

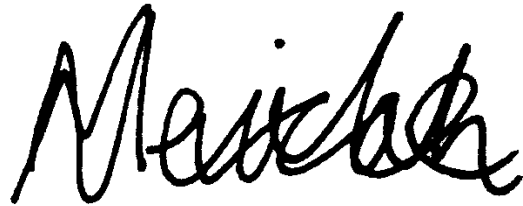
**'The Fiddling Footman': The Social History of Music-
Making among English and Welsh Servants in the
Long Eighteenth Century**

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Doctor of Philosophy, December 2020

Declaration of Authorship

I, Micah Anne Neale, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Micah Anne Neale". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Signed:

Date: 12/12/20

Abstract

This thesis investigates domestic servants' engagement with music, both as musicians and auditors, in England, Wales and Scotland, from 1690 to 1795. The methodological approaches are largely drawn from social history and cultural history, focusing on investigation of servants' lived experiences of music. This involves a variety of sources, including country house and parish archives detailing servants' lives, court records and published books which describe music-making from servants' perspectives, and notated vernacular music in print and manuscripts. Two case study microhistories, one of Erddig in Wales and one of the parish of St. Clement Danes, provide a focus for this archival research, and emphasise the importance of space and place to music-making. Music-making is seen to be a social technology and (in Lefebvre's terms) a spatial practice, in which space and status are generated, broken down, reconstituted or reinterpreted. The thesis will explore how music functioned in these ways for domestic servants, and what restrictions they faced in hearing and performing music. For instance, the penultimate chapter considers ballad singing and vernacular fiddling as technologies to exert control over space, and how domestic servants experienced and understood these musical practices. Considering music in this relational manner also illuminates its role as a tool to produce gender capital. The concept of gender as a form of capital, a transactable commodity, is elucidated in the final chapter (as a framework useful for the specific historical moment of eighteenth-century Britain): both domestic service and musical performance, considered in this framework, become transactions of power within a profoundly unequal economy of gender.

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List of Abbreviations

LLCDP	St Clement Danes Parish, Pauper Settlement, Vagrancy and Bastardy Examinations, 31 January 1739 – 5 October 1763, in Tim Hitchcock, Robert Shoemaker, Sharon Howard and Jamie McLaughlin, <i>et al.</i> , <i>London Lives, 1690-1800</i> (www.londonlives.org , v1.1 [April 2012], accessed 18/05/2017 – 5/12/2017).
OBPO	<i>Old Bailey Proceedings Online</i> (www.oldbaileyonline.org , v. 7.2, accessed 28/09/2016 – 03/05/2017; v. 8.0, accessed 20/07/2018 – 16/11/2020).
Hanway	Jonas Hanway, <i>Virtue in Humble Life</i> (London: J. Dodsley, 1774).
Haywood	[Eliza Haywood], <i>Present for a Servant-Maid: or, the Sure Means of Gaining Love and Esteem</i> (London: T. Gardner, 1743).
Macdonald	James Macdonald, <i>Travels in Various Parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, during a Series of Thirty Years and Upwards</i> (Dublin, P. Byrne et al., 1791).
Meldrum	Tim Meldrum, <i>Domestic Service and Gender 1660-1750: Life and Work in the London Household</i> (Harlow: Longman, 2000).
Steedman	Carolyn Steedman, <i>Labours Lost</i> (Cambridge: CUP, 2009).

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Soli Deo Gloria.

Frontispiece

Humourous LIFE of a FIDDLING FOOTMAN.

IN my younger days I was put an apprentice to a pewterer, but having unfortunately a most delicate ear for music, could by no means relish the perpetual din and clatter of my occupation. When the hours of work were over, I always flung away my hammer with disdain, and flew with rapture to my fiddle. To say truth, I never went to work without a tune in my head, and performed always more or less than my daily task, according to the quick or slow movements of the notes I hummed over. When my humour led me into an *adagio* or *piano* (as the fiddlers call it) the pauses were so long between the strokes I made, and my hammer fell so gently, that I worked to little purpose. But the next day I was perhaps the most expeditious labourer in the shop, and did great execution in a jig or a hornpipe.

I was no sooner out of my time, than I determined to renounce my trade for ever, and devote myself intirely to music. But finding it attended with little profit, not having interest enough to obtain a seat in the orchestra at either theatre, nor chusing to submit to the indignity of fiddling only at

occasional country-dancings in the neighbourhood, I was obliged to go to service. I had not been long in my first place, before my mistress's monkey escaped through the garret-window, to take the air upon the tiles. A ladder was immediately sent for, and I was ordered to catch him. Not being an adept in the art of climbing, I considered it as an hazardous enterprize. It affected my spirits, and I ascended the ladder to the tune of the Dead March in Saul. I gained the roof to this slow time, without making a single slip, secured the monkey, and had descended with good success to the second story, when thinking myself out of danger, and recovering my spirits on a sudden, I passed at once into a concerto of Corelli's. My feet corresponding with the rapidity of the measure, I made a false step in my hurry, fell in the area, and broke my leg. From this time I looked upon a house-ladder as properly the bricklayers gamut, and determined never to perform upon that scale for the future.

In three months I was discharged from the hospital, and taken into another service. My master was fond

of music, and at his country-seat was usually entertained with French horns at dinner. My attention to their playing was the occasion of my committing numberless blunders.—When he called for claret, I carried him small-beer; I either set down the plates with a flourish, or snatched them away with a jerk; and one unfortunate day, as I was introducing a dish of soup in a minuet, I inclined it a little below the level, and with a kind of femicircular sweep poured it fairly over him. I was dismissed upon the spot: and when I pleaded the true reason in my excuse, I was told, that such rascals as myself had no business with an ear for music.

In short, my case is particularly unhappy: though I am a better performer than most Footmen, I shall never be able to maintain myself by my fiddle; and am too much attached to it to get my bread

by any thing else. I shall be glad, however, if by your means, before I am quite starved, I may be of some use in general, as a warning to others.

My fraternity, in general, are too much addicted to music; and in every kitchen, at the polite end of the town, you are sure to hear either a French-horn or a Fiddle. Every black servant thinks himself qualified, by his complexion, to be an excellent performer on the first, and every white one, whose ear can distinguish between Bumper 'Squire Jones, and the Hundredth Psalm, has no doubt of excelling upon the last.—But you may assure them from me, that whatever their talents may be, they have but a poor chance to make any thing of them; and that, if they must be Musicians, the Salt-box, or the Platter and Spoon, are the properest instruments for a Servant.

ANTHONY SCRATCH.

Figure 0: Anthony Scratch, 'Humourous Life of a Fiddling Footman', The New London Magazine, 2, 10 (March 1786), pp.126-127.

Chapter 1: Introduction

'The Fiddling Footman'

My fraternity, in general, are too much addicted to music; and in every kitchen, at the polite end of town, you are sure to hear either a French-horn or a Fiddle. Every black servant thinks himself qualified, by his complexion, to be an excellent performer on the first, and every white one, who can distinguish between Bumper 'Squire Jones, and the Hundredth Psalm, has no doubt of excelling upon the last. – But you may assure them from me, that whatever their talents may be, they have but a poor chance to make any thing of them; and that, if they must be Musicians, the Salt-box, or the Platter and Spoon, are the properest instruments for a Servant.¹

So claims 'Anthony Scratch', the pseudonymous author of the satirical 'Humourous Life of a Fiddling Footman', published in *New London Magazine* in 1786. This piece was the starting point for my research: it provoked many questions that cut to the heart of several key controversies in the history of eighteenth-century music and popular culture. The fictional violinist is familiar with Corelli, Handel, and Italian terms of expression, but also folk songs, jigs, minuets.² He had not 'interest enough' (sufficient social capital) to get 'a seat in the orchestra at either theatre', but rejected 'the indignity of fiddling only at occasional country-dancings in the neighbourhood'. Only in domestic service (as a footman, one employed to wear an employer's livery and represent their prestige to the public) did he find enough leisure and opportunity to play as much as he wished – albeit with humorously deleterious effects on his employers and career – and companions to play it with. He paints a picture of urban kitchens filled with informal music-making, the repertoire a rich patois of elite and popular pieces, sacred and secular tunes, the personnel manservants both Black and white.

As a satire, this piece can (by itself) do little more than raise possibilities. The Fiddling Footman could be a vividly unreal figure for contemporary readers, or a figure designed to confirm their beliefs and prejudices about their servants, or an affectionate satire of a genuinely common set of life experiences. One hint as to its origins is that music is depicted as a distraction which drives the protagonist from a manual trade (as a pewterer) to

¹ Anthony Scratch, 'Humourous Life of a Fiddling Footman', *The New London Magazine*, 2, 10 (March 1786), pp.126-127.

² From p.126: 'When my humour led me into an *adagio* or *piano* (as the fiddlers call it) ... did great execution in a jig or a hornpipe ... ascended to the tune of the Dead March in Saul ... passed at once into a concerto of Corelli's'

the relative idleness of livery service, and even then, stops him from functioning as an effective employee. The tools of his trade, the salt-box, platter and spoon, are 'the properest instruments' for him to perform with. Such concern with capitalist productivity often came from London's mercantile classes (a sub-set of the ill-defined 'middling sorts'), as a criticism of the waste and inefficiency of the old aristocratic order.

However, if there were, indeed, a fraternity of fiddling footmen - or indeed servant musicians of any kind – their stories would provide insight into a number of important cultural processes in eighteenth-century Britain. One 'real' fiddling footman was James Macdonald, a footman orphaned by the battle of Culloden (1745), who learnt the fiddle during his childhood begging on the streets of Edinburgh, from a blind fiddler, accompanying him to weddings and dances.³ Climbing the ranks of service in large, aristocratic households, he was given extensive leisure as a footman in Dublin and London, attending the theatre and the pleasure gardens with his employer's unwanted tickets, socialising with fellow servants, and enjoying a rich consumer lifestyle.⁴ Yet, for some reason, he seems to have given up playing the fiddle himself: he does not mention ever playing it after his childhood, even in contexts where it would have been appropriate; this is a reminder that music-making was not universally admired in eighteenth-century Britain.

Servants making music, servants listening to and paying for music, servants learning music, illustrate the ways in which musical culture was reproduced and disseminated beyond the aristocracy and the small circle of professional musicians who serviced them. For instance, James Macdonald's life story demonstrates how his understanding of genteel urban music-making was mediated by formative years spent in very different circumstances. Servants were musically amphibious, experiencing not only the musical practices of their parents and friends, but also – often briefly and with particular restrictions on access – that of their masters. Yet his advancement represented a form of social mobility. Social mobility disrupted the processes of cultural reproduction that were vitally important to maintaining a stratified early modern society; hence why contemporary writers

³ Macdonald, pp.2, 13.

⁴ Macdonald, p.67.

denounced upwardly mobile servants so ferociously.⁵ This social mobility was also a spatial mobility, especially since most servants travelled considerable distances from their homes. They moved through a variety of spaces, engaging with different musics in different roles, encountering, modifying, disseminating and reproducing a wide range of musical cultures. Examining the musical lives of servants thus provides deep insight into the cultural processes and flows which generated eighteenth-century vernacular music-making, as well as the sociological rationale underpinning it.

Yet 'the Fiddling Footman' also demonstrates the difficulties of such a project. He is a caricature, with no real motivations or desires beyond playing music for its own sake; real servant musicians had reasons to play or sing rooted deeply in their relationships to others and their construction of themselves. Unfortunately, the legacies of servants were only occasionally preserved by masters. Sometimes contemporary writings about servants are careless, incidental mentions; sometimes descriptions of servants' behaviour are assembled for polemic purposes, divorced from their context; sometimes there are outright fabrications (only detectable through careful statistical analysis). This applies not only to satires, literature and drama, but also to newspaper reports, masters' diaries and letters, even court records. Hardly any of these sources concern themselves with the sociological or cultural meanings of the music servants made, listened or danced to; few, indeed, mention servants' engagement with music at all. Yet the number of ego-documents by servants – autobiographies, memoirs, letters, diaries, and the like – is very small. The reliability (and provenance) of those ego-documents which are extant is also questionable. Thus, sources produced by masters must be used, sensitively, to reconstruct their meanings.

The advantage of focusing on music-making among servants is that servants are seen to have some agency (although the limitations of servants' status also become apparent). Studies which focus on working conditions and working relationships, such as Tim Meldrum's *Domestic Service and Gender*, can often reveal much about servants' lives, including their social lives, and the ways they exercised agency to procure the best possible

⁵ For instance, see Haywood, p.22.

employment conditions.⁶ Yet studies of servants engaging in leisure activities, including music, go even further, showing servants' behaviour during the time they considered to be theirs (as opposed to their working time, which was considered to belong to their master).⁷ This thesis will explore both the ways in which servants used their agency to explore and engage with different musical practices, and the limitations placed upon that agency by constraints associated with race, gender and socio-economic class, as well as their occupational status.

The central purpose of this thesis, then, is to examine domestic servants' experiences of music in eighteenth-century Britain, whether they were making music themselves, dancing to it, listening to it, or even deliberately rejecting it. I wish to know how and why servants engaged with music in their daily lives; how they perceived that engagement as useful or meaningful (or not); and how musical engagement was restricted and facilitated by the social and spatial dynamics of service. These are the principal questions which this thesis aims to explore.

Theoretical and Disciplinary Positioning

There are weighty theoretical questions – ontological, philosophical, historical – which complicate (and hence enrich) a study of 'music' among 'domestic servants' in the 'eighteenth century'. Although this is a history involving *music*, the methodological approach and epistemology of traditional historical musicology is not especially useful in this particular case. Since it entered the academy in the late nineteenth century, historical musicology has been primarily concerned with developments in compositional style among works of the European classical canon.⁸ A clear continuity can be drawn between, for example, Hubert Parry's *The Art of Music*, which recounts the history of (implicitly European classical-canon) music as a narrative of distinct style periods progressing towards the present,⁹ and Richard Taruskin's *Oxford History of Western Music*, which recounts the history

⁶ Meldrum, p.20.

⁷ Haywood, p.6.

⁸ Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (Oxford: OUP [2013], 2014), pp.9, 16, 34.

