



## ***Lolita***

(with others)

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Letter to the editor, *The Times*, 23 January 1959, 11e



*Sue Lyon and James Mason in the 1962 film*

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES*

23 January 1959

SIR, – We are disturbed by the suggestion that it may yet prove impossible to have an English edition of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*. Our opinions of the merit of the work differ widely, but we think it would be deplorable if a book of considerable literary interest, which has been favourably received by distinguished critics and widely praised in serious and respectable periodicals were to be denied an appearance in this country.

Prosecutions of genuine works of literature bring governments into disrepute and do nothing to encourage public morality. When today we read the proceedings against *Madame Bovary* or *Ulysses* – works genuinely found shocking by many of their contemporaries

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– it is Flaubert and Joyce whom we admire, not the Public Prosecutors of the time. Let good sense spare us another such case.

Yours, &c.,

J. R. ACKERLEY; WALTER ALLEN; A. ALVAREZ;  
ISAIAH BERLIN; C. M. BOWRA; STORM JAMESON;  
FRANK KERMODE; ALLEN LANE; MARGARET  
LANE; ROSAMUND LEHMANN; COMPTON  
MACKENZIE; IRIS MURDOCH; WILLIAM PLOMER;  
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