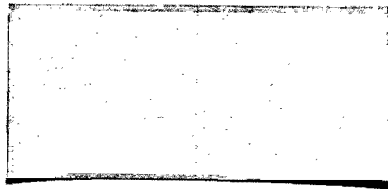


MA MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

**"Conversations That Fly":**  
**The *Little Review* and Modernist Salon Culture**

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*Nearly one century ago, a woman by the name of Margaret Anderson had the courage, in the face of widespread indifference, to launch a literary publication promoting a radically new art form. The magazine, called the Little Review, created a then rare forum to showcase and, most importantly, discuss avantgarde forms of expression that collectively contributed to a movement about to declare itself—Modernism. Guided by Anderson's vision and that of her co-editor Jane Heap, the Little Review employed seemingly simple yet transformative acts of inspired and influential conversation to stake virgin ground in a hostile cultural landscape. The magazine thus provides a remarkable and historically significant example of the power of talk. This paper examines the conversations hosted in the Little Review and how they "took flight" by helping to set in motion a seismic cultural shift that continues to cast widespread influence in the literary and art worlds.*

## **Introduction**

Margaret Anderson (1886–1973), the American writer, editor, publisher, and impassioned promoter of avantgarde forms of expression, defined great art as a struggle for communication (Anderson, *Little Review Anthology* 11). She ardently believed that the exchange of ideas is a sometimes difficult but vital component of the creative process. It is because of this belief that she launched a magazine called the *Little Review* in 1914, which quickly established itself as the leading avantgarde magazine of its era.

The *Little Review* was launched on the eve of the First World War, a period when widespread tensions manifested themselves in the arts as well as in political and social realms. It was therefore a time when Modernism — a revolutionary movement in the literary and visual arts that began in the late nineteenth century in response to traditional discourses of rationality and reached its apogee in First-World-War and post-war era— established itself with a broad array of new cultural expressions (Tew and Murray 11). Modernist experimentations were spearheaded by its avantgarde, a group of radical artists and writers representing an aggressively antagonistic spirit and revolting against the old systems of order and bourgeois institutions of art, as theorist Renato Poggioli (8) has described the historical avantgarde of the early twentieth century. As we shall see, the *Little Review* was an important member of a vanguard that helped create a cultural revolution by casting off, and inventing entirely new, literary and artistic conventions.

Anderson was raised in Columbus Ohio in an upper-middle class home and attended Western College in Oxford, Ohio. Ambitious from a young age, with dreams of pursuing a professional career, Anderson recounts in her memoir *My Thirty Years' War* how her family's expectations for her followed a traditional route: "my hopeful family waited for me to finish my education and come home to the higher joys of country clubs and bridge" (9). Desperate to escape the control of her family, and a life that was comfortable but lacked opportunities for "self-expression," she wrote to an advice column for young women in a magazine called *Good Housekeeping*. Her letter expressed an interest in striking out on her own and pursuing a career and therefore asked "how a perfectly nice but revolting girl could leave home" (12-13). Reflecting the passion and determination with which Anderson approached most endeavors in her life, the letter was

sufficiently passionate and convincing that it led to an offer to come to Chicago to work for the magazine. This experience was the first of a series of opportunities that eventually launched her career as editor.

By the time she was 27, Anderson had gained the skills and connections to launch her own magazine, the *Little Review* (Goodman 38). In 1916, Anderson met Jane Heap (1883–1964), who became Anderson's lover and co-editor. Born in Topeka, Kansas, Heap had enrolled in the Art Institute of Chicago and subsequently worked as an art teacher before focusing her efforts on the *Little Review*.

The *Little Review* was created to serve as a tool for advancing and promoting avantgarde forms of expression by harnessing the creative power of conversation. Anderson designed the *Little Review* to act as a meeting place where avantgarde artists, as well as their supporters and critics, could engage in dialogue and debate. The goal was to test, cultivate, and promote Modernism and entirely new and creatively fresh ideas. The outcome was a remarkable fifteen-year publishing run, from 1914 to 1929. During this time, the magazine mediated a collaborative form of art making which, as I shall argue in my paper, contributed to the development of disparate series of avant-garde movements that collectively lead, by the 1920s, to what is today known as "high modernism" but which will generally referred to in this paper simply as "Modernism."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to distinguish that the term Modernism, as used herein, specifically refers to a series of related movements that occurred roughly between 1914 and 1945 and is known as "high modernism," as noted by scholar Elizabeth Podnieks: There "is no such thing as one Modernism." [...] Anglo-American ones [...] originate from around the 1880s but are primarily situated in the years between the two world wars and [...] commonly termed 'high modernism'" (72).

I propose focusing my paper on the *Little Review* as a case study because it represents the most daring and avantgarde magazine of its type for its day with an ability to bring together a heterogeneous group of emerging artists (see Gammel 238-261; Marek 60-100). For fifteen years, the *Little Review* published the works of then-unknown American and English writers, many of whom today are recognized among the foremost authors of the twentieth century. The most famous examples include Jean Cocteau, Marcel Duchamp, T. S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and William Butler Yeats. Lesser-known yet important contributors to the magazine, writers who were significant catalysts for the development of Modernist literary styles were — notably — women. Distinguished examples include Djuna Barnes, Natalie Clifford Barney, Mary Butts, Mina Loy, Dorothy Richardson, as well as singer Georgette Leblanc and the colourful and notorious Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. In addition to these luminaries, the vast majority of contributors to the *Little Review* succeeded in establishing a name for themselves.

Anderson and Heap provided a welcome home for the experimental works of artists and writers whose radical break with conventional literary styles was initially rejected by the mainstream press, accustomed to promoting writings in vogue at the time. In contrast to conventional writers of the day, Modernists typically stressed a mundane and pessimistic outlook as well as a sense of alienation. They also employed more abstract writing styles. For example, some Modernists such as Gertrude Stein, inspired by a contemporary cubist movement in painting and sculpture, employed repetitive phrases as building blocks to structure their written passages. Such novel techniques, sometimes

accompanied by a willingness to tackle then-taboo subjects such as sex, were so unfamiliar as to seem bizarre or repugnant to some, though inspiring to others.

Ezra Pound's involvement in the magazine is of special interest since he not only contributed his own literature to the *Little Review* but participated as editor, securing many important artistic contributors. The most notable example was Joyce whose seminal work *Ulysses* was serialized, and appeared publically for the first time, in the *Little Review* beginning in 1918. Pound played an influential role in the artistic direction taken by the *Little Review* and made "the journal into [...] the first magazine to give Americans an adequate cross-section view of European and American experimentalism" (Scott and Friedman xxvi).

The *Little Review* is part of a genre of publications, referred to as little magazines, launched at the time to fill a publishing void. This genre, still in use today, is a "literary magazine, usually produced without concern for immediate commercial gain, and with a guiding enthusiasm for contemporary literature" (British Library online). This definition fits well with Margaret Anderson's recollection in her memoir, *My Thirty Years' War*, of the publishing practices employed by her magazine: "Practically everything the *Little Review* published during the first years was material that would have been accepted by no other magazine in the world at the moment" (44).

Reflecting the sense of struggle Anderson saw as crucial to art making, the *Little Review* presided over and helped fuel discussions which were at times polemic. "There was always a battle going on in the *Little Review*," says Anderson in an introductory passage presented on the book jacket of her book *Little Review Anthology*. This is especially evident in the magazine's letters-to-the-editor section where epistolary

contributions were often laced with adjectives such as “retching,” “ungodly,” “diabolical,” and “shameful.”

When the magazine ceased publication in 1929, silence replaced the inspired and, as I shall argue, productive conversations the *Little Review* worked to promote. In the following sections, I will document some of the key conversations that sustained Anderson's brainchild. As a crucial Modernist institution, and the era's most avantgarde magazine, the *Little Review* served as a site that inspired, provoked, and mediated influential conversations and debates between artists and an audience of readers and critics. In so doing, as I shall demonstrate using theories of salon culture, the publication ultimately functioned as a space in which ideas were expressed and debated in a manner that contribute directly to the shaping of a Modernist canon.

Bilski and Braun provide a taxonomy of salons that will be useful for considering the pages of the *Little Review* as both a virtual yet vibrant gathering space for artists and a forum for debating and testing ideas. A traditional salon “formed the centre of an information network” and “distributed and absorbed new ideas” (Bilsky and Braun 7). Neatly paralleling this description, little magazines were traditionally used to create “vigorous new connections between readers and writers who wanted to foster experimentation and challenge aesthetic traditions” (Marek 2). Further, “it is the little magazine's function as much to generate further writings and put writers in dialogue as it is to spread the word or proselytize for some not-yet available audience” (Golding 50). Likewise, as a little magazine, the *Little Review* became a focal point for people to share ideas that collectively challenged literary convention. Further, the magazine adopted a salon's function “to publicize and arbitrate, to shape consensus, [and] to unite in dialogue

those who would not normally meet” (Bilsky and Braun 2). More specifically, as we shall see, within the magazine-as-salon's discursive sphere, exchanges that contributed to collaborative art making intentionally included ones that, on the one hand, embodied rational and tolerant discourses that abided by salon conventions of harmony; and on the other hand, contravened such standards by at times being anarchic. This mix of polite and impassioned confrontational exchanges was in actual fact the *Little Review's* goal and is stated plainly in the magazine's credo: “[to] express the life of emotions is to make art” (Anderson, *Strange Necessity* 19).

Self-expression undertaken in the interest of creating and exchanging ideas is fundamental to a salon's function. Salons are institutions of reciprocity, where communication is used to develop intellectual relationships of mutual dependence. In similar fashion, there was a healthy and unfailing spirit of dialogue at the *Little Review*. This spirit was driven by a robust desire to create new ways of thinking by referencing, extending, reformulating, or discrediting ideas that collectively underpinned the developing institution of Modernism. Thus, an exploration of salonesque characteristics of communication and enlightenment attributable to the *Little Review's* editorial contributors will provide a logical starting point for this paper's examination.