⁹ C. Hubert H. Parry, *The Art of Music* (New York: D. Appleton, 1893), pp.4, 90-91, 364-368.

of European and American 'literate' (implicitly classical and mostly canonic) music as a narrative of distinct style periods, only slightly less teleological than Parry's.¹⁰ This approach to history encourages a fixation upon the musical 'work' (largely encoded in the notation), that borders on the ontological – the notation almost *becoming* 'the music' – a view challenged by a number of musicologists in recent years, including Nicholas Cook in *Beyond the Score*.¹¹

Much scholarly interest is still lavished on those elite musical traditions, such as grand opera, the orchestra, or the public concert, which are still markers of prestigious education and commensurately high status, and therefore earn a special regard from scholars encultured in these traditions.¹² However, historical musicologists of the early modern period and eighteenth century were quick to adopt alternative objects of study and different methods to approach them, producing a rich tradition of involved studies of urban soundscape, musical iconography, vernacular musics and performance practice.¹³ Although there is still a comparative imbalance in the field towards 'great works' such as Handelian opera,¹⁴ there are several musicologists and historians from whom this thesis can draw methodological and epistemological inspiration.

¹⁰ For instance, Volume 3 – covering the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – concerns itself primarily (as the chapter titles and preface show) with developments in canonic compositional style (such as the operatic genre, the rise and fall of *basso continuo*, etc.), with all else being rendered 'contextual'. Richard Taruskin, *Oxford History of Western Music, Volume 3: Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Oxford: OUP, 2008, online edition, available at www.oxfordwesternmusic.com, accessed 22/02/2018), pp. xxi-xxii.

¹¹ Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score*, pp. 14-15, 22.

¹² See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP [1979, 1984], 1996), pp. 2-4.

¹³ For instance, Reinhard Strohm's classic chapter 'Soundscape and Townscape' in *Music of Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford: OUP [1985], 1990), pp. 1-10; the tradition of musicological interest in Bach's and Handel's performance practice (and relevant organology) is venerable indeed, represented by Arthur Mendel's article 'On the Keyboard Accompaniments to Bach's Leipzig Church Music', *The Musical Quarterly*, 36, 3 (1950), pp. 339-362; a good example of eighteenth-century historical musicologists looking extensively at vernacular music practices is Jeremy Barlow, *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth's Musical Imagery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

¹⁴ It is notable that the journal *Eighteenth-Century Music* published not a single full-length article on vernacular or un-notated music in 2017 (14); most of its pages are devoted to opera. However, as David Hunter demonstrates, opera was created for, and generally experienced by, only a tiny fraction of the population of eighteenth-century London. David Hunter, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel* (London: Boydell, 2015), pp. 15-16.

For instance, any undue emphasis on musical notation, or the elite musical practices which relied upon notation for their transmission and production (as opposed to the vernacular musical forms explored in Chapter 4, where notation was an occasional *aide memoire* rather than a key component of the creative process), would not serve to answer this thesis's research questions. A more expansive understanding of music as an object of study is necessary to explore servants' engagement with it. Tia DeNora's book *Music in Everyday Life* describes music as 'an aesthetic technology, an instrument of social ordering'.¹⁵ Understanding music as a technology allows a powerful blend of phenomenological and analytical approaches. Just as a bridge is a unique technological object which serves a unique social function, but is based on patterns (written or unwritten) which can be explored to gain insight into the bridge's history and purpose; so too is a musical performance a unique technological event which serves a unique social function, but is based on patterns (the 'gist' of a tune, the score of a work, an improvisatory practice) which can usefully be explored. This thesis will explore several unique performances in this way, from the footman Ellis singing 'fine opera tunes' to his fellow servants in a London kitchen,¹⁶ to fiddlers playing at a country house's Christmas ball,¹⁷ to a convicted rapist singing to a maidservant whom he had compelled to accompany him.¹⁸ In each of these cases, this thesis will explore not only the unique functions which music might have had in these situations (such as generating markers of social or gendered status), but also what these situations might imply about other performances convergent in form or function – other songs in the townhouse kitchen, other fiddle dances in public settings.

Musical meaning is a vexed question more often assumed than theorised (by scholars in the tradition of Adorno, who imbue their hermeneutic readings with an implied universality).¹⁹ Considering music, as this thesis does, as a social technology does not necessitate treating musical sounds as more or less interchangeable, a 'blank slate' onto

¹⁵ Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), p.7.

¹⁶ See Chapter 2.

¹⁷ See Chapter 4.

¹⁸ See Chapter 5.

¹⁹ DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, pp.1-2.

which performers and audiences freely project meanings. Technology, or rather a user's relationship to it, has affordances and constraints, activities it facilitates and others it makes difficult:²⁰ similarly, a piece of music has affordances and constraints, social effects or actions it facilitates (such as emotions or dances) and others it does not. One relevant question for the historian is the degree to which these affordances and constraints are inherent to the psycho-acoustical perception of sounds, or a learned system of arbitrary (quasi-linguistic) symbols. Bourdieu described the symbolic, learned elements of music thus: 'the code, into which [artistic meaning] is encoded', which, for those without the 'cultural competence' to understand, 'a beholder ... feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythm'.²¹ Those musical qualities beyond what is socially determined, Bourdieu described as 'something ineffable, ... which communicates ... from body to body'.²² Robert Walser also cited the non-symbolic, non-representational elements of music in the body, describing musical meaning (in the context of the electric guitar) as a 'socially-guided bodily experience', which requires a 'preconceptual grounding' in bodily experience, as well as historical and cultural conditioning.²³ Music psychologist Barry Ross emphasises the way music as a signal has a direct effect on the minds of auditors, without necessarily being refracted through a linguistic system.²⁴ Musicians employ techniques which 'exploit our general, in-built responses to environmental stimuli', such as fast or slow tempo, loud or quiet dynamics.²⁵ Music thus produces an effect on the mind which conveys both abstract semiotic statements – about pitch, harmony, and so on – and mental states harder (or even impossible) to convey linguistically, such as emotions.²⁶ These sources of meaning in music are rarely accessible to the historian beyond the abstract semiotic level, which as Walser and Bourdieu would concur, frequently lack the context the historian would need to derive meaning from analysis.

²⁰ Thor Magnusson, 'Designing Constraints: Composing and Performing with Digital Musical Systems', *Computer Music Journal*, 34, 4 (2010), 62-73, pp.62-64.

²¹ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p.2.

²² Robert Walser, 'The Body in the Music: Epistemology and Musical Semiotics', *College Music Symposium*, 31 (1991), 117-126, p.118.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.119, 125.

²⁴ Barry Ross, 'The Causal-manipulative Approach to Musical Meaning', *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 48, 1(2017), 3-17, pp.6-7, 12.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.9, 11.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.13-14.

Restoring or reimagining that context requires a second theoretical framework with which to understand music, that is (to borrow Henri Lefebvre's terminology), as a 'spatial practice'. Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* discusses social spaces as a product, in Marxist terms, as something generated by particular social systems.²⁷ Space, in turn, generates social relations, so that the production of space is a process of social reproduction. A society designates, designs, encodes spaces as a means of preserving order, by setting particular spaces aside for the disruptive acts through which a society renews itself (such as elections, executions, coronations, and perhaps also births, deaths, marriages), and by spatialising individuals' lives, from birth to burial, so that the social system encompasses (perhaps encases) the whole of life.²⁸ This bears on the demarcation of 'public' and 'private' space, and the alleged formation of a new spatial order along gendered lines, both issues given particular attention in histories of the eighteenth century. Chapter 3, which uses the Westminster parish of St. Clement Danes as a case study, explores the power dynamics of the urban street from the perspectives of servants, relating individual agency to social control, and discusses the spatial practices which generated spaces *for* music in that parish. Chapter 4, an analysis of ballad tunes and dance tunes, emphasises how music functioned as a spatial practice in two distinct contexts: in dances at the country house, and in ballads in the urban street, and considers the spaces created *by* music.

A key 'conceptual triad' in Lefebvre's analysis of the production of space consists of: *spatial practices*, *representations of space*, and *representational spaces*. *Spatial practices* are the ways in which a group (a society or other configuration, on a micro or macro scale) produces and reproduces space in a particular place (or set of spaces in a set of places). Consistent spatial practices are that which allows a member of a group to negotiate a space, and perform social actions therein appropriately and effectively.²⁹ Music is evidently a spatial practice, in these terms. It can transform a barn into a barn-dance, a hall into a ball; creates spaces with special codes of behaviour, facilitating different types of social interaction and

²⁷ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell [1974, 1984], 1991), pp.26-27.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.32, 34-35.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.33, 38-39.

movement, and, indeed, limiting other interactions and movements. Steven Feld even claims, in corporeal terms, music creates a spatial alignment of bodies, by 'bringing a durative, motional world of time and space simultaneously to front and back, top and bottom, left and right'.³⁰ Like other spatial practices, music reacts to spaces changing, and changes in the ways spaces are represented and understood, just as music changes spaces and how they are understood and represented. Georgina Born discusses music's spatial role primarily in terms of demarcating different degrees and states of publicness and privacy, so that, for instance, the rise of audio recording and playback technologies accompanies capitalist privatisation of space and time.³¹ Like other spatial practices, music is a form of social reproduction (a point Richard Leppert also makes, referring to eighteenth-century England); its consistent regulation of movement, flow and feeling imposes values and hierarchies.³²

Lefebvre describes *representations of space* – which can be through a variety of media, from paintings to architectural descriptions to theories of space – as 'tied to the relations of production and the "order" which those relations impose'.³³ Those who control how space is represented are those who dominate the space (whether an individual, a class, or perhaps a number of stakeholders with conflicting interests), inscribing meaning, significance and behavioural codes into it. Lefebvre discusses at length the ways in which visual artists, architects, urban planners and such represent space; music also represents space, albeit very rarely in a literal sense.³⁴ 'Representation' need not mean encoded abstract propositional statements: musical representation is very often corporeal, a temporal and spatial alignment of mental states. The dance tunes discussed in Chapter 4 use patterns of cadences, sequences and phrases to regulate movement, so that the phrase structure becomes a representation of the dance itself. The more successfully a piece represents a given space, of course, the more successfully it produces it, and vice versa. It is no surprise, then, that those who control the

³⁰ Quoted in Georgina Born, 'Introduction', from *Music, Sound and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience*, ed. Georgina Born (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 1-70, p.8.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.25-26.

³² Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.2.

³³ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p.33.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.39, 41-43, 45.

music in a space also control how it is used, and by whom. The fiddler led the dance, the pub singer made the patrons their audience; the early nineteenth-century factory owner demanded silence of their employees, for to permit music was to cede control.³⁵

The third key category Lefebvre outlines is *representational space*, that is, the space as inhabited by its users (or members), enmeshed as they are in the symbolic codes inscribed by representations of space. Lefebvre calls it a ‘dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects’.³⁶ An eighteenth-century example might be a theatregoer attending a performance, whose perception of the physical space – the stage and set, the spatial disposition of the audience and performers – would have been entirely overlaid with the symbolic codes of both the theatre (as a highly-regulated space conveying prestige, sociability and hierarchy) and the performance (projecting multiple meanings on performers, props and set). Unlike the modern motorist, for instance, who has little influence over the architecture of the motorway or the very explicit symbolic codes that interpret it, the eighteenth-century theatre allowed different understandings of the space to coexist, not entirely peacefully. Audiences could riot, players leave their roles and social hierarchies be challenged by brute force.³⁷ Lefebvre’s categories become more complex, and somewhat less manageable, in the more conflicted – and more easily appropriated – social spaces of eighteenth-century Britain. This is, indeed, why Andrew Gordon prefers the emphasis de Certeau places on the interplay between the ‘totalising impulse behind the emergence of the concept of a city’ and ‘the everyday practices of a city’s users who appropriate the urban terrain’, to understand the early modern streetscape.³⁸ An analogy can perhaps be drawn between a city’s users and a performance’s audiences; and indeed, their imaginations do ‘seek to change and appropriate’ the meanings of the music. In the minds of

³⁵ Marek Korczynski, ‘Music at Work: Towards a Historical Overview’, *Folk Music Journal*, 8, 3 (2003), 314-334, p.321.

³⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p.39.

³⁷ Kristina Straub, ‘The Making of an English Audience: the Case of the Footmen’s Gallery’, in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830*, eds. Jane Moody and Daniel O’Quinn (Cambridge: CUP [2007], 2009), 131-144, pp.133-135.

³⁸ Andrew Gordon, ‘Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster (London: Routledge, 2016), 130-139, p.131.

his audiences, Handel's operas became everything from a crowning glory of English music to a symptom of feminising Italian influence; royal prestige or aristocratic decadence.³⁹ Since, however, the musical performers share the same space, constrained by the symbolic codes of musical practice, they are representing space while also bound *within* the representational space. It is a space they are producing, reproducing, reshaping, through their performance, but also one which they are inhabiting and whose codes they must continue to follow. Once a fiddler has begun to play a dance tune, there are only particular points in the tune when one can stop playing or change to a different dance; they also have limited autonomy to modify or ornament the tunes they play to maintain the 'dance' space. It is this circularity which makes music sufficiently stable to become a true spatial practice, allowing members of a society to interpret and negotiate its social geography.

Discussing music as a spatial practice, as well as a social technology, encourages a different perspective. At the most straightforward level, it connects music-making with the built environment and the landscape, an element of materiality which complicates music's technological functions. Not only do physical acoustics affect the relationship between a performer and their auditors, but the constructed spaces that are the sites of performance affect a performer's ability to create particular social effects. The most skilled fiddler cannot start a rowdy dance at a solemn funeral. These interactions between spaces are not always predictable, and the value of Lefebvre's conceptual framework is to begin to unpack the forces and processes that generate them. An emphasis on production, as in Marxist theory, encourages a thorough examination of the power relations underlying it – and this is the other major advantage of describing music as a spatial practice. While 'music as social technology' emphasises the agency of those using music (as performers, dancers, or listeners), 'music as spatial practice' emphasises layers of control, supremacy and hegemony (as well as resistance to them). Access to music was, in various ways, controlled in the eighteenth century, depending on an individual's social status and the space they were

³⁹ For an example of how Italian opera was seen as a feminising influence, see R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman: Being a Compendious View of All the Trades, Professions, Arts, both Liberal and Mechanic, now Practised in the Cities of London and Westminster* (London: T. Gardner, 1747), p.92; for more of the complex politics of Handel, see William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: a Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp.224-226, 228.

attempting to perform in (or hear someone else perform). That reflects the control music allowed a performer to exercise over a space, and the value an auditor derived from hearing an exclusive performance. An obvious instance of this is the theatre, for which tickets had to be obtained and in which certain events were reserved for people of elite rank.⁴⁰ Yet even in the public house, musical activities were restricted. London alehouses were not as exclusively male as Paris *cabarets*, where women were beaten for daring to enter, but there is little doubt that they were spaces controlled by men.⁴¹ As Chapter 5 discusses, women faced sexualisation, opprobrium and even risked assault for singing in them, even when sanctioned by a man. Music was a valuable and widely accessible technology, but the restrictions and implicit codes governing music's use are better understood in terms of space and power.