Salon theory, which constitutes the axiomatic basis for this paper, historicizes an institution that began in seventeenth-century France where intellectuals of all stripes would meet on a regular basis to generate critical discourse. By the late-eighteenth century, salon practice spread across Europe. At about the same time, salons evolved into havens of free political, social, and cultural debate. They helped challenge autocratic state authority and contributed to an emerging age of liberalism during which principles of

democratic rule were formed. In the decades leading up to the rise of Modernist art and literature, salon culture continued to thrive and only suffered a decline in popularity at the end of World War II. Emily Bilsky and Emily Braun document that salons were common among early twentieth-century artists who regularly met to debate ideas, challenge conventional ways of thinking, and collaboratively fuel avantgarde movements. Salon culture was thus a familiar practice to Anderson, Heap, Pound and the various *Little Review* contributors. In her account of salons' evolution in eighteenth-century France, Dena Goodman discusses the role of the women, called salonières, who by mid-century were commonly leading salons. Examples she lists include Madame Geoffrin and Suzanne Necker (nee Curchod) who were leading female figures in the French Enlightenment period which lasted from 1750-1777 and who hosted celebrated salons. Bilsky and Braun stress that salons evolved from their earliest incarnations as occasions for stimulating conversation into more constructive events intended to provide edifying experiences. Focusing on the role of salonières such as Geoffrin and Necker, Goodman explains that by the mid-eighteenth century these women “no longer conceived of intellectual activity as games to amuse them, but as work to instruct them” (338). This focus on learning was a directive clearly taken to heart by Anderson and Heap who, as editors, fulfilled a role strikingly similar to that of salonières. They guided their publication and its editorials in a fashion intended to illuminate and instruct.

Despite the magazine's impressive and influential literary history, very few theorists have made the *Little Review* a central focus of their research. Rather, the *Little Review* has typically been considered as part of a family of Modernist magazines of its day and rarely made the main thrust of a research investigation. By focusing on the *Little*

*Review*, I hope to contribute to an understanding of how the sharing of ideas was a key process in Modernist cultural production. The validity of this approach is substantiated by Lawrence Rainey who emphasizes the important role of little magazines in relation to group activity: “Anglo-American literary Modernism was unusual in the degree to which its principal protagonists interacted with one another through shared institutional structures during a brief but important period that runs from 1912 to 1922” (34). The period Rainey references brackets the *Little Review*’s most productive, ground-breaking period when it attracted a considerable amount of attention by fellow Modernists. The years 1918 to 1922 were particularly fruitful for the magazine, coinciding with some of the most important early years of Modernism, and thus form the focus of this paper.

Thus, considering how one of the most avantgarde little magazines of its day, the *Little Review*, offered a communal space in which people could connect, communicate, and influence one another is important to understanding the development of the Modernist movement. Examples of the few theorists that focus on the *Little Review* include: Jayne Marek, who documents the role of American women, including Anderson and Heap, as editors and publishers of little magazines and their contribution to Modernist literature; Irene Gammel, who examines the conscious effort by Anderson and Heap to stimulate discussion and debate by publishing the poetry of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven — a Dadaist, flâneur, and performance artist; Jackson R. Bryer, who details the repercussions associated with the censorship of *Ulysses*, serialized in the *Little Review*. Adding to this body of work, my examination is the first to focus solely on the *Little Review*’s contribution to Modernism through its function as a kind of virtual salon.

## 1 The *Little Review* as a laboratory for the new

Bilsky and Braun argue that, as the institutional basis for the age of the Enlightenment in Europe, salons relied on people gathering to share ideas for the purpose of generating new-found wisdom: “Opinion evolved through collective voices [...]. The power of conversation [...] to shape consensus, to unite in dialogue [...] was key” (2). They add that salons were places where “truth [...] could be arrived at [...] through open dialogue with others, from multiple points of view” (6-7). Thus, while people who attended salons might not have originally seen eye to eye, the goal was to arrive at new, collectively held, and progressive beliefs that challenged conventional thinking. However, the authors also make clear that, from the beginning of its history, salons used the power of conversation “to the end of discovering oneself” (Bilsky and Braun 4). In other words, *self-enlightenment* was also encouraged. Such a goal requires a degree of individuation that runs contrary to an ethos of consensus, demonstrating a willingness within salon culture to also tolerate a level of disagreement. Thus, salons were places where perspectives might just as easily have diverged into a multiplicity of counter viewpoints as converge, through the dynamics of group thinking, to a single truth. Turning to the pages of the *Little Review*, we see this same pattern.

Ezra Pound touches directly on the merits of group thought in the *Little Review*’s April 1918 edition where, in an article entitled “Unanimism.” He attacks literary publishers — who at the time rejected Modernist writers — for being backwards thinking or, as he less politely terms it, “fusty old crocks.” He accuses them of “intellectual cowardice” given their lack of interest in publishing the experimental works of Modernist artists (26-27). In contrast to such closed minds, Pound explores the merits of

Unanimism, a movement in French literature based on ideas of collective consciousness where members of a group did or thought something simultaneously in an attempt to transcend individual consciousness and achieve more enlightened views. Pound promotes the power of group thinking, using a sum-greater-than-its-parts analogy: "We admit the life of entities greater than our own bodies. Society is not merely an arithmetical total, or a collective designation" (28). Pound indirectly references the groundbreaking role such aggregative entities might play in the Modernist movement: "Groups [...] will start things afresh [...] and as the consciousness of their substance increases they will refashion the image of the world." He adds, in a statement that poetically captures the spirit of a salon's aspirations for a more utopian society, that "the men who henceforth can draw the souls of groups to converge within themselves will give forth the coming dream" (29).

Nevertheless, he sees a limit to the value of such associations: "I have not yet met a group fully divine" (31). An explanation for what Pound likely means is found in the previous February issue, where a poem appears by Jules Romain, a central figure in the Unanimist movement. Discussing the poem in relation to the author's affiliation to Unanimism, Pound writes that there "is in inferior minds a passion for unity, that is for a confusion and melting together of things which a good mind will want to keep distinct" (February 1918 55). He clearly sees a need to be selective about who to let into an intellectual circle, such as the *Little Review*. Pound, was foreign editor of the *Little Review* at the time these articles were printed and exercised considerable control over the magazine's development. Interestingly, Jane Merck credits the *Little Review* for acting as "a vehicle for critical exchange that mirrored the 'cubist' interest in a multiplicity of viewpoints" (61-62). Yet, Pound's comments qualify that the *quality* is as important as the quantity of

voices granted a forum. This attitude is in keeping with a traditional salon, which — while it values the input of many voices — is selective and, if necessary, cautious, about whom to invite to the table.

Pound's views are not just consistent with a traditional salon's tendency to filter out certain voices but reflect the expressed editorial policy at the *Little Review*, which ran the following motto on its masthead throughout 1918: "The Magazine That is Read by Those Who Write The Others." This slogan explicitly puts out a welcome mat to an audience of fellow artists, broadcasting an editorial policy that encourages a Unanimist style of merger but limits entry to a select few. Indeed, the *Little Review* wrote in a voice that clearly assumed an audience of fellow artists and supporters already in the know about issues, people, and events relating to the Modernist movement. The degree to which the *Little Review* was read by those who write the others is suggested by the fact that people published in the magazine occasionally appeared in the letters-to-the-editor section, which was called "Reader Critic". For example, the *Little Review* occasionally made the odd choice of publishing a letter *from* one of its editors. In March of 1918, for example, a letter penned by Pound, entitled "Raymonde Collignon", appears. One would have had to have been intimately familiar with the singer and dancer Collignon and her body of work to make heads or tails of Pound's comments, including his cryptic and critical evaluation of her as a "disease" (Pound was fond of abstracting the spelling of words) (60). Maxwell Bodenheim, an American poet, novelist, and leading figure of bohemian culture, contributed to the November 1919 issue a piece of fiction that is immediately followed by his letter to the Reader Critic section. While likely the result of low readership numbers, cultivated by its avantgarde spirit, this practice left the *Little*

*Review* open to criticisms that it lacked input from a sufficient variety of outside perspectives. The Reader Critic section was an ideal forum for introducing fresh, constructive ideas from a general audience that could provide valuable feedback and help place Modernism on a successful course towards popular reception. In this respect, the *Little Review* failed to operate like a traditional salon in which, as Habermas explains, intellectuals met on an equal footing with “sons of princes and counts associated with sons of watchmakers and shopkeepers” (Habermas 37). The *Little Review*’s upper crust consisted of a relatively insular avantgarde that failed to rub elbows with those outside a Modernist circle. This fact was not lost on one of the *Little Review*’s readers, a man by the name of Arthur Purdon who took the magazine’s editors to task in a letter entitled “Two Points of View,” which appears in the Reader Critic section in the October 1919 issue. His article makes a clear reference to salon culture: “You are secure with your Art in your drawing-room circle of literary friends. The whole atmosphere of your expression has been and is that of upper-class superiority.” Purdon asserts that the magazine risks appealing to the “scholar and the student” who seek an “intellectual apology for the continuance of his studies.” He finishes his letter by accusing the journal of aligning itself with the very powers that galvanized people into forming salons in the first place, writing “[y]ou protect yourself against mass action [...]. Not content to mingle with or become a part of the mass you thereby make a choice to remain in power with the ruling class as long as possible” (55). His reference to the ruling class is interesting since Anderson and Heap were actually part of a subjugated group ignored at the time by the mass press. Further, salons traditionally arose to challenge the status quo.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> As discussed below, salons arose in opposition to a hegemonic monopoly on belief and

Perhaps what fueled Purdon's exasperation and — as I argue, misread of the magazine's philosophy — was the fact that in the months before his letter ran (and continuing until 1921) a new, militantly tinged motto dominated the *Little Review's* masthead: "Making No Compromise with the Public Taste." Clearly, and echoing Pound's desire to keep a good mind distinct, the *Little Review's* policy was to avoid input from minds not "fully divine." Anderson and Heap did not always circle their wagons against an uninformed or hostile public. They occasionally allowed people, not directly associated with the Modernist movement, to speak unflatteringly of the *Little Review* through the Reader Critic section. The fact that Anderson and Heap chose to print Purdon's letter demonstrates their willingness to publish unflattering views if only to use them to vigorously discredit such criticisms. Otherwise, the magazine clearly brooked little interference from those whose goal it was to weaken, dilute, degrade or sabotage conversations that could inspire creative development. Heap herself makes this point in a parenthetical comment she wrote for her article, entitled "Bonds of Interest," in the May 1919 issue. Dismissive of newspaper critics who took issue with her tendency to use novel forms of expression, Heap promises that she will continue to "jazz" her articles — meaning, fill them with embellished phrases. Referencing the *Little Review's* new motto, she adds that "'making no compromise' refers only to those publics which have heard of civilization" (65). Thumbing her editorial nose at "uncivilized" critics, Heap is in essence accusing them of being culturally unsophisticated. While her response is sharp in tone, she fairly makes the point that opinions emanating from minds closed to the kind of

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political systems exercised for centuries by religious and state authorities.

creative experimentation undertaken at the *Little Review*, in this case with language, are not constructive and will be excluded from any serious consideration.

Heap's standpoint was necessary to protect the *Little Review's* function as a trial space and is consistent with the tradition of salons creating safe havens from unsympathetic and unsupportive mainstream audiences that might undermine a spirit of experimentation. That artists should look to themselves rather than seek out an admiring public for inspiration was also core to Anderson's philosophy, which incorporated a belief of leading rather than following societal standards. Anderson says as much in *My Thirty Years' War*, where she takes issue with an opinion she heard expressed that great poets must have great audiences: "Not true [...]. Great poets create great audiences, just as great people create their experiences instead of being created by them" (60).

A desire by *Little Review* contributors to keep a good mind distinct was not only directed at critics and a non-understanding public but also at fellow artists who lacked a spirit for, or the courage to present, works that demonstrated originality. In a fictional piece authored by Bodenheim that appears in the November 1919 issue, entitled "A Projection at Kensington London W.," the author creates an imaginary conversation between Pound and two poets from the future. The poets are critical of Pound's era when artists quarreled with one another. In this piece, Pound counters that in his time, artists had a tendency to "jog along in orderly fashion warmed by similar longings." He adds that he "and a few others tried to fight against this delusion of sameness which was petrifying poetry and other arts" (62).

Bodenheim's piece is one of a number that appear in the *Little Review* stressing that artistic circles of influence are to be avoided if they do not focus on the creation of

something entirely new. For example, in the June 1919 edition, the poet Emanuel Carneval reviews a play by the Italian writer Giovanni Papini. In his article, entitled “The Historical Play,” Carneval calls Papini a “rag-picker of dramatic literature.” Condemning the play for its lack of “Genius—Newness” — qualities that any evolving movement, including Modernism, hopes to achieve if it is to be taken seriously (49). He calls the work a piece of “nauseating sentimentalism” because it is constructed of “old customs, of old decorations, and very old words” (50). Papini’s play therefore represents a contaminating force to be rejected and excluded from Modernist dynamics. Carneval, Bodenheim, and their *Little Review* compatriots are only interested in the very newest of words.

Nevertheless, what constitutes originality worthy of an avantgarde is, of course, open to debate. In the September-December 1920 issue, an op-ed piece by American author Robert McAlmon appears, entitled “Essentials.” The article questions what constitutes creative originality whose worth is of “value equal to the ‘old’.” McAlmon, who ran his own little magazine called *Contact*, takes disapproving aim at Modernists whom he felt were too quick to dismiss classical art forms and supplant them with their own works which — he believed — all too often had “little to do with art, or life” (69). Interestingly, he singles out Bodenheim and Pound, who he says “swim under a sea of influences” despite their own professed disdain for creative conformity. He takes issue with Pound in particular for “worshipping at the shrine” of other artists. McAlmon believes that the “impact of experience, environments, realized perceptions—not literary-gained knowledge—and a will to say something about it produces literature” (70).

Interestingly, a salon straddles the line between what McAlmon sees as foe and friend to

creativity. As an institution of shared thinking, a salon can indeed be equally characterized as a “sea of influence” and, as an institution that encourages self-reflection, an “environment of realized perceptions.”

The danger of suggestibility and normative pressure that can exist in any salonesque dynamic is discussed months earlier in the September 1919 issue of the *Little Review*. In an article entitled *Critical Suggestions*, penned by the British artist Jessie Dismorr, a true artist is likened to an atheist who stays clear of religious doctrine. Dismorr warns against the “discounted imagination” that occurs when one falls under the influence of a religious canon. Her view is somewhat surprising, since she herself was a leading member of the Vorticist movement, so named by Ezra Pound, which had its very own indoctrinating manifesto. Nevertheless, Dismorr declares that “[a]rt, like religion, suffers chiefly from the too-eager belief and impressibility of its devotees [...]. It is surely under-estimated the part that suggestibility plays in our acceptance of forms of beauty” (31).<sup>3</sup> In his critique of *Little Review* contributors, in an article entitled “The December Number,” American writer Israel Solon also warns against the temptation by Modernists to “lift any tricks from other writers. They are always evident, and never suitable. [...] [T]echnique is inseparable from [...] matter” (January 1920 32). Like McAlmon, Solon stresses that literary inventiveness comes from one’s “matter,” or self. McAlmon’s, Dismorr’s, and Solon’s comments further reflect on the tension — inherent in any salon — between a desire to achieve self-enlightenment and the need to arrive at a collectively agreed upon set of understandings. However, their concern that artists that appeared in the *Little Review* were engaging in a degree of mimicry signaled that a true

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<sup>3</sup> The Vorticist manifesto appeared in the first issue, in June 1914, of a little magazine called *BLAST*.

artistic movement was beginning to take shape. Despite Dismorr's lament about impressionable devotees, a movement requires its members to share common forms of expression. For any community to coalesce, it is necessary that constituents begin to mirror and reinforce each other's ideas and expressions.

Interestingly, few examples were found of people using the *Little Review* as a vehicle to voice their support for some form of intellectual conformity, despite the fact that the goal was to create a coherent artistic movement. Perhaps this is because to be a Modernist at the time required a strong stomach for public indifference and hostility. This might explain why we find, in the fall 1921 issue, Pound encouraging fellow artists to stay true to their own convictions. He writes that a "work of art [...] is enjoyable in proportion as the maker had made it to please himself" (40). In this article, he characterizes artists as "bad" when they create a work to "get an audience, to keep an audience, to pay the rent" (41). At the time that Pound proffered this opinion, any hope of breathing life into the Modernism movement would have required eschewing any temptation to appease a mainstream audience. Pound's words could thus be interpreted as a warning, bordering on admonition, to those who might be tempted to give into then commercially acceptable standards.

## **2 The Power of conversation**

In a salon, talk — in the service of sharing perspectives, intellectualizing, and generating new ideas — is king. Anderson so exulted in the act of talking that she writes that she "can only talk to people who love to talk for its own sake" (*My Thirty Years' War* 39), describing the pleasures of discourse as among "the more important luxuries of the soul".

(180). She also conflates talk with making art, believing that art's talk — its ability to communicate — makes skilled artists adept commentators. Anderson uses Heap as a case in point: "Jane began life at sixteen as a painter. That is why she talks so well." She adds that when accomplished artists are "good at talking they are better than anyone else" (122). No wonder then that, just as in a salon, talk enjoyed prime status at the *Little Review* — a publication devoted to the arts — and that Anderson chose Heap not just as her lover but as the magazine's co-editor. Even in 1969, near the end of her life when the last edition of her autobiography was published, and after a lifetime of discussions with the leading artists and intellectuals of her day, Anderson was still willing to commit to print the following sentiment: "I felt in 1916 and feel to-day that Jane Heap is the world's best talker" (103). When Anderson recalls what motivated her to conceive a little magazine, she focused specifically on her intentions to promote talk. Expressing a desire "to have inspired conversation," she recounts, "if I had a magazine I could spend my time filling it up with the best conversation the world had to offer" (35). Anderson is clear about what constitutes the best conversation: "It isn't a question of words, facility, style. [...] It is entirely a question of ideas" (103). Describing her disappointment with, as she describes it, the "quality of talk," she encountered one night at a gathering of artists and thinkers, Anderson asserts in her memoir: "Intellectually I considered it a singularly second-rate evening. [...] [T]hey all seemed to be exchanging book information rather than personal points of view" (149). Rather than parroting other people's ideas, what counted for Anderson was talk in the service of new ideas and, ultimately, enlightenment. This belief might explain the captious tone with which Anderson describes the writer Djuna Barnes, observing that "Djuna would never talk, [and] she never allowed herself to

be talked to. She said it was because she was reserved [...]. She wasn't, in fact, reserved—she was unenlightened” (181). An inability to formulate and communicate new ideas was, in Anderson's estimation, a sure sign of ignorance.

The challenge with Anderson's wish to stimulate, through the *Little Review*, talk that cultivates new intellectual ground is that printed and oral forms of communication differ. This fact never struck Anderson as an impediment since she asserts that “anything one could formulate in words could be transcribed to paper without losing in the transition” (146). Practicing what she preached, Anderson sometimes recreated, in print, actual conversations she observed or engaged in. For example, after a ten-day marathon round of visits to publishers, whom she met in the hopes of attracting advertisements, Anderson published an account — replete with quotes — of the conversations that resulted from these meetings. Anderson penned an article in the December 1919 issue, entitled “To the Book Publishers of America,” that recreates the debates she had with publishers unwilling to advertise in the *Little Review* (65-67).

Anderson used this same technique when she recounted her experiences in court defending the *Little Review* against obscenity charges. The charges arose in response to sections of *Ulysses* that appeared in the *Little Review* and containing passages alleged to be offensive to public moral standards. In an article that appears in the January-March 1921 issue, entitled “‘Ulysses’ in Court,” she recreated — word for word as she remembered it — what the judge, the lawyers, and people called to testify had to say. The article even provides stage-setting details of, for example, the tone in which a remark is uttered in order to more realistically capture the nuances of what was said and how it was expressed. In spite of her love for talk, Anderson was herself silent throughout the

proceeding, as she explains: “I will protect my sensibilities and my brain cells by being unhearing and untalkative. [...] Why must I stand up [...] to [...] men who wouldn’t understand my simplest remark? [...] My function is silence” (23). Anderson chose to remain mute in an arena unwilling to abide by a spirit of intellectual open-mindedness.