Yet music (as a social technology and a spatial practice) 'among domestic servants' is also terminology which merits some examination. 'Servant' has been used in employment law from medieval times to the present day, and in the eighteenth century was in widespread use to describe any employee – even in a thoroughly non-domestic context like the theatre – who was not an apprentice or journeyman. Slaves were also described as 'servants', euphemistically.⁴² In an era where the home and the workplace were often one and the same, there is good evidence that many servants in working households assisted with their master's trade as well as caring for the family. Nevertheless, Tim Meldrum maintains that 'domestic servant' is a reasonably defined and coherent category, even in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as someone who performs 'housewifery', the contemporary term for housework.⁴³ However, some manservants in grand houses did not perform any meaningful housework (notably footmen); yet since they did not work in any kind of trade either, they are also best understood as 'domestic' servants. This thesis will take a relatively inclusive approach to 'domestic service', encompassing every servant – that is, a hired, salaried worker – who lived in and probably assisted with housework, even

⁴⁰ Hunter, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel*, p.68.

⁴¹ Thomas Brennan, *Public Drinking and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988), pp.147-149; Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830* (London: Longman, 1983), p.225.

⁴² Meldrum, pp.25-26.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp.27-28.

where they also probably assisted with their master's trade or occupation. This will not include hired 'servants' in large, non-domestic settings like playhouses or dockside sugar refineries, since they were not living in their masters' homes. Defoe's understanding of 'menial servants' is a good definition of the servants this thesis will focus on:

Menial Servants such as Cooks, Gardeners, Butlers, Coachmen, Grooms, Footmen, Pages, Maid-Servants, Nurses, &c. all kept within Doors, at Bed and Board; that is to say, such as have Yearly or Monthly Wages, with Meat, Drink, Lodging, and Washing.⁴⁴

Music 'among' domestic servants, as my wording thus far has implied, does not necessarily signify music-making *by* servants. Such music making is, of course, included, but as important (to understand how music functioned as a social technology and a spatial practice) is to study the music servants *experienced*, in whatever form. Servants encountered ballad singers in the street, dances in pubs, (allegedly) 'hops' in kitchens, orchestras in pleasure gardens, even – for a lucky few – operas in theatres,⁴⁵ and all of these experiences helped form an awareness of music as a spatial and social practice: how to negotiate a musical space with competence, and make appropriate music themselves. Nor is it always necessary to establish that a servant, specifically, encountered a particular kind of music. Some kinds of music (psalms, songs, nursery rhymes, ballads, especially) would have been transmitted by parents, friends, acquaintances, and the like; and given that most servants left domestic service for other occupations upon marriage, a fair number of Britain's publicans, artisans and tradesmen had most likely been servants at some time, and had children who might well enter service. Any musical knowledge sufficiently widespread among the general population would undoubtedly be encountered by servants. Maintaining a focus on servants, nonetheless, is essential to grounding this inquiry in a concrete set of

⁴⁴ [Daniel Defoe], *The Behaviour of Servants in England Inquired Into, with a Proposal* (London: H.b Whittridge, n.d. [1726]), pp.8-9.

⁴⁵ For instance, two maidservants listen to a street singer in OBPO t17541204-18; J. J. Hecht provides a few examples of servants organising and attending 'hops', or dances, in *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), p.133; Eliza Haywood discusses servant maids attending pleasure gardens, p.40; David Hunter has found evidence of employers buying tickets for their livery servants, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel*, p.68.

social, geographical and cultural conditions (since some studies of popular culture have suffered from vagueness in this regard).⁴⁶

This thesis will not be able to establish whether a description of a musical experience among servants was 'representative', that is, how typical a given historical servant's musical experiences (whether those were recorded in an individual anecdote or a standardised collection) were of the demographic they are assumed to represent. This is partly because representativeness becomes less useful the further the historian moves from demographics and other easily quantified data. Although some sources, such as newspaper advertisements for public concerts, have facilitated useful quantitative study,⁴⁷ musical performance is often inconsistently documented in the eighteenth century, particularly beyond elite and expensive musical practices such as opera or public concerts; quantitative analysis is rarely possible for vernacular musical performances' participants or repertory.

In addition, with those experiences which had an outsized impact on the libidinal economy – the imaginations of servants and discourses about and among them – the relative occurrence of actual experiences would be less important.⁴⁸ For instance, as Tim Meldrum explains, a maidservant being sexually assaulted by her master was probably not entirely typical (although, I suspect, distressingly common). Meldrum treats the rare cases of servant rape as horrific, but more of an exception than a rule: 'to subsume servant sexuality under categories of experience defined by vulnerability and oppression alone is to distort the historical record'.⁴⁹ Yet a pervasive sense of sexual vulnerability does not require sexual violence to be a universal – or even typical – experience. Instead, like graphic, violent eighteenth-century criminal punishments, the fear arises from the 'visible intensity' of the violence (and its relative social legitimacy) rather than its certainty.⁵⁰ The same is true of

⁴⁶ Emma Griffin, 'Popular Culture in Industrialising England', *The Historical Journal*, 45, 3 (2002), 619-635, pp.628-629.

⁴⁷ Catherine Harbor, 'The Birth of the Music Business: Public Commercial Concerts in London 1660-1750' (PhD thesis: 2012, Royal Holloway University of London); Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: CUP [2004], 2006).

⁴⁸ For a discussion of the meaning of the 'libidinal economy', see Chapter 5.

⁴⁹ Meldrum, pp.102-104.

⁵⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books [1977], 1995), p.9.

operatic performance, which can only have been directly experienced by a minority of servants, but which – as the rest of the thesis will show – had a profound impact on the repertoires of vernacular performance, and the ways most servants heard and discussed music.

Further, the nature of musical experience militates against the idea of a ‘typical’ musical experience. Even within narrow demographic and sociological subdivisions, individuals have varying levels of interest in music, so that, for instance, dilettantes such as Lord Chesterfield considered other interests more valuable for his son to cultivate.⁵¹ This means that seeking a ‘representative’ musical experience would be almost meaningless, obscuring the participation of the musically inclined behind a diluted, artificial construction of ‘mass culture’ characterised primarily by disengagement.⁵² Further, every musical performance is a unique event, leaving no trace save in the memories of those who experienced it. There are elements held in common between performances, such as instruments, tunes (aurally transmitted or otherwise), performance conventions and traditions of reception. Yet music, as a social technology, derives much of its functionality from unique contextual and relational elements: the attitude of the auditor, the demeanour of the performer, the expressive crack in the voice, the auditor’s past memories of the song. Eighteenth-century accounts of music-making – to take a typical example, ‘we had some musick in the Hall; three of the princess's servants play extremely well’ – reflect this, in their emphasis on personnel and overall effect.⁵³ Indeed, eighteenth-century observers tended to note the personnel with far more care than the musical sound, unless they had an unusual interest in music as an academic and aesthetic practice. When Mary Blandy tells a story of ghostly midnight music after the anniversary of her mother’s death, she simply calls it ‘music’, and the various members of the family’s inability to describe it to each other in more

⁵¹ Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters Written by Lord Chesterfield to his Son*, ed. Charles Sayle (Felling-on-Tyne: Walter Scott [1909]), p.129.

⁵² Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale UP [2001], 2002), pp.12-13.

⁵³ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, diary, August 1766, *The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), p.31.

precise terms causes misunderstandings and familial rifts.⁵⁴ Assessing whether these situational interpersonal experiences of music (which each merit close examination as anecdotes) were 'typical' would probably produce little insight.

Instead, it would be better to discuss what musical experiences were likely to be *accessible* to domestic servants, and different subcategories thereof. 'Accessibility' in this context refers to the degree of effort a domestic servant (or domestic servant of a particular demographic category, such as manservant/maidservant/charwoman) needed participate in, or audit, a performance in a particular space. To take the furthest extremes of 'elite' and 'vernacular' traditions: insurmountable difficulties, such as those faced by a maidservant who wished to join an aristocratic glee club, would make the level of effort required impossibly large. Active participants in glee clubs (imitating the Earl of Sandwich's Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch Club, which began in 1761)⁵⁵ were exclusively male, and such clubs became sites of high-level networking among the upper echelons of the local ruling classes, a music-centred and -generated space in which women were only conditionally allowed access as audience members on particular nights, and those of low status had no position.⁵⁶ In contrast, some vernacular forms of music required little effort for anyone to access, such as ballads sung in the street or the 'rough music' played at weddings.⁵⁷ Conversely, any suffering imposed upon those who engaged in music-making, such as the degradation ballad singers were frequently subject to, can also be understood as a vast increase in the effort and dedication required to cultivate that musical skill. Most of the musical experiences that servants had required a certain degree of effort, needing a domestic servant to dedicate a certain quantity of their time and money to music-making, but did not demand unusual levels of skill or determination.

⁵⁴ Mary Blandy, *Miss Mary Blandy's own Account of the Affair Between Her and Mr. Cranstoun, from the Commencement of their Acquaintance...to the Death of her Father* (London: A. Millar, 1752), pp.27-32.

⁵⁵ Viscount Gladstone, 'The Story of the Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch Club', in *Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch Club: Three Essays towards its History* (London: Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch Club, 1996), 11-66, p.13.

⁵⁶ Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics*, pp.147-149, 193.

⁵⁷ For 'rough music', see Tim Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 3 (2005), 478-498, p.487.

This thesis, then, is a social and cultural study in music history. Music will be examined as a social technology – a useful practice, imbued with affordances and limitations, that develops in response to new patterns of usage and can spread to new contexts. Music also generates contexts for social action: it is a spatial practice. The ways in which music produces and shapes spaces will be studied, paying attention to issues of control, power and status. The human focus for this inquiry will be domestic servants: the music they made, danced to, heard, and encountered through friends and relatives. Different forms of music, in different contexts, were accessible to different domestic servants to different degrees. The benefits conferred by music also depended on the status of the participants and the site of performance, complicating a form of music's effects as a technology, and indicating why servants might have paid the costs of access (economic, social or reputational) for some species of music more often than others. By studying the sociological contours, social spaces and cultural dynamics of servants' lives, and how music fitted into and indeed shaped them, this thesis will provide insight into music as technology and as social practice. In turn, studying music in this way will illustrate the functioning of several important cultural processes in eighteenth-century Britain.

Grand Narratives in Eighteenth-Century Historiography

The 'eighteenth century' referred to in my title is an arbitrary numerical division, but also the century which joins the 'early modern' to the 'industrial' eras, in conventional historical periodisation. For that reason, economists and economic historians have been making grand claims about eighteenth-century labour relations – including service relationships – since the time of Engels, for whom the eighteenth century was almost a pre-lapsarian state, before the growth of the heinous factory system.⁵⁸ For E. P. Thompson, too, the end of the eighteenth century meant the birth of the factory, the expansion of discipline at work, and the surrender of the worker's control over the time and pace of their work.⁵⁹ Following Thompson's

⁵⁸ Frederick Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844, with a Preface written in 1892*, trans. Florence Kelley Wischnewetzky (London: George Allen and Unwin [1892], 1943, digitised, available www.gutenberg.org), pp.1-4.

⁵⁹ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books [1968], n.d.), pp.198-199, 203.

Marxist narrative, the underlying premise of most twentieth-century social historical commentary is that, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, the site of production shifted from the home towards larger workshops, mills and factories. This alleged fundamental change in the space of production both reflected and generated a rebalancing of power away from heads of (manufacturing) households towards a new kind of employer, the capitalist: this, combined with the rise of investment banking, was the 'birth of capitalism'.⁶⁰ However, Hans-Joachim Voth's quantitative study of working hours, based on *Old Bailey Proceedings* testimonies, casts doubt on the details of this narrative. His large samples of urban workers are working startlingly longer hours in 1800 than in 1750 (mostly at the expense of feast days and Monday holidays), even though a similar proportion are unskilled workers (such as factory employees) and more are self-employed artisans (more likely to work at home).⁶¹ This increase in working hours is not, therefore, caused by the growth of factories, but a simultaneous trend, perhaps indicating that 'proletarianisation' and the expansion of workplace discipline was not a result of industrialisation but that both were facets of the same macroeconomic shift.

The shift towards larger workshops also meant a change in the way employment relations were codified. Several writers, such as Leunig, Minns and Wallis, have drawn attention to, and provided some reasons for, the slow but terminal decline of the apprenticeship system over this period, the number of apprenticeships falling in both absolute and *per capita* terms.⁶² Instead, an increasingly large proportion of London's workers were employed as journeymen (graduated apprentices unable to become masters) or as 'hired servants' (a general term for employees not to be confused with specifically domestic servants).⁶³ The changing face of manufacture in eighteenth-century Britain caused many profound sociological effects, heightening gender segregation,⁶⁴ increasing the

⁶⁰ Henry Heller, *The Birth of Capitalism: a Twenty-First Century Perspective* (Pluto Press, 2011), p.244.

⁶¹ Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Time and Work in Eighteenth-Century London', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58, 1 (1998), pp.29-58, p.31, 35-36, 38, 45.

⁶² Tim Leunig, Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, 'Networks in the Premodern Economy: The Market for London Apprenticeships, 1600-1749', *The Journal of Economic History*, 71, 2 (2011), 413-443, p.420.

⁶³ Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class* (London: Methuen, 1989), p.26, 28-29.

⁶⁴ Tim Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny in the Life of John Cannon, 1684-1743', *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), 25-43, pp.41-42.

importance of provincial towns, especially in the north of England,⁶⁵ and – along with increasingly systematic colonial exploitation – creating a new ‘middling sort’ with markedly consumerist behaviour.⁶⁶ This, along with Lord North’s manservant tax – which was exempted for servants who assisted with business rather than being purely domestic workers – created an increasing theoretical disjuncture between the economies of service and manufacture, something which Carolyn Steedman examines in *Labours Lost*. This disjuncture continued in the works of Adam Smith and Karl Marx, Steedman argues.⁶⁷

The alleged shift in employment relations and working conditions has important implications for the study of domestic service in this era. For instance, the move away from the household as primary site of production, and the consequent disjuncture between the economies of goods and services, implied greater gender segregation in workplaces. This, Bridget Hill contends (following Hall and Davidoff), included domestic service, which became increasingly female over the course of the century, accelerated by growing numbers of ‘middling’ households employing one servant.⁶⁸ However, this narrative is incompatible with the demographics of domestic servants in Tim Meldrum’s study of 1,500 servants who testified in the London consistory court between 1660 and 1750, in which around 81 per cent of all London servants were women. This is consistent with previous studies of London domestic service in the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries, and also with the 1851 census.⁶⁹ Hill therefore casts doubt on the representativeness of this sample and other sources consistent with it, drawing attention to estimates of the demographics of farm servants, which show a radically different picture (despite the overlap between farm service and domestic service).⁷⁰ Hill also criticises the practice of systematically discounting those male servants who were more likely to be apprentices than domestic servants (as Peter Earle, one of Meldrum’s corroborators, does), and suggests that the demographics of

⁶⁵ Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp.2-3.