Perhaps the most interesting example encountered of this tendency to recreate conversations in the *Little Review* involves a “letter” that appears in the Reader Critic section under the title “Overheard at an Amy Lowell Lecture” (author unknown) and quoted here in its entirety:

Amy Lowell has the drummer method of letting you in on poetry, hasn’t she? I haven’t ever written any, but now I’ve heard her I think I shall. . . . If she didn’t have so much ease, there would still be ease enough, . . . wouldn’t there? (September-December 1920 93).

Amy Lowell is an American poet who in 1926 was posthumously awarded a Pulitzer Prize for her work. Presumably, as the title suggests, Anderson, Heap, or someone they knew literally overheard this snippet of conversation. By reprinting these comments, the *Little Review* offered readers the experience of eavesdropping on other people’s assessment of her poetic talents.

With regards to the editorial sections of the *Little Review*, not only do they appear under the title “Discussion” in many of the 1919 and 1920 editions but the various opinions expressed often play directly off of one another in a manner that creates a chatty, point-counterpoint sense of debate. Editorials play off one another so often that in the twenty-two editions reviewed for this paper, no less than fifty strings of “conversation” are found involving two or more authors expressing their opinions in

response to one another. While most of these strings involve two or three people responding — sometimes repeatedly back and forth — to each another, there are five strings that involve a circle of five or six voices. The topics that generate the greatest number of back-and-forth remarks focus on the themes of aesthetics, art criticism and, tellingly, the notion of talk. Furthermore, that the vast majority of editorials written as responses occur during a period that lasts from October 1919 to August 1920, a period when Modernism swung into high gear.

These conversational dynamics occurred within, as well as between, editions — evidence that Anderson and Heap employed editorial skill to synchronize discussions. One striking example occurred in the October 1919 edition, in an article entitled “More Swill.” Authored by William Carlos Williams — a pediatrician who moonlighted as an accomplished poet — the article employs the following morbid imagery to make the point that art can be deemed beautiful and worthy of public attention by an influential art critic yet lack vitality if it is not animated by creative thought: “[i]t never occurs to [...] an American critic [...] to discover first whether he is dealing with a live thing or with the symmetries of a corpse” (29). Immediately following his commentary, the writer Winthrop Parkhurst continues with the same tombstone analogy in an article entitled “An Open Letter to Margaret Anderson.” In his evaluation of art critics, Parkhurst compares some to a “grave-digger who exhumes the corpses of art and exposes them [...] to see—and smell” (31). Clever editing makes it appear that Parkhurst’s remarks are playing directly off of those made by Williams.

For added conversational effect, back-and-forth exchanges sometimes involved people addressing each other directly. In the Fall 1922 edition, an editorial penned by the

poet Hart Crane appears consisting of what appears to be a letter addressed to Heap, whose reply immediately follows. In this piece, entitled "Secession," Crane expresses his concern, using a first-person voice, that Heap's editorial commentaries attack the messenger rather than the message: "[t]he trouble with you is that you have had to fight against the mere taboo element so long (and nobly!) that you are apt to become merely personal in your answers" (39). Heap's response reads in part: "[y]ou take me too seriously. [...] I have never fought anything." (39). In similar fashion, in a debate sparked by comments published earlier by Heap, McAlmon addresses Heap directly in the September-December 1920 issue, in an article entitled "Essentials": "[d]o you know any 'modern' critic, you 'JH,' [...] who would be capable of writing [...] of art [...] with modern comprehension" (71).

While the earliest editions of the *Little Review* are not included in this study, it should be noted that there was an evolution in the quality of talk paralleling one that took place in salons. Originally, in the seventeenth century when salons first developed, "talk traditionally involved verbal games and recitations, undertaken during a game of cards" (Bilsky and Braun 5). Talk was a means of recreation, meant more for entertainment than edification. However, "by the mid-eighteenth century, salons no longer promoted leisurely activity for its own sake but became schools of intellectual ambition [...]. With eminent writers in attendance, serious study replaced serious play" (Bilsky and Braun 5-6). While Anderson launched her magazine with a desire for "inspired conversation," reflecting back many years later in her autobiography, she conceded that her earliest editions were more focused on adoration of the arts than a serious formulation of new ideas about them. She recalls how the first few editions of the *Little Review* contained

“nothing but praise, and of those phenomena of art and nature that have been most obviously praised since man began” (*My Thirty Years' War* 47). However, the magazine quickly turned its attention to exploring serious subjects. As the “third number of the *Little Review* was going to press,” recalls Anderson, “I heard Emma Goldman lecture and had just time to turn anarchist before the press closed” (54). Emma Goldman was an anarchist and political activist. Anderson both embraced, and introduced as a topic of discussion in her publication, Goldman’s then radical opinions about philosophy, women's rights, and social issues.

The *Little Review* editors could at times be sufficiently dismissive of their own editorial and creative contributors that people would sometimes protest. For example, the American painter Marsden Hartley set off a debate by publishing an article, entitled “The Poet of Maine,” in the July 1919 edition. In this article, Hartley writes admiringly of the poetic talents of Wallace Gould and laments that book distributors and retailers rejected his published body of work. In a parenthetical comment that follows this editorial, Anderson undercuts Hartley’s abilities to accurately appreciate or assess art: “I print this article as a good example of what passes for criticism in America. Mr. Hartley has simply made up words about Wallace Gould. [Gould] has not grasped his material as an artist” (55). In the following October issue, in an article entitled “Art and Wallace Gould,” Hartley responds to Anderson’s comments: “[i]s art so painfully necessary that it must be eaten and disgorged continually? Must we dwell forever on the theme of esthetic vomiting?” (25). The “elite talk,” he continues, “about every thing under the sun from dollars to doughnuts” (26). Not only does Hartley bristle at what he believes to be an overreaching and obsessive desire by Anderson and others to caste their judgments on

people's creative talents but he believes that they condescend, as he sarcastically puts it, to "the American troglodyte" (26). As with any institution that engages in acts of intellectualization and in challenging commonly held beliefs or tastes, the *Little Review* is an easy target for these sorts of criticisms. While Anderson's response, which cuttingly suggests that Hartley and others who fail to appreciate her magazine's discussions are not "illuminated," she is willing to give voice to and address their complaints. Anderson's parenthetical comments directly follow Hartley's article: "I am merely glad to prove once in a while by publishing illuminating remarks for the illuminated, that talk about [art] is of some interest. [...] Any one who has a passion for [...] talking [...] does [so] because he needs the satisfaction of agreeing or disagreeing with what he reads or hears" (27). Talk in the interest of enlightenment requires that one be receptive to, and engage with, countering points of view. Although Anderson was not receptive to Hartley's favourable assertions of Gould's work, she did indeed engage with them. Further, despite her low opinion of Gould's creative talents, Anderson allowed her parenthetical comment to Hartley's October editorial to be followed by three of the poet's works, allowing readers to make up their own mind.

### **3 Avantgarde militance versus ideals of harmony**

While, in a salon, talk is king it is the "queen" or salonière who sets the tone for the discussions she presides over, providing "for her guests the model of a rational, exhilarating, discursive style" (Bilsky and Braun 2). In the interest of open inquiry, it is important, however, that she moderate rather than dominate conversations. As Bilsky and Braun stress, the "authoritative salonière couched matters of public importance in the

nonthreatening language of open inquiry, soliciting and dispensing counsel in equal measure” (1-2). Salons are institutions that arose in opposition to a hegemonic monopoly — exercised for centuries by religious and state authorities — on political, moral, philosophical, religious, cultural, scientific, and other belief systems that defined and ruled nearly all aspects of society. Bilsky and Braun thus emphasize that salons ensured that “[t]ruth was no longer divined or dictated,” least of all by salonières (6-7). Further, the “ethics of salon reciprocity banned aggressive behaviour in the pursuit of mutual tolerance,” with the salonière “expected to take the lead,” creating “a harmonious gathering” (Bilsky and Braun 1, 3).

Anderson and Heap were no strangers to the role of salonière. For example, at the time that Anderson launched her magazine in 1914 she was also attending a literary group, which she described as a “sort of salon” (*My Thirty Years' War* 38). Recalling the artists and conversations she and Heap often hosted in their home, Anderson provides the following account, which describes a salon in all but name: “[t]he younger poets came for talk. [...] [W]eighing the content of one’s thought, checking up on one’s observation,” (153). The degree to which these two women were sometimes willing to transgress the courteous and moderating boundaries set for a salonière can be deduced from Anderson’s own account. She provides a clear depiction of how she and Heap habitually conducted themselves when presiding over the intellectual circles they hosted: “Sometimes opposing factions gathered [...] for debate [...]. We were considered heartless, flippant, ruthless, devastating” (154). Clearly, a polite and nonaggressive demeanor — something traditionally expected of a salonière — was not Anderson’s or Heap’s priority. A theme of combativeness is one that Anderson returns to time and again in her memoir: “We

could find the Achilles heel in everybody's psychic set-up [...]. We stuck pins into people [...] doing a necessary world's work" (186). In another passage says Anderson, "I made up quarrels of opinion so that Jane could show her powers" at cutting down other people's ideas (107). Thus, Anderson and Heap were contravening the historically held rules of conduct in a salon by adopting militant tactics. However, their unconventional approach was aimed at achieving the same lofty and important goals expected of any salonière, namely to challenge people to think and confront their deeply-routed biases. Rewriting the salon playbook to fit within a Modernist paradigm, Anderson and Heap employed provocation like a bucket of cold water, a shock tactic to awaken people to new ways of thinking. However, unlike Anderson, Heap "regarded the prickling of the bubbles" as a means to help people to "distinguish between wish-fulfillment and reality" and "didn't at all share [Anderson's] obsession about enlightening the world" (108). Anderson's and Heap's differences of opinion on this matter were, in fact, so great that Anderson felt compelled to spend days at a time prodding Heap, who did not see "the necessity to instruct anyone on any subject" to write commentary for the *Little Review*" (109). Thus only Anderson felt motivated to fulfill a salonière's duty of fostering enlightenment — albeit with a heavy dose of belligerence.

How Anderson and Heap conducted themselves when presiding over intellectual conversations in their home provides a useful lens for analyzing how they moderated, as editors, the conversations that took place in the *Little Review*. The roles of a salonière and editor are clearly analogous. For example, given that it is her salon, held in her home, a salonière is able to exercise gate-keeping authority through her choice of guests and control over conversations through her role as moderator. As editors, Anderson and Heap

were able to exercise this same level of control over who was allowed to voice their opinions in the *Little Review*. They also set the tone for their magazine by selecting, featuring, juxtaposing, or directing attention to particular creative or editorial expressions. These comparisons are especially compelling given the degree to which the *Little Review* was associated with Anderson's and Heap's domestic life. Not only was the magazine literally produced from their home, but Anderson — in particular — explicitly conflated domesticity and the *Little Review*, as Nina Van Gessell has documented with countless examples from Anderson's memoir *My Thirty Years' War*. "We kept our house in the most perfect order. We cleaned, scrubbed, dusted, cooked, washed dishes," writes Anderson and continues: "Besides this domesticity we brought out the *Little Review* every month" (156).

We can also treat as an object of formulation the personality traits which underlay and influenced these inclinations. Marek observes that as editors and publishers of avantgarde little magazines, women and their personalities were central to the dynamics of Modernist publishing (3). From the perspective of temperament, it is Heap — not Anderson — who more closely reflected the personality of a salonière. According to Marek, "Heap asserted her ideas in a language that exuded knowledge and self-confidence through an aphoristic style and sharp sense of irony" (75). Through her characteristic style of editorial commentary, Heap not only radiated these qualities but also those of self discipline and keen intuition. These traits were a valued commodity among salonières for whom "[l]istening meant anticipating and preempting with the calibration of a military operation" (Bilsky and Braun 2). Such skills require intellectual confidence and a mental acuity that together reflect a tendency to favour verbal versatility

and calm reason over emotional debate. Most importantly, a keen understanding is required of human character, a quality Heap clearly possessed according to Anderson who writes that “[Heap’s] canny knowledge of the human composition” was such that she possessed “unfailing clairvoyance about human motivation” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 122).

Heap’s editorial style was exceedingly self-assured, rational, and calculatingly restrained in tone. She consistently was able to make her point using a few well-chosen words. Anderson, on the other hand, took an impassioned and impetuous approach. The result, for Anderson, was often a clashing of minds with artists and thinkers that Heap characterized as “too infantile” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 151). Anderson provides a colourful account of attempts she took to take a more reasoned approach and reign in her fierce and unrestrained temperament:

I decided to become mature. I would be calm, careful, contained. I would proceed henceforth by [...] methods of exposition and comparison, or reason and logic. I [...] gave up after the first attempt. This reasonable and convincing procedure gave me no emotional recompense. [...] [M]y object in talking is neither to learn nor to convey but to enter into new emotional states, since I can’t produce ideas unless they are forced out of me by an emotional explosion. (151)

Nevertheless, within the privacy of their home Heap was as likely as Anderson to participate in passionate exchanges. Heap and Anderson immersed themselves in a private and often intense and tempestuous bubble that fueled their passion for, and frustration with, each other as both lovers and fellow intellectuals. This dynamic drove

strong emotional forces that initially attracted but eventually repelled these two women from one another: “Jane and I began talking. We talked for days, months, years,” writes Anderson when describing the earliest years of their relationship (107). Talk fueled for Anderson such an impassioned, bordering on ecstatic, relationship with Heap that she describes being “insane with the mental satisfaction of Jane’s presence” (111). Anderson narrated how, like newlyweds who could not stand to be apart, the passion was initially so strong that at the end of late-night conversations they could not bear to pull away from one another: “it was difficult—it was destroying—to break it up by saying good-night, going to bed, and calling out from one room to the other our final intellectualizations [...]. So I moved our beds into the living room” (128-129). With this arrangement they would talk until they fell asleep. Interestingly, the earliest salons were launched from the bedroom with salonières moving their “actual bed [into] an adjacent wardrobe alcove and receiving company” (Bilsky and Braun 5). Thus, reading Anderson’s description of their nighttime chats brings to mind a strikingly similar image of the *Little Review*’s co-editors presiding as co-salonières over their own intimate salon, reclining in their resituated beds.

Given that Anderson’s sometimes fiery personality was in sharp contrast to Heap’s, their opposites-attract relationship could just easily leave them at odds: “Jane and I were as different as two people can be. Temperamentally we were almost never in accord” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 122). Their different temperaments often led to conflicting perspectives, which left them “at swords’ points” (231). The sometimes polemic nature of their relationship was mirrored in the tone of conversations they oversaw in the *Little Review*. Recalling their one-on-one salons, Anderson writes that the “results of our differences was—argument,” which is precisely what salons are supposed

to avoid but which Anderson and Heap were comfortable fostering in their magazine (122). When Marek describes Anderson's and Heap's style of editing, she captures the dueling nature of both women and the manner in which they approached discussing ideas in private, their salon, and magazine. "They refused," says Marek, "to use editing as a passive facilitation of others' works and were instead confrontational" (61). Marek also points out that the two women saw themselves as having an active rather than neutral role in arbitrating the art they promoted, in direct violation of the rules of conduct expected of a salonière (81). Indeed, the *Little Review* is laced with Heap's and Anderson's assertive, broad-gage commentary. They were constantly finding "the Achilles heel" and "pricking bubbles" in the ideas of those they published. Rather than unobtrusively presiding over discussions tabled through the *Little Review*, Anderson and Heap stepped in with their own strongly-worded opinions in nearly three quarters of the editions studied for this paper. Moreover, of the 111 people whose writings appear in the journals studied, just four individuals take up more space with their writing than Anderson and Heap combined. Only James Joyce, whose novel *Ulysses* is serialized at length in the *Little Review*, and the novelists Dorothy Richardson and Djuna Barnes fill more pages.<sup>4</sup> Anderson readily admits to having an assertive editorial style: "It is this incessant [...] need to distinguish and impose that has made me an editor" (*My Thirty Years' War* 58). About the artists she promotes, she unapologetically professes "I tell them what they should be" (59).

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<sup>4</sup> Combined, Anderson and Heap fill 59 pages in the 22 editions of the *Little Review* studied for this paper (January through to March 1918 and April 1919 through to fall 1922). Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven contributes 44.5 pages, James Joyce contributes 206 pages, Ezra Pound contributes 67 pages, Dorothy Richardson contributes 129 pages, and Djuna Barnes contributes 63 pages.

Given that Goodman emphasizes that the intellectual activity in a salon was meant to instruct, Anderson's penchant to educate her audience might appear to lie within acceptable bounds for a salonière. Further, Anderson and Heap always maintained the upper hand, as is expected of salonières. They did so in part, by asserting the last word, instructing when required, and — with an air of unchallengeable finality — stamping other people's thoughts with their own conclusions. In early editions of the *Little Review*, Anderson and Heap allowed other people's opinions to be printed without comment. However, in a one year period (lasting from June 1919 to June 1920) they bookend people's editorials approximately half of the time with their parenthetical comments, containing counterarguments, rejoinders, or words of support. By getting in the last word so often, Anderson's and Heap's interjections had a forceful effect, carrying an implied tone of authority and confidence. Anderson's and Heap's practice of reserving the right to have the final say led Evelyn Scott to pen — in protest — an editorial aptly entitled "The Last Word" in the March 1920 edition. In the previous January and December issues, Scott contributes an analysis of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven's writings that are immediately followed by a sharp rebuttal from Heap. Scott complains in her March edition: "'jh' [Heap] is in a position of vantage as she can exercise the editorial prerogative of the last word." Heap follows Scott's editorial with following parenthetical comment: "I am glad to allow Miss Scott the last word. I withdraw quietly. I feel that I have been permitted a glimpse of the gentle mystic soul of an adding-machine" (47). By not directly challenging Scott's comments, Heap does grant her editorial the final word — albeit with a heavy dose of irony.

Echoing Heap's barbed remark, an interesting theme arises in the *Little Review* with regards to the ability of talk to fully express art's emotions. In the January-March 1921 issue, a notice appears advertising an exhibition of works by the writer Sherwood Anderson in New York City. The notice reads, in part: "[t]here are certain images that haunt the human mind. They cannot be expressed in words except through the poet who occasionally raises the power of words beyond the real possibility of words" (64). Anderson continues, in the notice, to state that his inner thoughts and impulses can never be "seen," meaning represented accurately enough for an audience to fully grasp. The notice thus suggests that art criticism — which is what generated the debate between Scott and Heap — is an imperfect science. The critic can never fully glimpse and understand what the artist is expressing. In the same issue, a mysterious "Emmy V. Sanders" expresses, in an article entitled "Apropos Art and its Trials Legal and Spiritual," an opinion that resonates with Anderson's sentiments: "Art has a language of its own; a language not of words only, but of subtle reactions and ever shifting valuations taking place in the depths of the artist soul—and a fair amount of knowledge of that language is indispensable for knowing what is at stake" (43). The clue to Sanders' identity lies in the fact that Pound was fond of using the pseudonym "Abel Sanders." As it turns out, he sometimes also adopted the guise of "Abel's" equally fictional sister "Emmy." While Pound reinforces Anderson's concerns in his article, he explicitly directs them at art critics who are deaf to Modernist expressions and only value art "of a date anterior to 1900" (42). Pound characterizes their unsympathetic interpretations of Modernism as "interfering and talking. Talking—forever beside the point" (43). To properly understand and critically comment on a creative expression then — a topic which will be explored in

the following section — Pound asserts that one must understand the emotions stirring deep within the artist's soul. Just as Anderson and Heap make “no compromise with the public taste,” in order to protect the *Little Review*'s function as a trial space for experimentation, Pound is openly silencing critical voices that transgress a salon's expectation of openness to new ideas.