⁶⁶ Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Classes*, p.10.

⁶⁷ Steedman, especially pp.36-64.

⁶⁸ Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.35, 37.

⁶⁹ Meldrum, pp.13, 15-16; Hill, *Servants*, p.39.

⁷⁰ Hill, *Servants*, p.36. Hill was responding to conference papers given by Meldrum in 1993 before the publication of his book (based on previous PhD research) in 2000.

London service were always anomalous.⁷¹ However, Hill's only positive evidence for the feminisation of domestic service is an assertion that Jonas Hanway was 'looking to the future' when he stated, in 1760:

if *Women* serve for less Wages than *Men*, or if *Men* should continue to be wanted for *war*, in order not to distress *Agriculture*, or *Manufactories*, women will be more courted, for *domestic service*.⁷²

This assumes that Hanway's ideas about what 'domestic service' entailed was the same as a modern social historian's; that he had an accurate understanding of the contemporary demographics of domestic service; and that the trends he prognosticated came to pass.⁷³ Hill theorises that a feminisation of domestic service would make sense given the economic and social changes of the period. Nevertheless, where quality evidence (such as Meldrum's) exists, it complicates and – in this case – probably contradicts the grand narrative of the 'feminisation' of domestic service.

Domestic servants occupied a unique position in terms of family relationships, living in the household of another, and this implied a different relationship to sexuality also. Grand narratives about sexuality, gender and the family have one concrete, substantial piece of evidence which requires explanation. Both birth rates and rates of illegitimacy (the proportion of children born outside wedlock) increased substantially compared to the seventeenth century, a datum which is very well established, at a national level.⁷⁴ Explanations, however, vary among historians. Among economic historians, it used to be considered sufficient that economic prosperity had grown among a large cross-section of the population. However, there are two facts which this cannot account for. Firstly, prosperity increased enormously during the second half of the seventeenth century, with little corresponding rise in birthrate.⁷⁵ Secondly, the increase of the bastardy rate is very telling.

⁷¹ Hill, *Servants*, pp.41-42.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp.35-36, 37-38.

⁷³ Whereas, as L. D. Schwarz suggests, contemporary estimates of domestic servant numbers fed into moral panic and were wildly inaccurate. Leonard Schwarz, 'English Servants and Their Employers during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Economic History Review*, New Series, 52, 2 (1999), pp.236-256, pp.237, 240.

⁷⁴ Tim Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex in Eighteenth-Century England', *History Workshop Journal*, 41 (1996), 72-90, pp.74-75.

⁷⁵ Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex', p.75.

These births were not planned, economically rational decisions (often coming as a horrible shock to the women involved and ruining their livelihoods).⁷⁶ Economic prosperity certainly influenced the sociological changes involved, but it does not seem a sufficient cause in itself.

Thomas Laqueur suggests on the basis of literary evidence that the increasing birthrate reflects a change in sexual practice, which in turn reproduces a change in how gender is constructed. For Laqueur and his followers, there was at some point between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries an increasing coherence between gender and sexuality.⁷⁷ Whereas gender, in particular masculinity, had previously been performed principally through patterns of gesture, body language, dress and other behaviours, by the later eighteenth century it was linked almost exclusively to sexual behaviour, specifically, one's relation to penetrative heterosexual sex.⁷⁸ Randolph Trumbach, among others, suggest there is reason to believe that the 'molly' subculture developing among the urban poor of London and Amsterdam caused a backlash which helped to catalyse these changes.⁷⁹ Maleness allegedly came to be defined by voracious, unrestrainable sexual appetite for penetrative sex with women. Women, on the other hand, were increasingly desexualised, considered incapable of orgasm, and responsible for guarding themselves against male approaches.⁸⁰ Mollies and other 'sodomites' had to be part of a separate gender category, with 'male' bodies but a sexual role that was allegedly 'male' in the sense of actively desirous and penetrative, but also 'female' in the sense of receptive.⁸¹ This made them continue to be a threat to heterosexual society, but providing them their own niche allowed them to be dehumanised and singled out, an external threat to the gender system rather than a deep insecurity at the heart of it. Within musicology, interesting work has been done interpreting contemporary reactions to castrati within a similar framework, whose relation to systems of

⁷⁶ Meldrum, pp.110-116.

⁷⁷ Karen Harvey, 'The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 45, 4 (2002), 899-916, pp.900-901, 906.

⁷⁸ Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, 'Introduction', *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, 1-22, p.8.

⁷⁹ Hitchcock and Cohen, 'Introduction', pp.4-5.

⁸⁰ Randolph Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity in Modern Culture: Male Sodomy and Female Prostitution in Enlightenment London', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 2, 2 (1991), 186-203, pp.191-192, 195.

⁸¹ Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity', p.193.

gender and sex was complicated by anti-Italian prejudice.⁸² As Chapter 5 will demonstrate, these changes had a profound relevance to domestic servants' lives.

Although some of the details of this narrative have been contested – for instance, the degree to which adulterous males were held liable for sexual misbehaviour – there is compelling evidence for every aspect of this change which can be empirically tested.⁸³ The societies for the reformation of manners did indeed instigate a moral panic about mollies in the first half of the eighteenth century, leading to many prosecutions for 'sodomy' through their network of informants and salaried agents.⁸⁴ The difficulty of prosecuting rape cases which Laurie Edelstein draws attention to, in which the burden of proof fell on women to prove that they had put up sufficient physical resistance, and through which women would lose reputation even in the event of a conviction, testifies to the widespread belief that men were not responsible for their sexual behaviour – women were responsible for resisting them.⁸⁵ A huge array of literary sources also show the trace of this powerful conflation of gender and expected sexual behaviour, such as in servant advice manuals (see Chapter 5). More difficult to establish are more abstract claims about categories of sex and gender. The language contemporary writings use to describe different bodies, sexual practices and genders does not significantly change in the contemporary literature I have read; perhaps this is why Michael McKeon, in his review of Laqueurian scholarship, describes the timing of the paradigm shift as 'hard to pin down'.⁸⁶ Chapter 5 discusses the impact of gender on domestic servants, who were overwhelmingly young, female and somewhat vulnerable to abuse.⁸⁷ It will also describe how music could be used to produce gender capital for

⁸² For example, Xavier Cervantes, ' "Tuneful Monsters": The Castrati and the London Operatic Public 1667-1737', *Restoration and 18th Century Theatre Research*, 13, 1 (1998), pp.1-24.

⁸³ For example, Jennine Hurl-Eamon, 'Policing Male Heterosexuality: The Reformation of Manners Societies' Campaign against the Brothels in Westminster, 1690-1720', *Journal of Social History*, 37, 4 (2004), 1017-1035.

⁸⁴ Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'Sex and Societies for Moral Reform, 1688-1800', *Journal of British Studies*, 46, 2 (2007), 290-319, pp.302-304.

⁸⁵ Laurie Edelstein, 'An Accusation Easily to be Made? Rape and Malicious Prosecution in Eighteenth-Century England', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 42, 4 (1998), 351-390, pp.364-366, 368, 371, 372, 373-374.

⁸⁶ Michael McKeon, 'The Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Sexuality Hypothesis', *Signs*, 37, 4 (2012), 791-801, p.793.

⁸⁷ Meldrum, pp.16-17.

participants in musical activity, for instance, men's musical performance projecting a sense of active sexuality and public confidence.

This illuminates some of the dynamics underlying the relationship between servants and 'family', another concept which is supposed to have radically shifted over the eighteenth century. Kate Retford suggests a clear move among the aristocracy towards viewing family as a loving, sentimental bond rather than the bearers (and producers) of dynastic prestige.⁸⁸ This necessarily meant a changing role for servants in aristocratic portraits. While they had often been in view simply to establish the superior prestige of the aristocrats, they were often either absent in the new, more intimate family portraits, or appeared as companions, charitably placed almost level with their beneficent masters (as I confirmed with a perusal of images of servants in the National Portrait Gallery's Heinz Archive).⁸⁹ David Dabydeen highlights the former aspect of portraiture – servants appearing as accessories to their masters' prestige – with particular reference to Black servants.⁹⁰ Servants were, in larger households, clearly represented as inferior and dispensable, only occasionally being represented as companions much closer to friends than family. Exploring servant portraiture in eighteenth-century Britain will form an important part of Chapter 2, with reference to the unique servant portraits of Erddig.

However, portraiture can only testify to concepts of family among masters of the very highest socio-economic status.⁹¹ The evidence is somewhat more mixed for those of lower status. Of course, service had always been drawn in sharp contradistinction with apprenticeship: apprentices were effectively adopted into the family for the period of their indenture, and professionally were a kind of 'successor' to their masters; hired servants were temporary workers, engaged usually for short periods, to assist with menial tasks. Tim Meldrum nonetheless maintains that servants were considered part of the 'family' in

⁸⁸ Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2006), pp.1-4.

⁸⁹ Retford discusses the gradual disappearance of images of nursemaids, for instance, in *The Art of Domestic Life*, p.85.

⁹⁰ David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art* (Kingston-upon-Thames: Dangaroo Press, 1985), p.26.

⁹¹ Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, p.15.

numerous contexts, especially in discussions of a father's headship over the household (and a mother's dominion over her servants).⁹² Further, smaller households with one or two servants could sometimes grow to regard their servants with familial affection, and treat them accordingly.⁹³ Whether such treatment was the exception or the rule, however, remains to be seen.

Most masters, of course, were not aristocratic or the idle rich, but working artisans, tradesmen, shopkeepers, farmers, and others affected by production (allegedly) moving from the household to the workshop or factory.⁹⁴ The period which Meldrum studies, from 1660 to 1750, would not have seen the effect of these changes, especially in London, where the structure of employment seems to have remained quite stable even in the second half of the century.⁹⁵ In the early stages of industrialism, too, according to Douglas Galbi's study of early nineteenth-century cotton mills, family ties continued to be important in the workplace even as the site of production shifted to the factory.⁹⁶ Meldrum, therefore, understandably sees continuity rather than change in master/servant relationships, once again contradicting previous narratives. Bridget Hill, following E. P. Thompson, contends that there was a marked change in the relations of domestic service, away from a patriarchal model of the household – with all of the moralism and unequal, but reciprocal duties that implies – towards a more capitalist, cash-based economy.⁹⁷ One particular flashpoint in this alleged progression was the (failed) attempt to abolish vails in the 1760s, as the beginning of a longer campaign of organised opposition from employers to customary systems of vails and perquisites (respectively, tips given by visitors to the household, and benefits in kind considered the rightful property of the servant, such as meat carcasses or old clothes).⁹⁸

⁹² Meldrum, p.66.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.90.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁹⁵ Voth, 'Time and Work', pp.44-45.

⁹⁶ Douglas A. Galbi, 'Child Labor and the Division of Labor in the Early English Cotton Mills', *Journal of Population Economics*, 10, 4 (1997), 357-375, pp.358, 365; also see Craig Calhoun's discussion of Smelser's (dubious) theory that family employment structures were maintained almost unaltered on the factory floor, 'Transition in Social Foundations for Collective Action: Communities in the Southeast Lancashire Textile Region in the 1820s and 1830s', *Social Science History*, 4, 4 (1980), 419-451, pp.430-433.

⁹⁷ Hill, *Servants*, pp.64-65.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.85-86, 89; Meldrum, pp.202-203, 206.

However, Hill concedes that informal forms of remuneration persist ‘well into the early nineteenth century’, despite how controversial they were. Such customary relationships were characterised as an excuse for servants to steal what belonged to their masters, or relics of an aristocratic economy of largesse and waste (and thus disapproved of by the more plutocratic urban wealthy who tended to dominate moralist discourses).⁹⁹ Yet the underlying economic realities persisted; changes to household relations during the eighteenth century seem to have been primarily through how these relations were represented, particularly in elite aristocratic portraiture.

Another grand narrative with a profound impact on servants was the rise of gendered ‘separate spheres’ (the private home and public sphere). It implies profound changes in the ways mistresses related to their households. According to conventional wisdom, represented by historians such as Bridget Hill, the eighteenth century saw the rise of a ‘private sphere’ to counterbalance the rise of the ‘public sphere’ which Habermas theorised.¹⁰⁰ Habermas discussed the growth – through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – of uncensored ‘public spaces’ amenable to meaningful discourse, such as the coffee house, and virtual spaces such as the newspaper and pamphlet.¹⁰¹ However, these spaces differentiated themselves from the French *salon* not only by their greater degree of politicisation and separation from aristocracy, but, Habermas alleges, their almost exclusive maleness.¹⁰² As production moved outside the household, too, the traditional (Marx-inspired) interpretation is that the workplace became a male space, leaving the home to become a female one.¹⁰³ This ‘separate spheres’ narrative is a transformation which Hill believes occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century, leading to the hiring of more domestic servants, particularly maidservants.¹⁰⁴ However, Meldrum draws attention to the long tradition of high-status ‘managerial mistresses’, and other historians such as Amanda Vickery have also suggested that the eighteenth century might have seen more continuity

⁹⁹ Ibid., p.202; Hill, *Servants*, pp.66, 89-90.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp.90-91.

¹⁰¹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press [1962, 1989], 1991), pp.58-60.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.33.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp.44, 47.

¹⁰⁴ Hill, *Servants*, pp.36, 39.

than change in this regard.¹⁰⁵ If Hill is wrong about the demographic feminisation of domestic service, as I believe she is, it is likely she is also mistaken about the cultural changes supposed to have caused this. In addition, although there is good evidence for increasing gender segregation in the larger workshops, mills, factories and enclosed farms that developed in the eighteenth century, that is not synonymous with masculinisation of the workplace. Women continued to make up a high proportion of the industrial workforce well into the nineteenth century;¹⁰⁶ one of the largest categories of servant employment was in the victualling trades, where women were often in quasi-managerial positions or even landladies in their own right.¹⁰⁷ It is clear that a shift in middle-class *bourgeois* values had occurred by the second quarter of the nineteenth century, since Anna Clark's analysis of Chartist rhetoric shows that Radicals bemoaning women's existence in the workplace was a tactic intended to conciliate the middle classes.¹⁰⁸ Yet there is not any compelling evidence for that shift to have taken place in the eighteenth century.