#### 4 The role of the critic

As bruising as they could sometimes be — the *Little Review*'s sharp editorial comments were driven by a sincere desire to critically evaluate art. To do so was essential. What was to be considered aesthetically good or bad, a manifestation of talent or a lack thereof, and the criteria by which to judge these issues needed to be hammered out. Whether expressed by the stroke of a pen, the notch of a chisel, or the sweep of a brush, Modernist art needed to establish a set of ground rules by which to define and guide its development and representation as a coherent movement. In the debuting March 1914 edition of the *Little Review*, Anderson is clear about her intention to create a venue through which a critique of arts will help to establish these rules: “The *Little Review*'s aim [...] is to produce criticism of music, art, drama, and life that is fresh and constructive [...]. Criticism [...] is creation: it gives birth!” (1). The birth Anderson speaks of is, of course, the then nascent Modernist movement. Anderson makes good on her promise. In the 22 editions of the *Little Review* studied, no fewer than 40 editorials consist of critical art reviews. Further, approximately forty additional editorials are concerned with the topic of art criticism. By assigning such a clear aim for her magazine, and delivering on it, Anderson was taking a page directly out of a traditional salon's playbook since the

“modern institution of art criticism was born in the salon, educating amateurs, begetting connoisseurs.” As a result of salons, an “audience was empowered to determine new standards” (Bilsky and Braun 7). Thus salons and their talk institutionalized a form of criticism that led to these standards which, in turn, served as the basis for establishing and evolving new schools of thought. Equally important, with respect to the *Little Review*, it is Jurgen Habermas’s observation that “the development of critical periodicals as a result of salons, literature and art were no longer possible except in connection with literary and art criticism” (42). The *Little Review* and salons thus clearly shared a common history and important *raison d’être*. They both lay the foundation for new intellectual and creative institutions by constructively razing as well as praising works that sought acceptance.

Guided by her desire to encourage avantgarde expressions, Anderson’s critiques consistently centred on the issue of originality. She demanded a creativity that demonstrated a break from convention, an outlook key to understanding her statement that “[a]n artist is an exceptional person. Such a person has something exceptional to say” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 134). To be exceptional requires one to possess, by definition, something outside the norm and thus rarely or never seen or heard. Thus art that Anderson most craved and was motivated to praise needed to demonstrate a break with precedent sufficiently radical that it would appear odd or strange to an unfamiliar audience. In fact, Anderson titles the second volume of her memoirs *The Strange Necessity*. In this publication, she explains that the title of her book refers to “that strange ultimate state of great creation” she so desired. A piece of prose, poetry, music, painting, or sculpture can be admirable or even a masterpiece but fail to leave her “breathless” unless it is, in her estimation, the brainchild of a highly inventive mind (37-38). This

point of view comes out loud and clear in her dismissal of the author Sinclair Lewis's celebrated book *Main Street*: "[t]here is no art in it. Its photography is faithful and insignificant [...]. Faithful photography has never been a proof of art" (79). Lewis's book fails Anderson's litmus test since it is, she believes, merely a facsimile rather than an inventive, fresh representation.

Anderson not only demands originality of the artist but also of the critic, an expectation that is consistent with her belief that criticism gives birth. Thus, upon first meeting American writer, photographer, and music critic Carl Van Vechten she finds his opinions "vacuous" since they are merely a "fund of anecdotes [...] intellectual gossip, echoes of information, a cataloging of current impressions" (*My Thirty Years' War* 150-151). In her view, Van Vechten merely parrots rather than parents ideas. Anderson takes this same tack in her assessment of other critics when editorializing in the *Little Review*. Writing about Henry Louis Mencken, the literary critic for the mainstream magazine *The Smart Set*, Anderson opens her piece, entitled "Truisms," by stating that "Mr. Mencken cannot be considered as critic at all," since he "talks always with a residue" of "old discussions" (January 1918 13).

Anderson's expectation that an artist should create, rather than recreate, is sometimes expressed in terms that demand a creative talent that borders on the divine. She writes, in a passage that expands on "Emmy V. Sanders'" and Sherwood Anderson's thoughts about an artist's creations in relation to their very being, that the "more universal the artist the greater his power to reveal his soul in different images" (*My Thirty Years' War* 148). This quote reminds one of biblical references to God creating in his own image. She comes to her conclusion after stating: "None of the arts expresses

emotion—they express the sources of human emotion. To express the emotion of life is to live; to express the life of emotions is to make art” (148). Art is thus, by Anderson’s measure, associated with a genesis. Just as a god is typically considered a creator of a world and its inhabitants, so too Anderson expects artist and critic to construct, populate, and animate a new world of art. Thus when outlining in her article what is lacking in Mencken’s critical assessments, Anderson uses a shorthand to reference these expectations when she states that a ‘critic is concerned first, last, and always with art emotions” (14). In her memoir, Anderson asks “by what touch does one immortalize objects? by what power does one create in one’s own image?” (155). Again, while Anderson’s colourful and scripturally inspired language is reminiscent of someone in the throes of spiritual fervor, it is important to remember that her “religion” is simply guided by a passion for new creative expressions that collectively formulate new cultural developments.

The British writer and suffragist May Sinclair, who herself functions as an art critic, picks up on the theme of — as she terms it — “criticizing criticism.” In the April 1918 edition, she employs a line of reasoning that adheres to Anderson’s belief that a critique should be forward-thinking and concerned with a creative genesis. In her piece, entitled “The Novels of Dorothy Richardson,” she wonders how one might improve on the role of art criticism and “make it alive.” Just like Anderson, she believed that the answer lies in turning to something new, for she states: “the first step [...] is to throw off the philosophic cant of the XIXth Century” (3). Presumably, it is this same cant that results in Anderson dismissing Mencken’s opinions as mere “residue.” Demonstrating, like Anderson, a desire to encourage constructive criticism that breathes life into the Modernism movement, Sinclair adds “that criticism up till now has been content to think

in clichés, missing the new trend of the philosophies of the XXth Century” (4). Sinclair’s comments about criticism serve as a preamble for her defense of what is then a highly novel style of writing. Her article provides a review of British writer Dorothy Richardson’s novels. Notably, Richardson is the first to publish English-language novels using a stream-of-consciousness technique — *before* James Joyce, best remembered for popularizing this style of writing.

If, as Anderson and other *Little Review* commentators hoped, art criticism was to play a productive role then it is essential to consider, as poet Pierre Loving asks in the December 1919 issue, “Who’s the judge?” (47). In his editorial, entitled “Questionings,” Loving challenges the notion that anyone can claim the mantle of absolute truth with respect to questions of beauty or value in art, whether it be from the perspective of its author or subject. As he states, “[e]ven truth is prejudiced at times” (46). Loving poses his question in response to a debate that arose in the previous October issue. The debate was sparked by an editorial written by Parkhurst who used, as discussed earlier, a tombstone analogy in his evaluation of art critics. His article expresses his frustration with Anderson’s review of an orchestral performance she attended. In setting up his argument against Anderson, Parkhurst considers a spectrum of art criticism. It is defined on one end by a purely intellectual, rational approach employed by one who “records things as he thinks they are.” At the other end of the spectrum lies an entirely emotional, intuitive approach employed by the critic who “sings of things as he feels them” (31).

Parkhurst not only sets up this mind-heart binary, but pits one approach against the other as mutually exclusive. In so doing, Parkhurst both references and revives a centuries-old debate that smouldered in salon circles and which, as it so happens, also

arose over quarrels about musical performances — namely, French and Italian operas (Pekacz 277). Early in its history, in the mid-seventeenth century, salon culture recognized the *honnêteté*, someone whose tastes were deemed to have been mastered through contact with polite society, as a superior critic in aesthetic matters (Smith and Watson 279). The *honnêteté* judged by measures that were intangible, ethereal, or — to borrow a term Parkhurst uses to describe people led by instinct — “aromatic” (32). In direct contrast were the so-called “savants” and “pedants” who were people who had acquired so-called “bookish” knowledge. Such intellectuals were considered to lack the social experiences and grace, and therefore taste, associated with the upper echelons of society and were therefore deemed incapable of weighing in on issues of cultural importance (Pekacz 280). The role of a logically-minded savant or pendant was therefore limited to informing polite society, not dictating its preferences. The *honnêteté*’s judgment accommodated but “purified” such knowledge, guided by “natural sentiment” with only a cursory understanding of the facts, as supplied by the pedant or savant (Pekacz 281). Thus, in the earliest stages of salon history, culturally refined perspectives were deemed the superior skill set for critical evaluation. Further, by setting these approaches in opposition, there was an underlying assumption that a person could not concurrently possess the skills of the *honnêteté* and a pedant or savant.

Parkhurst’s historical allusion is not lost on Loving. In a separate article, also appearing in the December 1919 edition and entitled “Defending Margaret Anderson,” Parkhurst observes that “Mr. Winthrop Parkhurst sub-divides criticism into two forms [...] poets and pedants” (45). While Parkhurst rejects the notion that the approach of the *honnêteté* is superior to that of the savant or pedant, he does maintain the historically held

belief that the critic cannot simultaneously be guided by both intuition and pragmatism. Thus he levels the following criticism against Anderson for attempting to combine both approaches in her analysis of the arts: "If you think, it is only with your heart. If you feel, it is only with your brain." Her hybridized approach results in "critical monstrosities," says Parkhurst, based on his belief that when you select both approaches at once "the result [...] is a horrified hybrid that is neither flesh nor fowl" (31). Parkhurst conjures up a chimerical terror, the barren offspring that results, in this case, from an impossible mating of ideas. The implication is, of course, that Anderson's fiery evaluations of art are "critically sterile" and therefore, by extension, incapable of parenting ideas that will bear further fruit (October 1919 32).

Anderson follows Parkhurst's October editorial with a parenthetical comment that states that "[i]f one sets out to make a piece of criticism [...] it either turns out to be art, if he is an artist, or a valuation if he is merely a critic. Let it be one or the other" (33). She seemingly cedes to his position that, given that she is not an artist, she should stick to logic and leave more creative evaluations to those more artistically inclined. However, she concludes her response by delivering a thinly veiled mockery of her critic in the form of a witticism:

"I can certainly avoid any efforts in the direction of 'Hallelujahs in the temple of musical art,' etc. [E]very one can make such efforts, every one does make them, they become one of the horrors of existence. And because every one sanctions this kind of thing, and we loath it, the *Little Review* gains its reputation for [...] avoiding democracy in criticism" (sic) (34-35).