The complementary narrative, Habermas's description of the rise of the public sphere, has only limited relevance to domestic servants, although it speaks to the development of London's musical societies. He unambiguously, and correctly, describes the world of coffee-house political discourse as a masculine, bourgeois sphere. However, Habermas's concept of the 'public sphere' – a place of debate and discussion, on topics both political and cultural, which forms a collective bourgeois 'public' – is better understood as a diffuse collection of multiple publics, which intersected each other somewhat, but cannot be read as a single entity. Harold Love, drawing on Peter Clark's history of 'clubs' and coffee-houses, suggests that the coffee-house does not represent a collective 'public' in the terms Habermas describes it: instead, it is a place of ideological stratification, 'places one went in order to avoid meeting people who disagreed with one'.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Love claims that ideologically polarised pamphlets, newspapers and other printed representations of public discourse were mostly read by people who agreed with them, dividing rather than uniting

¹⁰⁵ Meldrum, pp.42, 66.

¹⁰⁶ Calhoun, 'Transition in Social Foundations for Collective Action', pp.427-429.

¹⁰⁷ See Chapter 3; also Meldrum, p.22.

¹⁰⁸ Anna Clark, 'The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity: Gender, Language, and Class in the 1830s and 1840s', *Journal of British Studies*, 31, 1 (1992), 62-88, pp.64-65.

¹⁰⁹ Harold Love, 'How Music Created a Public', *Criticism*, 46, 2 (2004), pp.257-271, p.258.

the public.¹¹⁰ Habermas' public sphere, of course, does not really require consensus, only discourse; Love's (perhaps dubious) assertion is that meaningful discourse between different ideological factions did not occur at all. Regardless, Love's formulation of 'a considerable number of different publics' whose members intersect with each other is a powerful one.¹¹¹ It allows me to posit that those beyond the bourgeois, masculine denizens of the coffee house – such as servants, who were overwhelmingly female and poor – might have their own public spheres, with their own musical communities, which might overlap with the better-known elite cultural worlds. For instance, small-coal merchant Thomas Britton's 'Society of Tickle-Fiddle Gentlemen', and the music library he amassed, were considered important to the development of musical life in the first decade of the eighteenth century, despite his lack of genteel status.¹¹²

Servants were certainly not shut out of public discourse, as this thesis will demonstrate. They had access to a broad range of discursive materials, both as readers (or auditors) and authors (or makers), from broadside ballads and chapbooks to plays, epic poetry and lectures at Henley's Oratory in Clare-market (discussed in Chapter 3). Jonathan Rose's seminal book *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* serves as a reminder that the poor, the 'masses' as previous historians of popular culture have termed them, were heterogeneous in their literary and cultural tastes.¹¹³ This heterogeneity was partly due to sociological factors as well as personal inclination. Footmen, with their excess leisure and reasonable pay, would have had opportunity to engage with learning. George Williams, a self-taught footman, published several learned books on Unitarian theology in the 1760s.¹¹⁴ Autodidacts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries went to impressive lengths to seek out elite learning and culture. Although Mutual Improvement Societies and other worker-

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p.259.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp.259-260.

¹¹² However, poor-rate taxation evidence suggests Britton was not poor, and in my view was unlikely to be considered the same social stratum as most domestic servants. Curtis Price, 'The Small-Coal Cult', *The Musical Times*, 119, 1630 (1978), 1032-1034.

¹¹³ See note 54.

¹¹⁴ George Williams, *An Attempt to Restore the Supreme Worship of God the Father Almighty* (London: T. Becket and P. A. de Hondt, 1765); George Williams, *The Articles of the Church Weighed against the Gospel; and Found Wanting: or, A Third Attempt to Draw Christians to the Belief and Practice of Christianity* (London: T. Becket, 1767).

led educational institutions were more of a nineteenth-century phenomenon, the eighteenth century saw early lending libraries organised in the Scottish Lowlands and a growing culture of public reading and vigorous debate among weavers.¹¹⁵ Such self-improvement opened up access to a wider realm of 'public' discourse, contributing to the breadth of 'public opinion' on political, religious and cultural questions, as well as musical ones.

Beyond that which Habermas and Rose would have considered the 'intellectual', a lively sphere of public debate existed in the public house. Adam Fox uses seventeenth-century libel cases as a means of studying the kinds of discourse and literate activity which went on in alehouses, taverns and inns, particularly in rural areas. Libellous ballads provided a (limited) outlet for social commentary, often criticising local authority figures through ritualistic insults and fantastical allegations.¹¹⁶ Women are known to have authored some of them and copied them by hand for circulation.¹¹⁷ Like printed ballads, they could be handed out to passers-by or pasted up on the walls of public houses, providing a stimulus for discussion and debate.¹¹⁸ Of course, much of the intellectual discourse which went on in public houses, enriched by the aforementioned profusion of cheap print, has left far less trace. However, some evidence of these discourses exist in the form of organised popular unrest, from silk weavers protesting over cheap imports to footmen forming a primitive trade union and striking over the attempted abolition of vails.¹¹⁹ Given that, as Peter Clark claims, particular public houses became meeting-places for certain trades (so that customers knew where to find journeyman tailors, printers and so on), they were probably much more vigorous spaces of political discussion and organisation than historians such as Habermas believed.¹²⁰

Indeed, like the coffee house, Clark finds that the alehouse was really a product of the later seventeenth century, a comfortable, companionable permanent space distinct from

¹¹⁵ Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, pp.16-18, 59.

¹¹⁶ Adam Fox, 'Ballads, Libels and Popular Ridicule in Jacobean England', *Past & Present*, 145 (1994), 47-83, pp.50-51, 55.

¹¹⁷ For instance, mantua-maker Bridget Laytus was convicted of seditious libel in 1693 for anti-Royal songs she had both written and sung. *OBPO* t16930531-51.

¹¹⁸ Fox, 'Ballads, Libels and Popular Ridicule', p.61.

¹¹⁹ Hill, *Servants*, p.83; Robert B. Shoemaker, 'The London "Mob" in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies*, 26, 3 (1987), 273-304, p.280.

¹²⁰ Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp.229-230.

the often-temporary drinking dens of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.¹²¹ Like the coffee house, also, after the Restoration the alehouse became a more established part of society, less prone to revolutionary foment and slightly more regulated by custom and law.¹²² The alehouse was also a profoundly musical space. Since perhaps the Commonwealth era, in which church organs were bought up by public houses for their 'music rooms', public houses were well-known as venues for the genteel as well as vernacular musical performance.¹²³ Catherine Harbor's 'big data' approach to the eighteenth century London music industry demonstrates that the public house hosted at least as many serious performances by renowned artists as dedicated concert rooms like those at Hanover Square.¹²⁴ This coexisted with vernacular performance in the form of convivial songs, ballads and dances, and gentrified vernacular forms like the notated glee or round.¹²⁵ Public houses, then, helped produce a 'public sphere' from diverse constituent elements, with music one of its most fundamental attractions. Throughout the rest of this thesis, the public house is explored as a potential venue for music, as well as a fundamental part of the social infrastructure of servants' lives.

In many ways, then, one could posit the development of a parallel 'proletarian public sphere' (to echo Habermas' anachronistic terminology) in the spaces of the street and the public house. Given the apparent centrality of ballads to this culture, music was clearly an important element in the development of this sphere. However, where these 'proletarian public spheres' perhaps differed from Habermas' 'bourgeois' sphere is that there is little or no corresponding stratification of public and private space. Chris King writes that ' "private" space was difficult to find and difficult to conceptualise in the crowded streets and houses of early modern England'.¹²⁶ Chapters 2 and 3 examine the spatial and architectural contexts of servant lives, in a rural country house and urban vernacular architecture, respectively, and both chapters find considerable evidence to justify Chris King's assertion.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp.197-199.

¹²² Ibid., p.222.

¹²³ Harbor, 'The Birth of the Music Business', p.93.

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp.96-97, 99-101, 193.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.96.

¹²⁶ Chris King, 'Domestic Buildings: Understanding Houses and Society', *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2016), 115-129, p.118.

Even if privacy were possible for some eighteenth-century Britons, servants occupied spaces which belonged to others, so that every space they inhabited was liminal, lacking 'privacy' in both senses (of ownership and seclusion). Chapter 2 will also discuss servants' liminal access to elite musical spaces such as the theatre through their masters; liminality sometimes meant the possibility of advancement as well as precarity of livelihood.

Another space in which servants could experience a wide variety of culture, in their own right (rather than as accessories of their masters), was the parish church. The conventional sociological narrative of the early modern period is one of 'secularisation', expanded to mean not only the increasing disentanglement of church and state, but the privatisation of religion, the retreat from public, communal ceremony into personal religious devotion.¹²⁷ J. C. D. Clarke, though, has rightly questioned a number of the assumptions of this narrative, especially the dubious concept of the 'Protestant work ethic' which often accompanies it.¹²⁸ As W. M. Jacob confirms in his book on eighteenth-century popular religious participation, it is difficult to assert declining levels of religious engagement, not only because of the lack of concrete data, but because most sociologists struggle to account for the very different expectations which Catholic, Anglican and Nonconformist churches had of their congregations.¹²⁹ Jacob's impressions, although difficult to quantify, would seem to refute the 'secularisation' narrative: packed urban churches, the growth of Methodism, and continued popular interest in religious printed literature all suggest growing religiosity, of a very 'public' nature.¹³⁰ In addition, although the Act of Toleration distanced the political State a little from the Church of England, the Church Building Act of 1711, and high officials' support of genteel mission initiatives through the first half of the century such as the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, the societies for the reformation of

¹²⁷ J. C. D. Clarke, 'Secularization and Modernization: the Failure of a Grand Narrative', *The Historical Journal*, 55, 1 (2012), 161-194, pp.161-162.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.164-166, 170-171.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.167; W. M. Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP [1996], 2009), pp.53-54.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.55, 61, 65-66.

manners, or local religious societies, implies a new approach to politico-religious entanglement, not necessarily a movement towards secularism.¹³¹

It is these genteel initiatives which cause the Anglican parish church, as well as the less well-documented Methodist and Baptist chapels, to be an essential component of eighteenth-century music history. Local religious societies started choirs of young men in their parishes, helped organise fundraising efforts to restore organs to churches (which had been absent since the Commonwealth), and campaigned to reform and replace the 'old way of singing psalms' which had grown into a very unusual-sounding, un-'musical' phenomenon.¹³² Methodist hymnody, and its Anglican imitators, transformed the musical and literary forms of popular sacred music, as well as its function (becoming a vehicle for disseminating theology more than an element of sacred ceremony).¹³³ One question which this thesis did not have space to address is how different people (particularly servants, and those likely to be relatives and friends of servants) reacted to and participated in these changes in religious musical practice. Institutions such as the SPCK and Reform Society led change 'from the top', engaging with clergy and the local wealthy first and foremost; Baptists, Methodists and other Nonconformist groups are often portrayed as being 'bottom-up', proletarian movements.¹³⁴ Yet individual congregations reacted very differently to Anglican reform and Nonconformist mission according to a complex mixture of sociological and cultural factors. Mary Clement's edited collection of the SPCK's Welsh correspondence testifies to the tremendous struggles the Church of Wales's clergy and bureaucracy had in trying to comprehend the staggeringly variegated and multivalent understandings of religion that prevailed in their different parishes.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: CUP [1979], 1983), pp.103, 107-108, 126.

¹³² Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, pp.103, 126, 142.

¹³³ Lowell B. Harlan, 'Theology of Eighteenth Century English Hymns', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 48, 2 (1979), 167-193, pp.170-171.

¹³⁴ e.g. Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p.208.

¹³⁵ Take, for instance, the geographical and cultural conflicts recorded in a letter by James Harries of Llantrissant: '[He writes] that the Psalms of David have been sett to good Tunes by some private Hands and able Ministers have taught them to the People with great Advantage. That several of his Parishioners who are above 5 miles distant from the Church do neither frequent his nor any other Assembly. That upon Discourse with the most Sensible of them, he finds a spice of Atheism or Indifferency runs thro' the Family and has done for some Generations'. Mary Clement, ed.,

Asking how different servants engaged with different kinds of religious practice, particularly musical practices, is important: to unearth hidden difficulties and complications which servants might have encountered in accessing religious music, as well as the benefits they might have derived from it. Contemporary fiction's allegation that the religion of the master often became that of the servant probably had some truth to it; servants like James Macdonald or those at Erddig gravitated towards masters whose understanding of religion was compatible with their own.¹³⁶ However, Jacob's book also clearly demonstrates the difficulties of documenting ordinary parishioners' responses to church.¹³⁷ Wealthy evangelists, reformers and moralists are often relied upon to describe the conduct of congregations and the popularity of changes, and their ideological schema are often transparent. For Jonas Hanway, for example, the Sunday service was a space for public displays of piety and uprightness, a symbolic arena of bourgeois pride in which servants could be symbols of virtue so long as they displayed no agency or wilfulness.¹³⁸ Understanding the mindset of, say, those who attended church but 'misbehaved' (according to the standards of the moralist writers who commented on them) requires a greater depth of evidence. This lack of evidence is what has complicated the secularism debate for many decades. This thesis lacked the space and time to make a full investigation of servants' religious practices and the musical practices which accompanied them, but this should not be understood as a reflection of the importance (or lack thereof) in servants' lives.

Contemporary writers such as Eliza Haywood and Daniel Defoe believed that servants consumed an increasing variety and quantity of luxury goods, and it is thus worth describing the condition of the eighteenth-century economy.¹³⁹ Since at least the time of G. M. Trevelyan, the eighteenth century has been understood as a time of increasing material

Correspondence and Minutes of the SPCK Relating to Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), pp.11-12.

¹³⁶ For instance, James Macdonald fell foul of a master who was elder of the Presbyterian parish for alleged sexual misconduct, but still lectured an English master for their laxer Anglican morals. Macdonald, pp.36, 98. The fictional servant protagonist of *Adventures of a Footman* shifts into an Anglican family, finding Dissenters too morally strict for his liking. Macdonald, pp.65, 89.

¹³⁷ Jacob, *Lay People and Religion*, p.7.

¹³⁸ Hanway, p.27.