The efforts Anderson refers to involve the critical conflation of reason and emotion. Anderson clearly did not believe this to be the case. Her natural inclination, to welcome equally the strengths of both the *honnêteté* and *savant* or *pedant* into her critical discussions, indeed sets a centuries-old exclusionary wrong to a democratic right. Thus, in this one exchange between Parkhurst and Anderson, we see that — to answer Loving's question about who judges — the editorial policy at the *Little Review* both valued and gave favourable voice to those who could evaluate by applying a full range of human faculties. Nevertheless, and despite Loving's accusation, Anderson welcomed a democracy in criticism by allowing assessments such as Loving's to be published in the *Little Review*.

Anderson's "Hallelujahs" riposte to Parkhurst demonstrates a mixed style of counterargument that was commonly favoured in salons during the period of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. At that time, the emphasis trended away from earlier-favoured discourse that, while clever, remained politely amusing to conversations where a critic challenged his or her subject. Thus, salon participants "turned conversations into criticisms and *bon mots* into arguments," where *bon mots* refer to clever sayings or witticisms (Habermas 31). With this turn, salons were positioned to challenge wide-spread ignorance, promote wisdom, and lay the seeds for the Enlightenment. Thus Anderson's disputatious and sometimes sarcastic tendencies mirror this historical shift. She was motivated by a desire to rouse a post-Victorian society from its intellectual and creative slumber and awaken its members to entirely new ways of seeing.

## 5 Taking flight

Thus far, the analysis undertaken has consistently focused on addressing the first of two assertions that constitute this paper's hypothesis — namely, that the communal intellectual gatherings typified by the tradition of a salon serve as an archetype and theoretically productive tool for understanding the *Little Review*. Providing insights into the magazine's form and function, a range of examples were analyzed that consider how Anderson's circle of prototypical Modernists alternatively cast, advocated, exchanged, deflected, discredited, or substantiated a range of artistic and philosophical convictions, interpretations, and conjectures.

The second piece of the puzzle that needs to be addressed involves understanding how fruitful these exchanges were in terms of disseminating ideas to those outside a relatively small circle of people associated with or aware of the *Little Review*. Specifically, to what degree did *Little-Review*-hosted conversations “take flight?” Did they break, so to speak, the strong gravitational orbit that typically prevents new ideas from being cast aloft into public consciousness or, even more challenging, into the rarified realm of new and widely accepted schools of thought?

The odds are against most intellectual circles being able to make a convincing claim of widespread influence since, as Bilski and Braun observe, “[n]ot all salons were [...] influential—most were not,” especially since there was a tendency for salons to “close rank” (15). This is indeed true of the *Little Review*, which clearly wrote to an audience of fellow artists and supporters assumed to already be intimately familiar with the topics, titles, individuals, ideas, or events discussed. To clearly follow many of the discussions in the *Little Review*, the reader needed to possess a sophisticated knowledge of

art and literature. This approach was, however, a necessary first-step which helped guarantee future successes at spreading the Modernist word. A salon provides a sheltered and supportive trial space in which new talents and thinkers can gather and safely practise and develop their skills. Likewise, Anderson and Heap understood that their publication was providing a valuable space for a then small, selective group looking to find its collective wings. Anderson references this issue when she recounts Sinclair Lewis saying to her, “[y]ou’re too remote from the common herd, you believe in art for art’s sake, you ought to be interested in the psychology of the average person as well as that of the exceptional person.” Anderson’s response is telling: “I am always so bored by this argument that I ignore it” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 77). Her boredom was an intellectual response to a failed argument, one blind to the realities that champions of Modernism then faced. If the *Little Review* tried to appeal to the “common herd” it would have failed its important role as a nursery for new art forms. Thus, throughout the editions reviewed for this study, *Little Review* editorials are productively focused on speaking to an audience already in the know.

One amusing example is provided by Ezra Pound who occasionally appears incognito, as earlier discussed, in the *Little Review* under the pseudonym Sanders. Under this guise, Pound had a penchant for taking creative license with the English language. In the January-March 1921 edition, an article entitled “Sculpshure” appears. “My Khrist,” laments Pound, “Kant somethin’ be done about this man George G. Barnard. It aint Mikel Angerlo, an’ it aint even Rodin. It’s just mashed popatoz” (47). Bernard was an American sculptor who was heavily influenced by Auguste Rodin, widely considered to be the progenitor of modern sculpture. Pound takes issue with Barnard’s work and is

petitioning, through the *Little Review*, that his sculptural oeuvre be rejected as a respected representation of Modernism. The article provides none of this context, without which a lay audience would never have been able to make or tail of, nor engage with, Pound's remarks. However, at this stage in its evolution, Modernism was so new, so experimental that there were far too few people who, with only a passing interest in the arts, would have heard of, let alone have actively sought out, a magazine like the *Little Review*. As Pound's article demonstrates, this was a time when such basics as acceptable aesthetical standards were still being debated. The *Little Review* was therefore not operating in an environment that was ready for "prime time" and wisely focused its resources where they counted most, by engaging an audience of people already committed to, and often directly associated with, the cause. Thus one sees pieces in the *Little Review*, such as one by a Charles Henry in the April 1920 edition entitled "What about the Independent Exhibition Now Being Held on the Waldorf-Astoria Roof?" Likely an art critic, his report of the exhibition reads like a column in a society page. Many of the people he recounts seeing and with which he has "a giggle" are among the Modernist movement's most important leaders or contributors, including many *Little Review* contributors — people like Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Francis Picabia, Carl Van Vechten, and Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. Henry comments on the various works in the exhibition in a manner that assumes his reader has attended the exhibition, is intimately familiar with the pieces that were displayed, and knows the people he describes in attendance.

The editorial practices employed at the *Little Review* also assume a multilingual capacity on the part of readers and thus a sophisticated level of schooling outside the reach of all but a small, highly educated segment of society. The February 1918 edition

provides a particularly illustrative example. It features 61 pages of French poetry by different writers. Only brief English introductions or annotations are provided by Pound. German poems are published in March 1920 that are authored by Dadaist Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and expressionist/surrealist Iwan Goll, as well as in French by diplomat-cum-writer Paul Morand. In the Fall 1921 issue, painter and poet Francis Picabia contributes a highly entertaining piece, written entirely in French, and entitled “Fumigations.” His then-novel use of stream-of-consciousness expression, caustic digs at Romantics, and creative references to machine-age inspired themes of space engineering and colonization would have been lost on all but a minority of Americans readers.

Likely though, the goal was not to exclude English speakers as much as it was to engage, on occasion, with a more receptive international crowd that could help strengthen Modernism as a widespread phenomenon. Anderson says as much in a public appeal she makes to “a [New York] city of millionaires” in the April 1920 edition. In her appeal, entitled “Are there 1000 People in America,” she implores the wealthy to help finance her publication. One of her arguments is that the magazine has been able to “establish some intellectual communication between England, France and America by presenting the best of the creative work produced in those countries today” (62). Thus Anderson provides direct evidence that the *Little Review* both intended to, and succeeded at spreading, the word internationally to a circle of committed Modernists. Other theorists have confirmed this to be true. For example, Gammel quotes an advertisement for the *Little Review*, which appears in the *Greenwich Village Quill* in January 1918; to demonstrate that “the journal was ‘an attempt to break through the ingrained refusal of

thought in America and to establish some sort of intellectual community between New York, London, and Paris” (242). Golding corroborates Gammel’s argument by directly referencing the fact that the *Little Review* carried non-English works and states that “the *Little Review* can be said to have constructed a transatlantic axis for Modernism from [its] New York base [...] creating an additional centre for the movement outside of European capitals (50).<sup>5</sup>

Despite being, at times, inaccessible to a general audience the very fact that the conversations that took place in the *Little Review* were publically available and that the journal remained active for fifteen years with a circulation numbering in the thousands — strongly hints at a broader influence. Historically, the memorializing and public sharing of private salon discussions in print — through the distribution of journals, newsletters, or letters — was a tool that was relied on by the earliest salons to broadly transmit ideas. From the very beginning, the function and convention of personal correspondence and salon conversation intertwined (Bilsky and Braun 7). While the *Little Review*’s readership was small and select by mainstream publishing standards, this fact is a reflection and inevitable outcome of the *Little Review*’s transformative role as a radical pioneer. The magazine’s willingness to present experimental and therefore little-tested works by new artists guaranteed a small and select readership. Thus it will be argued that despite a small circulation, the *Little Review* exercised an influence that was sufficiently powerful that it eventually spread through to a general population. As will be demonstrated, it did so by exercising a dialogical influence, acting not in isolation but in relation to other little

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<sup>5</sup> The *Little Review* first published from Chicago but moved to New York with its March 1917 issue.

magazines, as theorized by Rainey who emphasizes the collective role of little magazines. The *Little Review* also had an outwardly rippling effect that allowed it to cast, over time, a wide and influential footprint.

In addition to Rainey, Golding documents that “the shaping of taste by Modernist magazines is a collective project, not a matter of the atomized influences of single publications,” where these publications “have their meaning and effect not in isolation but in relation to others” (Golding 43). Golding focuses on the relationship between the *Little Review* and a contemporary yet slightly more mainstream little magazine called the *Dial* which, notably, was founded by Edgar Allan Poe. Golding explains that while it is the *Dial* that consciously engaged in dissemination, it is Anderson’s and Heap’s publication that lay the all-important groundwork. The *Little Review* served as a testing and proving ground, absorbing the initial shocks of public disapproval. Further, by helping artists to develop and improve their Modernist skills, and by being one of the first out of the gate to champion Modernism, the *Little Review* made possible the *Dial*’s broader influence. Golding thus concludes that both journals played roles in the development of Anglo-American Modernism and that the “*Dial* helped to canonize what the *Little Review* helped discover, and thus in some sense the *Little Review* exercised its influence *through* the *Dial*” (Golding 45-46).