¹³⁹ Defoe, *The Behaviour of Servants in England*, pp.14-15; Haywood, pp.21-23.

wealth.¹⁴⁰ The causes of this alleged growth in prosperity were, it has been suggested, innovations in manufacturing and agriculture, intensifying colonial exploitation and global trade, and the effects of relative peace and political stability.¹⁴¹ This growth in prosperity is assumed to be responsible for the decline in long-distance 'subsistence itineracy' from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, as well as the growth of provincial towns;¹⁴² the development of the alehouse into larger, better equipped and more specialised institutions;¹⁴³ and the eighteenth-century 'consumer revolution'. This last grand narrative, discussed critically by Maxine Berg, involved developments in retail such as the shopfront and the catalogue, as well as an increasing variety of consumer commodities from around the world.¹⁴⁴ The evidence for this growth in the consumption of goods and the cultivation of the retail economy is clear in probate inventories, as well as the material evidence of surviving antiques, businesses and traditions such as tea-drinking.¹⁴⁵ Servants were often apparent consumers of these goods, especially tea, sugar, and fine clothes, as Chapter 3 will explore.

However, many of the details of this narrative of increasing prosperity and consumption of luxury goods are open to question. For instance, the alleged 'consumer revolution' is often linked to the 'rise of the middling sort', who are implicated as both key consumers and key retailers of these new goods, and therefore changes to employment relationships and the growth of capitalism.¹⁴⁶ Yet the syntactic vagueness of the 'middling sort' in both contemporary and modern writings, the disjunctures within any definition of the 'middling sorts' that undermines any common narratives of 'middling' cultural and material consumption – between urban and rural, between 'dirty' and 'clean', between not-quite-gentry and more-than-artisans – leave open to doubt the role of a distinct 'middling

¹⁴⁰ G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries, Chaucer to Queen Victoria* (London: Book Club Associates [1944], 1973), pp.294-295.

¹⁴¹ e.g. Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp.4-5, 6-8.

¹⁴² Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society*, pp.1-4.

¹⁴³ Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp.197-199, 223-224.

¹⁴⁴ Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp.260-262.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.10.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.9-10.

sort' shaping eighteenth-century consumer culture.¹⁴⁷ Further, L. D. Schwarz's wage series (Figure 1.1) – which shows a decline in wages for construction labourers in the second half of the century – is incompatible with the narrative of rising prosperity, suggesting a different cause (or causes) than a simple growth in prosperity underlying the birth of a 'consumer society' and a 'middling sort'.¹⁴⁸ Chapter 3 will consider servants' ability to participate in the eighteenth century's new consumer economy, despite being a very different demographic to the archetypal 'middling sort'.

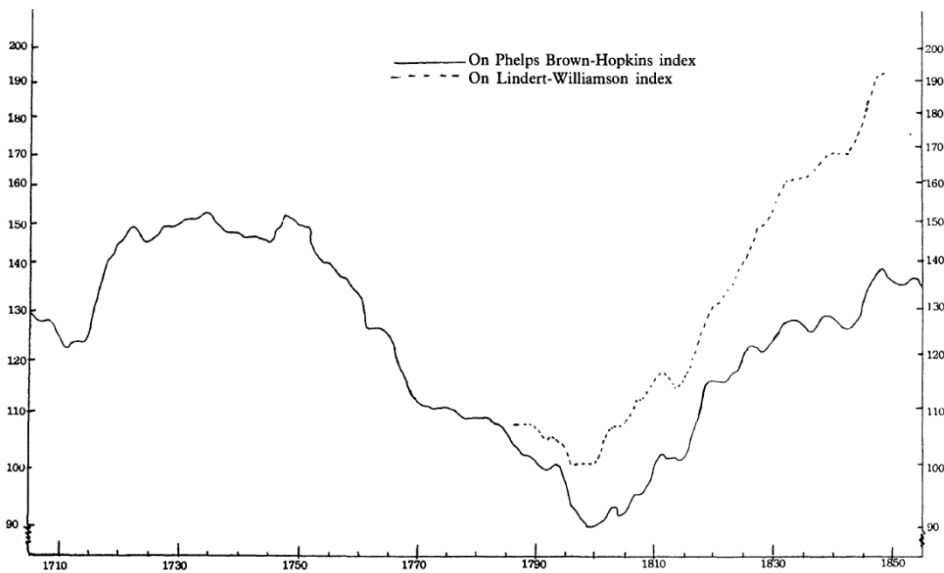


Figure 1.1: Real wage rates of London bricklayers, eleven-year moving average, 1705-1855.

Reproduced from Schwarz, 'The Standard of Living', p. 28.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp.9-10; H. R. French, 'The Search for the "Middle Sort of People" in England, 1600-1800', *The Historical Journal*, 43, 1 (2000), 277-293, pp.278, 284, 288, 290.

¹⁴⁸ L. D. (Leonard) Schwarz, 'The Standard of Living in the Long Run: London, 1700-1860', *The Economic History Review*, 38, 1 (1985), 24-41, pp.29-30.

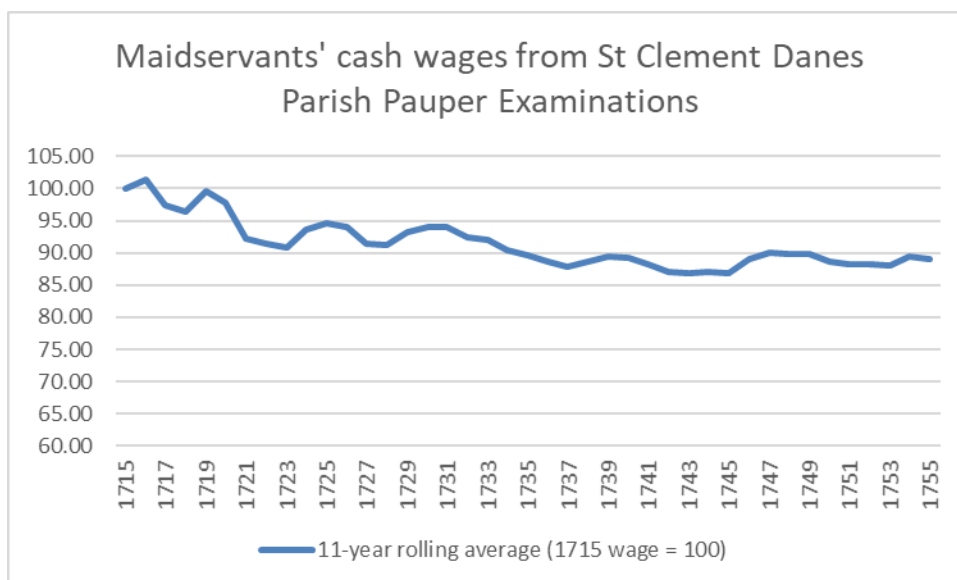


Figure 1.2: An eleven-year rolling average of cash wages for maidservants examined in the St Clement Danes parish settlement examinations (see Chapter 3), 1715-1755. Note the peak between 1715 and 1720, and slight decline after 1730, as well as the stability after 1750.

All of these grand narratives about eighteenth-century economic history suffer from fragmentary or inconclusive evidence. The best studies, such as John James's study of wealth distribution using fire insurance records,¹⁴⁹ cannot show changes over time easily because, to maximise the sample size (producing more useful results), records have to be drawn together from a long period of time. Schwarz's wage series, often relied on or referred to by economic historians, is based on builders' bills from the Middlesex Session Papers, interpolating estimated figures where gaps in the records exist.¹⁵⁰ Other wage rate series, which are not entirely consistent with Schwarz's, are also based on wages in the London construction industry.¹⁵¹ A comparison of Figures 1.1 and 1.2 demonstrate the ways these data might relate to other economic sectors, such as domestic servants' earnings.¹⁵² Schwarz's series factors in changes in the cost of living, unlike the parish settlement examination data collected from St. Clement Danes, but there are some striking similarities and differences. The peak between 1715 and 1720, and the slight decline between 1730 and

¹⁴⁹ John A. James, 'Personal Wealth Distribution in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain', *The Economic History Review*, 41, 4 (1988), 543-565, pp.544-545.

¹⁵⁰ Schwarz, 'The Standard of Living', p.26.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp.25, 27-29.

¹⁵² Also see *Ibid.*, pp.32-33.

1740, are present in both; yet although Figure 1.2 only extends to 1755, there is no sign of a precipitous decline that would mirror the Schwartz series.

Although these sources are therefore useful to understand variation in pay for certain categories of worker in eighteenth-century London, they are often understood to be generalisable to the whole country and workforce (including by Schwarz himself).¹⁵³ Fragmentary data like this is supplemented with contemporary estimates, such as Gregory King's 1688 estimate of income distribution; yet even when these were based on surveys, rather than the author's subjective impression, the methodology remains unclear, its biases inestimable (as Tim Hitchcock discusses with reference to Matthew Martin's 1796 study of the demographics of street homelessness).¹⁵⁴ More frequently used by economic historians are subjective impressions of individuals, which work well to enrich understanding of the social and cultural processes underlying economic change.¹⁵⁵ Yet economic historians must be as sensitive to the biases of these accounts as historians of crime are.¹⁵⁶ Observations by commonly cited authors such as Henry Fielding, Jonas Hanway or Daniel Defoe straddle the boundaries between activism, satire and allegedly honest reportage. These deficiencies in the available evidence, and the inconsistencies between high-quality datasets, make it necessary to question and revise narratives relating to the 'consumer revolution'.

One such revision, which has gained considerable popularity in recent years, is the idea that the new cultural products of the eighteenth century – such as operas and novels – were inaccessible to all but the very wealthy, considerably reducing the role of middle-income households (to use a more precise term than 'middling sort') in the growth of the consumer economy. David Hunter argues against a peculiarly favoured narrative in eighteenth-century historical musicology, that Handel's oratorios were produced for an

¹⁵³ Ibid., p.31.

¹⁵⁴ Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London', p.481.

¹⁵⁵ For instance, Maxine Berg supplements her chapter examining the growth of 'fashion' and 'shopping' in eighteenth-century Britain – for which it is difficult to obtain quantitative evidence – with literary accounts. Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp.247-278.

¹⁵⁶ For example, Laurie Edelstein, 'An Accusation Easily to be Made? Rape and Malicious Prosecution in Eighteenth-Century England', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 42, 4 (1998), pp.351-390; Peter King, 'Making Crime News: Newspapers, Violent Crime and the Selective Reporting of Old Bailey Trials in the late Eighteenth Century', *Crime, History & Societies*, 13, 1 (2009), pp.91-116.

anachronistic 'middle-class' audience (as performances of them were in the nineteenth century).¹⁵⁷ He suggests that only the wealthiest (excluding almost all of the 'middling sort') would have been able to afford oratorio tickets, let alone influence their creation by subscribing to a season.¹⁵⁸ Hunter argues that the contexts in which Handel's music was performed were too exclusive for his works to be meaningfully 'popular' outside the narrow elite circles of his subscribers (at least in the sense which Handel's previous biographers imply).¹⁵⁹ Robert D. Hume extends the argument to novels, newspapers and stage plays – the intellectual and cultural foundations of bourgeois life – and attempts to demonstrate their complete inaccessibility to anyone below the level of the very wealthy.¹⁶⁰ Such doubts are a necessary counterpoint to the assumptions of earlier scholars about the contemporary 'popularity' of artworks that have since become canonic. Yet neither author addresses seriously the possibility of informal access.

Hunter is aware that some servants were able to access theatrical performances, even finding that some aristocrats paid for their servants' seats (quite apart from the well-documented custom of the 'footman's gallery', as part of which guests' footmen could retire to the second gallery free of charge).¹⁶¹ Hume is aware that an individual newspaper would have passed through many hands; yet instead of citing the work of Hannah Barker, who has studied eighteenth-century newspaper distribution and concludes that a large proportion of Londoners had access to news, Hume speculates about circulation of newspapers in coffee houses, in his own words, 'plucking numbers out of thin air'.¹⁶² Contemporary sources present a number of ways in which a sufficiently determined person could see a performance without paying full ticket price for it: from borrowing their master's tickets, as James Macdonald did;¹⁶³ to having a ticket bought for them by a friend or suitor, as Eliza

¹⁵⁷ Hunter, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel*, p.15.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.18.

¹⁶⁰ Robert D. Hume, 'The Value of Money in Eighteenth-Century England: Incomes, Prices, Buying Power – and Some Problems in Cultural Economics', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 77, 4 (2014), 373-416, pp.376-378. Also see www.measuringworth.com, the resource which Hume discusses and critiques.

¹⁶¹ Hunter, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel*, p.68.

¹⁶² Hume, 'The Value of Money', p.378; Hannah Barker, *Newspapers and English Society* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1999), pp.46-64.

¹⁶³ Macdonald, p.67.

Haywood warned maidservants against;¹⁶⁴ to forging social or sexual connections with performers;¹⁶⁵ to entering pleasure gardens secretly when an opportunity presented itself.¹⁶⁶ The constant reassurances of exclusivity which music promoters gave are perhaps more a sign of insecurity than confidence. The same is true of printed works and musical instruments: informal, highly affordable distribution of both of these facets of musical culture are discussed in Chapter 4.

Another factor which neither Hunter nor Hume fully considers are heterogeneous (and alien) eighteenth-century spending priorities and propensities, something which I discuss in Chapters 2 and 3 with reference to servants. In particular, the economics of mutuality give expressions of sociability, including music-making, a functional and vital economic role for maidservants and manservants alike.¹⁶⁷ London rents were also a considerably smaller proportion of household expenses than they are for most twenty-first century London families.¹⁶⁸ Expensive items, such as sheet music, instruments, or clothes and household furnishings, could also be pawned in times of need, a practice which Alannah Tomkins writes of as extremely common.¹⁶⁹ Hunter and Hume, relying on a simple examination of income and prices, perhaps state their cases too confidently when they deny the possibility of popular dissemination.

Existing literature on eighteenth-century musicians and repertory, such as Weber's seminal *Rise of the Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* or Cyril Ehrlich's *The Music Profession in England since the Eighteenth Century* focuses upon genteel music-loving

¹⁶⁴ Haywood, p.40.

¹⁶⁵ Hanway, p.411.

¹⁶⁶ The management of Vauxhall Gardens advertised in 1788: "To prevent the inconvenience generally complained of by the Public, from improper persons attempting to gain admission late in the evenings, on pretence that they had paid before ... a general Order is given, that in future, after the conclusion of the regular Concert, no person shall be admitted who does not pay at the time." Advertisement, 'Vauxhall Gardens', *The World*, 19th May 1788, p.1.

¹⁶⁷ Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor, 1780–1870* (Pickering & Chatto, 2013), p.34.

¹⁶⁸ Peter Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale UP [2004], 2009), p.16; Anonymous, 'Londoners "spend 59% of income on rent", Shelter says', *BBC News*, 8th January 2013 (online article, www.bbc.co.uk, accessed 03/04/2018).

¹⁶⁹ Alannah Tomkins, 'Pawnbroking and the survival strategies of the urban poor in 1770s York', in *The Poor in England 1700-1850: An Economy of Makeshifts*, eds. Alannah Tomkins and Steven King (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003), 166-197, pp.166, 180-181, 183.

amateurs, and the professionals who served them, with salaries in the hundreds of pounds per annum.¹⁷⁰ Only Catherine Harbor makes diligent reference to ‘the huge majority of musicians who could not earn enough from music to be able to devote themselves to it full time, but who had to combine music-making with some other non-musical occupation in order to make a viable living’.¹⁷¹ Yet examining this latter category of musicians – the musicians most likely to be in personal contact with servants, as their friends, neighbours and relatives (exceptions like Thomas Britton notwithstanding)¹⁷² – requires stepping away from the opera house, the genteel subscription concert, and provincial music festival. Some of these lower-income musicians no doubt played in these settings, albeit probably those with the best connections: the social importance of these events was bound up with their exclusivity, and this applied as much to the onstage personnel as the audience, as John Marsh’s diary testifies.¹⁷³ Yet there is a distinct vernacular tradition of (semi-)professional music-making which scholars such as Ehrlich and even Harbor do not consider: the eighteenth century lacks a counterpart to Christopher Marsh’s holistic study of the early modern period’s musicians.¹⁷⁴ The Fiddling Footman did not wish to earn a meagre living from playing at country dances, not ‘chusing to submit to the indignity of fiddling only at occasional country-dancings in the neighbourhood’; yet certainly some did.¹⁷⁵ These fiddlers are discussed in Chapter 4.

As Chapter 4 indicates, vernacular fiddlers in this mould not only had a repertory with plenty of tunes from the theatre, pleasure garden and opera house (alongside popular ballads and local favourites), but also performed in a full range of venues from the country house to the market stall. This is an indication of a much broader eighteenth-century music market than the narrative of a ‘growing music profession’ around the end of the eighteenth

¹⁷⁰ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Weber, *Rise of the Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England*.

¹⁷¹ Harbor, *The Birth of the Music Business*, p.268.

¹⁷² See note 112.

¹⁷³ Brian Robins, ‘John Marsh and Provincial Music Making in Eighteenth-Century England’, *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, 29 (1996), 96-142, p.98.

¹⁷⁴ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010).

¹⁷⁵ Scratch, ‘Humourous Life of a Fiddling Footman’, p.126.

century and first half of the nineteenth century would allow.¹⁷⁶ Instead, it is perhaps possible to read the apparent increase in organised, commercial music-making between 1750 and 1850, which Ehrlich and Weber describe, as more akin to gentrification: the markers of classicism and gentility increasingly widely adopted among a body of vernacular musicians whose size and workload perhaps did not much change. This would reflect changing attitudes to music among people on middle incomes, changing patterns of consumption and easier access to instruments and sheet music. The lack of documentation makes it difficult to demonstrate either hypothesis (growth or gentrification) conclusively, however.

These historical narratives attributed to the eighteenth century might not be beyond question in factual terms, then, but prove to be useful structural devices for my historical enquiry. They draw attention to narratives of transformation and transition that took place between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries: sometimes a change occurring within the eighteenth century itself, and sometimes a change visible in the centuries either side (positing the eighteenth century as either the *status quo ante* or the aftermath). In this sense they are truly historiographical, presenting a system within which to understand historical data, contexts and focal points.

Use of Sources

Unfortunately, most of the contemporary sources about servant life from which this thesis is drawn were not produced by servants themselves, but rather by masters, observers or bureaucrats. Although Meldrum's study of consistory court records suggests that 80 % of manservants, and around half of maidservants, could sign their names in the first half of the eighteenth century, there are several obstacles to the survival of useful servant ego-documents.¹⁷⁷ Firstly, literacy and illiteracy are not binary states: most early modern education taught reading before writing, and being able to sign one's name is not necessarily evidence of full competency in either.¹⁷⁸ Secondly, publishers evinced little interest in the

¹⁷⁶ For examples of this narrative, see Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics*, pp.82-83; Ehrlich, *The Music Profession*, pp.53-62.

¹⁷⁷ Meldrum, p.141.

¹⁷⁸ Hill, *Servants*, p.226.

inner lives of servants, except perhaps in the later eighteenth-century fashion for ‘maids who wrote poetry’ such as Ann Yearsley, Mary Leapor or (later) Elizabeth Hands. These exceptional authors had connections with gentry which enabled their works to be commercially published and achieve prominence as poets, and Carolyn Steedman discusses their work in depth, especially those passages which reveal their attitudes to the service relationship.¹⁷⁹ However, most of their works are not in any sense autobiographical. Migrant servants, that is, most servants, wrote letters to communicate with distant friends and relations, such as Erddig letter D/E/550 discussed in Chapter 2, but a lack of interest from contemporary archivists has meant few have survived.¹⁸⁰ As the title of his book indicates, former coachboy and footman James Macdonald’s memoirs were published primarily because of his travels to distant lands, as well as his pretensions to Scottish aristocracy; his career as a footman within the British Isles is only retained to develop his character and to provide a baseline with which to compare the ‘exotic’ destinations he later visits.¹⁸¹ Macdonald’s memoirs, as an eighteenth-century, commercially published servant autobiography without a transparent activist or satirical motivation (like the dubious ‘memoirs’ of Mary Saxby), might be unique.¹⁸² Although servants could, and did, engage with the world of letters from time to time, the vast majority of extant sources on eighteenth-century servant life were created by, and for, non-servants.

This naturally has repercussions for the interpretation of these sources. Those sources which are closest to servants themselves are archival sources which were obliged to report servants’ words reasonably accurately. Servants sometimes had reason to lie in legal and archival sources, but since they had to produce a plausible fiction, it does not often create a significant problem for the social historian. Most administrative and legal scribes only sought to obtain and record very specific data. In Chapter 3, for instance, I will be using parish settlement examinations, whose purpose was to prove servants’ connection to a parish, with a series of questions whose answers allowed no leeway for more than a simple response. This information is useful for quantitative study, but provides little insight in itself

¹⁷⁹ Steedman, pp.282-285, 287-293.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.227.

¹⁸¹ Macdonald.

¹⁸² Mary Saxby, *Memoirs of a Female Vagrant, Written by Herself* (London: J. Burditt, 1806).

into servants' attitudes to or uses of music. Consistory court records (as Meldrum uses) are an excellent example of a more qualitative record, since all witnesses to church court cases (including many servants in cases of divorce and defamation) had their words recorded *verbatim* in longhand.¹⁸³ Unfortunately, English magistrates' courts were not (and are not) required to leave any official record of cases; very few eighteenth-century magistrates' notebooks survive, meaning that this most common and accessible interaction between servants and the law remains unknown.¹⁸⁴ The only officially regulated source with any interest in servants making or hearing music was the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, a source which straddles the boundary between a commercial and an archival publication.

The *Old Bailey Proceedings* were a commercially published record of felony cases heard at the Old Bailey court, licensed and regulated by the Lord Mayor (rather unsuccessfully, given the 25 publishers granted the licence between 1720 and 1778).¹⁸⁵ Testimonies and case details are almost always recorded accurately, but much is omitted, both to keep the buying public's interest and to satisfy the Lord Mayor's demand that the Old Bailey's decisions be portrayed as just.¹⁸⁶ Successful defences were often omitted in case they gave criminals ideas.¹⁸⁷ While for legal historians the somewhat one-sided nature of the *Old Bailey Proceedings* makes them an unreliable, if essential, resource, for historians of music the more significant bias is the commercial imperative underlying their publication. Eighteenth-century audiences sought entertainment, sensation and relevance alongside accuracy in printed reportage (which, according to Harold Love, was not regarded to be as authoritative as manuscript letters);¹⁸⁸ hence Peter King's finding that eighteenth-century newspapers disproportionately covered crimes of interest to their 'middling' readers, such as white-collar fraud and highway robbery.¹⁸⁹ Not only does the *Old Bailey Proceedings*

¹⁸³ Meldrum, pp.8-9. I am grateful to Tim Meldrum for the access he has provided to his original research materials and databases of servant witnesses in consistory court testimonies.

¹⁸⁴ Dietrich Oberwittler, 'Crime and Authority in Eighteenth Century England: Law Enforcement on the Local Level', *Historical Social Research*, 15, 2 (1990), 3-34, pp.9-10.

¹⁸⁵ Robert B. Shoemaker, 'The Old Bailey Proceedings and the Representation of Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 47, 3 (2008), 559-580, pp.563, 565.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.563, 567, 570.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.578.

¹⁸⁸ Love, 'How Music Created a Public', p.259.

¹⁸⁹ Peter King, 'Making Crime News', pp.94-95, 99.

represent these crimes in greater detail than others, it also shows a marked tendency towards showing the lives of the poor as colourful, amusing theatre. The publishers were reprimanded in 1727 for recording the victim's colloquial Irish testimony in entertaining phonetic spelling which detracted from the gravity of the case (and, of course, the dignity of the witness).¹⁹⁰ This portrayal of the poor as othered stock figures, as exoticised and unknowable in their own way as Captain Cook's depictions of Tahitians, runs through much of the commercially published literature about servants, fictional or nominally non-fictional.

Yet the *Old Bailey Proceedings*' interest in 'colour' and sensation actually aids their usefulness to historians of music, since dance, song and drink made a case more amusing. Of course, where it appears at all, music-making is usually only a filigree detail within witness testimonies, and is rarely important to the overall case. Yet the great advantage of the *Old Bailey Proceedings* as a source for music historians is that music is shown deeply embedded within its social purposes and contexts. Richard Leppert describes the value (and limitation) of music iconography being that 'reference to music occurs in visual art not because musical sound exists but because musical sound has meaning'.¹⁹¹ Likewise, the *Old Bailey* was not interested in music as an abstraction, but rather only discussed it when it bore on the human relationships the court was chiefly concerned with. As a result, the *Old Bailey Proceedings* provides a depiction of vernacular musical life as richly textured as any in contemporary fiction, but with more guarantee of its veracity than most newspapers, let alone fiction writers, could garner.

A supplement to these archival sources are offered by contemporary advice manuals and similar moral tracts, particularly those aimed at servants. They offer insight into both the expectations masters could have of their servants, and also into common 'vices' (as well as genuine problems) that affected servants. The level of detail varies from precise descriptions of what a working day should entail for different categories of servant,¹⁹² to

¹⁹⁰ Shoemaker, 'The Old Bailey Proceedings', p.564.

¹⁹¹ Leppert, *Music and Image*, p.3.

¹⁹² e.g. Anne Barker, *The Complete Servant Maid, or Young Woman's Best Companion* (London: J. Cooke, n.d.), pp.33-34.

vague exhortations to obedience and submission.¹⁹³ Their prescriptive purpose is, of course, transparent, and it is hardly surprising so many of them require unquestioning obedience from servants, honesty in transacting masters' business, and exhortations to hard work and to take delight in their humble station. Eliza Haywood fancies: 'were you to know the real Pinches some endure who keep you, you would find the Balance of Happiness wholly on your Side', for masters had to trouble themselves with taxation, the economy, and current affairs, while servants had 'only to do your Duty quietly in the Station God has placed you'.¹⁹⁴

Advice manuals marshal descriptions of errant servant behaviour to fit a narrative critical of the dissolute metropolitan gentry and their Godless behaviour; behind every misbehaving servant is a master either too indulgent or insufficiently aware of their sacred responsibilities.¹⁹⁵ Conversely, some (I would contend, aimed at middling employers) upbraid masters for being too harsh and unreasonable in their commands, making their servants disobedient and 'saucy'.¹⁹⁶ A common theme in these moral tracts, alien to a twenty-first century mind enculturated in the mythos of capitalist meritocracy, is that social mobility is evidence of some crime or transgression against the established social order. That is perhaps why these advice books associate every luxury with a precipitous descent into vice, misery and poverty. Most absurdly, Eliza Haywood suggests that indulging in tea will lead to a taste for gin; but music, the theatre, and fine clothing, even when legitimately acquired, all similarly have the potential to drag a servant into iniquity.¹⁹⁷

Another narrative which affects how the historian should read these texts is their association with what modern feminists term 'rape culture'. This is discussed in Chapter 5, with reference to the work of Simon Dickie, who studied 'jokes' involving rape and their permeation throughout the world of eighteenth-century texts, even ones as 'official' as the

¹⁹³ e.g. Thomas Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* (London: Tim Goodwin, 1720), pp.24-37.

¹⁹⁴ Haywood, p.34.

¹⁹⁵ e.g. Hanway, pp.xiii-xvii.

¹⁹⁶ e.g. A Footman, *Servitude: A Poem* (London: T. Worrall, n.d.), p.5.

¹⁹⁷ Haywood, pp.6, 41.

Old Bailey Proceedings.¹⁹⁸ For the authors of these advice manuals, overwhelmingly aimed at maidservants, sexual assault was the result of a woman's failure to guard herself carefully, resist men's attentions, or treat men with sufficient distance. Advice manuals therefore devote considerable space to discussing how a maidservant should interact with her master or her male colleagues, in terms of words, tone of voice, and gesture.¹⁹⁹ This affects, also, the way that advice manuals depict leisure activities such as music. Naturally, their fundamental premise is that leisure should be minimised, since a servant's time belongs to her master, although some 'innocent recreation' will always be necessary.²⁰⁰ Without fail, however, advice books recommend reading and writing (as well as, of course, churchgoing and prayer) as suitable pastimes, perhaps because they are solitary and indoors, free from the sexual hazard that association with men involves, or the moral peril of luxury.²⁰¹ Their depictions of public music-making and theatregoing will consequently be unkind, and the extent of them perhaps exaggerated (for vice and risk are always exaggerated in moralistic texts).

Similar concerns attend other commercially printed materials about servant life. Servants were commonplace stock figures in comedies and parodies across multiple media: from *High Life Below Stairs* to Swift's *Directions to Servants*, servants could play a versatile role, capable of satirising both the perceived failings of real servants and the preoccupations of broader society (an interpretation which *High Life Below Stairs* certainly invites).²⁰² The 'Fiddling Footman' is also in this genre, of course, and the problems I outlined at the beginning of this chapter have a broader applicability among satirical works. Allusive parody demands a certain distortion of servants' characterisation beyond even that which the non-servant audience would recognise as credible, for there must be a suggestion that the characters are depicting something other than a servant. It also relies on servants being

¹⁹⁸ Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp.191-195.

¹⁹⁹ e.g. *Ibid.*, pp.35-37; Hanway, pp.366-368; Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families*, pp.144-146.