One of the first to promote new talents, the *Little Review* also helped acclimatize the public to Modernist works, thereby initiating a process of making them more acceptable. There are limits in terms of how fast artists can push a wider audience along the road to appreciating and buying into what amounted to a radical break with traditional forms of expression. Dismorr herself acknowledges this reality in the following

memorable quote, which appears in her earlier discussed article entitled “Critical Suggestions” in the September 1919 issue: “Art that is one step beyond the level of taste charms like a novelty, art that is two steps ahead hurts like an outrage” (34). She continues by saying that originality in the arts, even when it produces works of excellence, all too often elicits reactions that are austere and repellant. Her comments serve as a reminder that as the avantgarde, the *Little Review* was also an advancing guard, inching Modernism closer to a tipping point of receptivity at which point other promoters could further evolve such expressions into forms suitable for widespread acceptance. Indeed, Golding stresses that, on the heels of the *Little Review*, “the *Dial* put experimental Modernist work in a context that made it more palatable to a general audience” (Golding 41).

As with any dialogical dynamic, the influence cuts both ways. Anderson’s formative years, before she took on the challenge of editor at the *Little Review*, were spent working at the *Dial* when she was 21: “I was [...] taken on the staff of the *Dial* and initiated into [...] composition [...] proofreading, make-up. This practical knowledge was indispensable when I began the *Little Review*” (*My Thirty Years’ War* 28). Not only was Anderson shaped by her experiences at the *Dial*, but her readers were influenced by writers who also contributed to that magazine. For example, Anthony Wrynn appears in both publications and, notably, Kenneth Burke was both editor of the *Dial* and a prolific contributor to the *Little Review*. Burke’s writings fill more than 21 pages of the *Little Review* editions studied for this paper.

That the *Little Review* played an important role in providing Modernism an avenue from a niche to more mainstream readership is well known in the case of *Ulysses*.

This transmission happened so quickly with respect to Joyce and his works that Heap writes, in short comment that appears in the Reader Critic section of the Fall 1921 edition, “before we could revive from our trial for Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’ it was announced for publication in book form.” A successful, but battle-weary soldier, Heap adds, “We limp from the field” (112). Another example is found in the works of T. S. Eliot, whose poems and articles appear in the *Little Review* in 1917-1918. By 1922, the cultural landscape changed sufficiently that Pound confidently suggested that Eliot try to publish *The Waste Land* in *Vanity Fair*, a magazine that extends the *Dial*’s influence by introducing Modernism to a more fully mainstream readership. Both Anderson and Heap are aware of this domino effect they helped to set in motion. For example, in Anderson’s previously discussed round of visits to publishers to make her case for their advertising dollars, as recounted in her December 1919 article entitled “To the Book Publishers of America,” she says of the *Little Review*: “[w]e give you the best publicity in the world by publishing your authors before you bring them out in book form, and by stimulating discussion about them before their newest books are on the market” (66). In the September-December 1920 issue an unnamed reader critic submits the following letter, which is followed by Heap’s parenthetical comment. The letter and comment are worth quoting at length since they provide the most compelling account of Golding’s key assertion regarding the *Little Review*’s success at disseminating ideas:

Of course, you see the *Dial*? Why in the name of literature do they start a magazine at this date and follow directly in your footsteps? Can’t they do any pioneering of their own?

[Yes, we have had this called to our attention many times. The *Dial*'s contents page often reads like our letter-head; but we don't mind, and they seem to like it. There is room in America for any number of efforts of this kind. And it is especially fitting, now that we have prohibition, to have a de-alcoholized version of the *Little Review*.—jh] (93).

Heap's comments are well born out. However, a remarkably large number of *Little Review* contributors go on to make a name for themselves, not just at the *Dial* but across a broad range of American and European cultural landscapes. The people whose writings populate the pages of the *Little Review* are comparable to habitués, the regular attendees of a salon. A "successful salon depended on a core of habitués, a combination of close friends and persons of renown" (Bilsky and Braun 2). Indeed, *Little Review* contributors commonly associated with one another as friends, professional collaborators, and even lovers. The level of renown achieved by *Little Review* contributors is such that of the 111 artists and thinkers who appear in the editions researched for this paper, a simple Google search turns up biographical information on, or lists published or produced works by, all but 19 individuals. Nearly a full century after their appearance in the *Little Review*, these people's contributions to Modernist or other subsequent movements is such that information about them is still commonly sought and therefore easily obtained. Many were actively involved in, or were leaders of the many "isms" — movements that collectively define Modernism including Vorticism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Expressionism, Futurism, and Imagism. Some were progenitors of these movements such as Tristan Tzara who was one of the founders of Dadaism, Clement

Pansers who was also a leading Dadaist promoter, Stuart Davis who was a key advocate of Cubism as well as Modernism, and Phillipe Soupault who was instrumental in founding the Surrealist movement. The level of acclaim achieved by other *Little Review* habitués is such that “superstar” authors like William Faulkner, Thomas Wolf, and John Steinbeck attributed some of their inspiration to Sherwood Anderson (a regular contributor to the magazine). Gillaume Apollinaire, whose writings appear as often in the *Little Review* as those of Sherwood Anderson, collaborated with such artistic heavyweights as Pablo Picasso and Marc Chagall. Maxwell Bodenheim achieved international fame in the 1920s. Both Ralph Block and Ben Hecht became film producers who each won an Academy Award. Henry Bellamann’s novel *Kings Row* was adapted into a film of the same name (starring Ronald Reagan).

The remarkable achievements associated with those who participated actively in the *Little Review* circle must, as discussed, be viewed within a larger dialogical context. The *Little Review* did not exert its influence in isolation. This fact is exemplified, in part, by the degree to which its habitués were editors of, or were contributing to, other little magazines. As mentioned earlier, Kenneth Burke, who contributed articles to the *Little Review* in 1921 and 1922, was editor of the *Dial*. Wyndham Lewis — a common voice at the *Little Review* — was editor of the Vorticist magazine *Blast*, and Harriet Monroe, who appears in the magazine’s January-March 1921 edition, founded and edited *Poetry*. John Rodker, whose writing appeared repeatedly in the *Little Review*, started the Ovid Press, which published the likes of Pound, Elliot, and Wyndham Lewis. Beyond American borders, there were similar active circles active in countries such as the UK and France. Members of these groups regularly contributed works to the *Little Review*. Of the

numerous examples, notable names include Aldous Huxley, Clive Bell, May Sinclair (pseudonym for Mary Amelia St. Clair), Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Richardson, Wyndham Lewis, and Tristan Tzara.

The story of how Modernism took flight thus hinged on a collective effort spread out over a broad geographical, creative, and intellectual landscape. However, the *Little Review* was not just one of many vital cogs that concurrently supported a larger machine of cultural production. No other American little magazine of its day can lay claim to helping kick start this assemblage in motion in the first place at the level and scope achieved by the *Little Review*. It was Anderson's and Heap's visionary acumen that provided not just one of the first but also the most reliable, long-lived, wide-spread, and well-connected intellectual exchanges that eased the development and spread of the "gospel" of Modernism.

## Conclusion

As has already been attested to by other theorists, "the 'conversation' embodied in the *Little Review* became one of the forces that moved Modernism" (Marek 61). However, this paper is the first to focus exclusively on this little magazine and use the institution of the salon as the theoretical underpinnings with which to make this case. The *Little Review* provided an exemplary salonesque environment in which people could "talk" to one another and generate some of the earliest and most influential dialectic forces. These forces were absolutely crucial to the germination and promotion of a new international lingua franca for artists. In some ways, Anderson's and Heap's trailblazing efforts veered into an arena outside the normal rules of conduct for a salon. In such cases, unfailingly,

the uncompromising and militant approach they took, and the blatant opinions they expressed — sometimes at the expense of their own contributors — constituted a necessary front-lines, shock-troop tactic that, as I have argued, was necessary to wrench people's thinking in an entirely new direction.

There are, of course, limits within which this argument have been presented. There were important aspects of salon culture that were not considered including: equality and autonomy; civility; domesticity and the private sphere; femininity; performance; and politics. With regards to issue of performance, salons “offered a space for artists to perform and exhibit when suitable public venues did not exist or were inaccessible” (Bilsky and Braun 15). As such, they functioned as an “insulated trial space for debuts” and as a “laboratory of the new” (Bilsky and Braun 7). While this was an extremely important function served by the *Little Review*, this paper focused, almost exclusively, on the magazine's editorial writings. The much more extensive body of literary and visual arts works printed in the *Little Review* was rarely considered. With respect to the issue of equality, beyond being institutions in which women played leading roles, the “salon allowed women [...] to challenge openly the asymmetrical power relations between men and women” (Bilsky and Braun 14). The *Little Review* provides an exceptional example for its era of collaboration between female artists, yet this issue was not explored. Indeed, at a time when women were still largely regulated to second-class status, and were not commonly afforded opportunities to play leading roles, among the editions studied an impressive 30 per cent of the *Little Review* contributors were women. They contributed 33 per cent of the total volume of writings published in these editions.

Anderson's vivid and colourful behind-the-scenes recollections provided a substantial and essential source of information with which this paper's arguments were constructed, lacking are the equally important perspectives of her co-editor and co-salonière Heap. With the exception of *Dear Tiny Heart* — an annotated collection of letters largely describing day-to-day and personal issues between Heap and her friend Florence Reynold — an account of Heap's perspective is largely missing.

Not all editions of the *Little Review* were studied, representing an additional limit on the scope of research undertaken. While the *Little Review's* most active years, coinciding with some of the most important years of early Modernist development, were targeted (1918-1922) there is a one-year gap in editions reviewed, lasting from April 1918 to March 1919.

As a final point, one important issue that reflects on the *Little Review's* role in dissemination ideas, but which was not reviewed at length, was the censorship of *Ulysses* and subsequent trial. Others have researched this issue at length including, for example, Jackson R. Bryer.

Within the limits within which this paper's argument was considered, some of the initial ground work has been laid with which to more fully consider the largely unanalyzed and historical contribution the *Little Review* made to the arts. That the words exchanged at the *Little Review* took flight is without question. These paradigm-shifting sparks of enlightenment were cast in a multitude of directions and illuminated entirely new avenues with which artists and thinkers could explore ideas and express themselves.

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