²⁰⁰ Hanway, p.281; Anonymous, *Instructions for Masters, Traders, Laborers, &c.* ([London], 1699), pp.5-6.

²⁰¹ e.g. Hanway, pp.407-410.

²⁰² Gillian Russell, ' "Keeping Place": Servants, Theater and Sociability in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain', *The Eighteenth Century*, 42, 1 (2001), 21-42, pp.23-24.

understood as a negative referent, a shameful comparison, something developed by parodies with less allusion such as *A Letter from Betty to Sally*, or Swift's *Directions to Servants*.²⁰³ These tracts establish servants as the symbols of an economy of waste, their customary practices – vails, perquisites, livery, the delegation of particular tasks to specialists – irrational holdovers from a Catholic, aristocratic social system to be banished by enlightened efficiencies.²⁰⁴ Advice literature and parodies, then, reinforce much the same moral message (and Hanway's *Virtue in Humble Life* explicitly depicts servants in terms of economic inefficiency).²⁰⁵ Even newspapers, legal reports and other nominally 'factual' printed sources play into such narratives.²⁰⁶

Although the public for novels and theatre was somewhat broad, these parodies make it clear that only certain kinds of audience were valued by their creators, and that valued public did not necessarily include servants. For servants protested these parodies vigorously: in 1759 they began an unsuccessful protest at the premiere of *High Life Below Stairs*;²⁰⁷ some wrote pamphlets of their own to counterbalance the weight of moralist anti-servant agitation.²⁰⁸ Broadside ballads, which again had a wide public but a different principal target demographic, depict servants in a more nuanced way. Footmen were caricatured and maidservants could be hypersexualised,²⁰⁹ but these tropes are neither as common nor as consistent as those used in more 'elite' cultural forms. It is probable that both those 'above' servants and those 'below' servants in the nominal social hierarchy enjoyed humour at their expense, but that from 'below' was more likely to be specifically targeted at upper servants and livery servants, with their pretensions of gentility, including in musical performance.

²⁰³ *A Letter from Betty to Sally, with the Answer; A New Year's Gift* (London: Fielding and Walker, 1781); Jonathan Swift, *Directions to Servants in General* (London: R. Dodsley, 1745).

²⁰⁴ e.g. Hanway, p.xxi.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.378-379, 410.

²⁰⁶ For instance, see the newspaper reports on servants' leisure Hecht takes to be fact (see note 45).

²⁰⁷ Straub, 'The Making of an English Audience', p.141.

²⁰⁸ A Footman, *Servitude: A Poem*, pp.2-3, 6-7.

²⁰⁹ For instance, two ballads from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (jisc.ac.uk, accessed 30/03/2017): 'Fun in an Alley; or, The Footman Trapped' (London: no publisher, n.d.), in which a footman is a foolish and gullible protagonist, and 'Great News from Guild-Hall: Being an Account of Two Trials on Tuesday' (London: no publisher, 1695), in which a heinous sexual assault on a maidservant is cast as harmless fun (see Chapter 5).

Letters and diaries, especially those which have been archived and disseminated, are likely to come from the wealthy or influential. Reverend William Cole's *Blecheley Diary*, in which he documents the daily life of his manservant Tom in excruciating detail, survived because he bequeathed it to the British Museum; he had sufficient cultural capital for them to honour his request because of his close ties with Robert Walpole.²¹⁰ Thus, extant letters and diaries overwhelmingly present the view of the master, rather than the servant, and portrayals of servants can have as much of an ideological function as in didactic or satirical print. For instance, when Lady Coke describes servants taking part in an aristocratic ball in Italy, it is more because of the 'singularity' and 'novelty' than genuine interest in the servants' participation. She is soon distracted by a theatre usher dressed as an Indian beggar.²¹¹ The documents regarding servant life at Erddig, presented in Chapter 2, seem to have been kept as much through indiscriminate hoarding and neglect as deliberate interest. Reverend Cole took interest only in his manservant Tom – probably for deeply personal reasons – and not so much in any of his other staff or anyone else's servants.²¹² Letters and diaries, as more diffuse, personal documents, contain a great deal more incidental detail about servants' lives than commercially printed sources of the period. Yet the information recorded is subject to many of the same biases, being written by, and for, people of similar sociological categories.

Common between almost all sources on eighteenth-century servant life, then, is the difficulty that most records do not reflect the priorities, interests or beliefs of servants themselves, but those of their masters and social superiors. This causes particular problems when trying to assess how common or unusual a particular behaviour was among servants. The 'hop', for instance, was a dance held by servants for their friends, without their masters' knowledge, either when their masters and mistresses were absent or by taking advantage of limited vigilance. Many are alleged to have taken place in the servants' halls and kitchens of

²¹⁰ Francis Griffin Stokes, ed., *The Blecheley [sic.] Diary of the Rev. William Cole, 1765-67*, introduction Helen Waddell (London: Constable & Co., 1931), p.ix.

²¹¹ Lady Mary Campbell Coke, *The Letters and Diaries of Lady Mary Coke, Volume 4* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), pp.291, 294.

²¹² *The Blecheley Diary*, pp.lv-lvi.

London.²¹³ For masters, this was a subversive and dangerous practice, an abuse of the trust they placed in their servants to use the spaces (and alcoholic beverages) set aside for them responsibly. Newspapers therefore highlight the few cases of illicit ‘hops’ so large – often renting public rooms for the purpose – they drew the attention of law enforcement.²¹⁴ They also published letters to the editor and moralising pamphlets that describe the practice as commonplace.²¹⁵ Postwar historian J. J. Hecht interpreted these reports as unproblematically true, reflective of a commonplace tradition of ‘hops’;²¹⁶ thinking a little wishfully, historian of Black British people David Dabydeen uses references to Black-organised ‘hops’ to suggest that in 1787 London ‘“black hops” were the latest craze’.²¹⁷ Yet there is every possibility the relative incidence of ‘hops’ was exaggerated by printed sources because of their sensational and disturbing character. In the few instances when letters and diaries refer to such occasions, they are often merely hearsay, and not directly experienced or known.²¹⁸ Even Erddig letter D/E/550, or the 1751 Old Bailey trial of David Mills, sources which depict servants making music in their masters’ houses – the closest things to a ‘hop’ of which I can find direct evidence (besides the parties shut down by law enforcement, newspaper reports of which are probably not fabricated wholesale) – suggest informal, relaxed music-making on a limited scale, much more akin to genteel chamber music than the rough, riotous dances servants are accused of.²¹⁹ The evidence for ‘hops’ is sufficient to suggest that at least a few took place, but the question of its relative frequency requires more unbiased observation than I have yet found. Since musical activity among servants is often connected with either

²¹³ Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class*, pp.129-130.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.134.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.129, 134-135.

²¹⁶ Hecht also believed his eighteenth-century masters when they claimed, for example, that Black domestic servants were ‘cherished and caressed’, ‘pampered’ by their masters; he believes some of their claims that Black and Indian slaves were ‘drunkards’, ‘lechers’, ‘incorrigible’; that their desire to escape was ‘wanderlust’ – J. Jean Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants in Eighteenth-Century England* (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College, 1954), pp.40, 43-44, 52-53. His books are useful more as a collation of diverse genteel writings about servants than for the distinctly uncritical interpretation he places upon them. For his writing on ‘hops’ see note 45.

²¹⁷ Dabydeen, *Hogarth’s Blacks*, p.39.

²¹⁸ The only exception being John Macdonald, who did claim to attend a servants’ assembly with dancing and drink. Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class*, p.133.

²¹⁹ D/E/550 will be examined in Chapter 2. The trial of David Mills – in which Mills, a porter to a baronet, plays from a music-book on the German flute to a small audience of fellow servants at 11 pm – can be found in *OBPO* t17510417-38.

transgression or pretension, reports of a particular musical behaviour being either widespread or frequent need to be assessed carefully.

However, despite these difficulties, the affordances of these sources can be quite generous, provided they are interpreted intelligently. Sources amenable to quantification, such as parish settlement examinations, can be used to establish quite detailed sociological information about servants' lives; diaries and letters, fictional portrayals and Old Bailey cases, which provide fuller but less reliable – or at least less representative – information can be used to link the sociology to musical behaviours. The resulting methodology would not be sufficient to establish 'typical' musical behaviours, but can demonstrate musical 'accessibility' in a nuanced way, expressing the ease or difficulty of different types of servant engagement with different musics. It also allows deep insights into the different social functions that musics held and how servants might have used them in the construction of space and personhood.

Plan of Remaining Chapters

Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis are case studies of domestic service at Erddig, a country house near Wrexham in North Wales, and St. Clement Danes, a small parish on the eastern edge of Westminster in London, respectively. The emphasis of Chapter 2 is the unique position of the country house in mediating between the rural and the metropolitan, and the musical benefits servants could derive from the liminal access to metropolitan elite culture Erddig offered to its favoured servants. Musical opportunities for servants in Wrexham are explored, too. However, it also examines the vulnerabilities which servants' liminal position within the country house could produce, in particular for Black servants, isolated from the local community and the fellowship of other servants through prejudice, and dependent on the whims of their masters. Chapter 3 considers the roles which servants had within the burgeoning economy of leisure developing within a Westminster parish, and the ways in which they mediated, curated and facilitated music-making, both vernacular and elite. It also contains a study of wage data from St. Clement Danes parish settlement examinations, a replication of and supplement to D. A. Kent's study of wages based on St. Martin-in-the-

Fields parish settlement examinations.²²⁰ This data produces important insights into the sociology of domestic service which throw Kent's conclusions into question, and have profound implications for understanding how servants interacted with the economy of leisure as consumers. Finally, Chapter 3 demonstrates how the spatial proximity imposed by the urban environment eroded the spatial and social barriers dividing the poor and the genteel, creating opportunities for servants to participate in, as well as experience, a wide range of musical practices. This chapter also discusses the role of John Henley, a Nonconformist priest, political journalist and aspiring popular educator, in inculcating among a broad range of the urban populace an awareness of genteel musical discourses.

Chapter 4 will examine the two secular musical performance traditions which servants were most likely to encounter, and encountered most frequently: vernacular fiddle playing and ballad singing. This chapter discusses how these two musical practices were perceived as social technologies: the kinds of social effects they could have, and how their practitioners were regarded. It also considers in detail the temporal organisation of instrumental fiddle dance tunes from three sources, intended to cast some light on how fiddling might have sounded in the two localities discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, and the ways fiddlers at Erddig in particular might have interpreted their repertoires. The first of these is the manuscript tune-book of John Alawon Thomas, active in North-East Wales (the same region as Erddig, the case study in Chapter 2, although there is no evidence that John Thomas had any direct connection with the country house). The other two sources represent a metropolitan counterpoint to John Thomas's practice: dance collections printed by St. Clement Danes music publisher Thomas Cahusac; and the so-called 'Kitty Bridges' manuscript tune-book, with a link to Windsor in the acrostic verse which opens the manuscript. These instrumental dance tunes can be analysed as a spatial practice, since detailed examination suggests the centrality of temporal organisation in the way these tunes were modified and ornamented in performance and aural transmission. Temporal organisation, in turn, is central to how music orders bodies in space through the prism of dance. Ballads are then discussed to provide insight into the practices of ballad singing in

²²⁰ D. A. Kent, 'Ubiquitous but Invisible: Female Domestic Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London', *History Workshop*, 28 (1989), pp.111-128.

the streets of St Clement Danes: their audiences, their performance style and quality, and crucially, the ways they organised space around them in the crowded and chaotic eighteenth-century street.

Chapter 5 takes a more theoretical approach to the issues of gender and sexuality that arise from an exploration of eighteenth-century domestic service and vernacular musical performance. In a variety of contemporary contexts and situations, musical performance is seen to be a performance of gender, in the conceptual framework of Judith Butler. However, this chapter will examine how the performance of gender in these eighteenth-century contexts can also be modelled as a transaction, in which gender is a form of capital, a commodity produced through daily performance. This framework makes sense of the ways in which gender intersects with the economies of domestic service and musical performance, as well as the currencies of reputation and status. This chapter consequently sharpens the themes of the thesis into a useful analytical tool for those studying a variety of historical and musicological fields: the histories of gender and sexuality, the social practices of vernacular music-making, and the relationships of class, gender, and race to 'elite' culture.

Chapter 2: Domestic Service, Musical Practices and Liminality in Erddig, Denbighshire

Introduction

This chapter will examine servants' lives through a microhistory of Erddig, a country house about two miles from Wrexham, in North Wales. The estate's house was initially constructed in the late seventeenth century by the debt-ridden Josiah Edisbury, and subsequently bought by John Meller and kept in the family of his cousins, the Yorkes.¹ Erddig, for a house smaller than the 'great' aristocratic houses such as Cannons, Blenheim or Chatsworth, has unusually complete eighteenth-century documentation, including of its servants. A substantial section of servants (perhaps 10-15% of all servants)² had been hired by genteel and aristocratic employers like Erddig's owners; country house servants also had an outsized presence in both contemporary discourses about servants and the rural economy. In discussing Erddig, the first chronological focus will be the decades between London lawyer John Meller purchasing the house in 1714, and his cousin Simon Yorke (the first of the lengthy Yorke dynasty to hold the property) inheriting the house in 1733. Not only was that a time of considerable political discord in the Wrexham area, the geographical dynamics which arose from a large Welsh estate being bought by a wealthy London professional provide an especially interesting focus for a case study. The second chronological focus will consider the period from the 1750s to the 1780s, during which time Erddig's local presence changed considerably and the Yorke family began to engage with musicmaking in a much more active manner. Archival material from this period, especially account books, provides rich narratives of music-making at Erddig and the economics of

¹ Merlin Waterson, *The Servants' Hall: A Domestic History of Erddig* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p.22.

² Meldrum, p.22 indicates that although fully 40% of domestic servants in consistory court records who identified an employer identified one that was noble or genteel (from 'Esquire' up to the hereditary aristocracy), Meldrum acknowledges this is likely an overestimate, due to a tendency to emphasise elite employers whose status would make them more readily memorable and important for the servants testifying. The St. Clement Danes parish records examined in Chapter 3 give a perhaps more realistic figure of 11% who work for noble or genteel employers.

servant life, providing a base of evidence for understanding the economic, social and geographic liminality of servant life there.

Previous scholarship on Erddig begins with Albinia Cust's rare 1914 antiquarian history of Erddig, which is effectively an annotated collection of letters.³ Later, Merlin Waterson's history of domestic servants on the estate was written while the National Trust was restoring the house in the 1970s.⁴ His monograph is an admirable introduction to the Yorke family, their housekeepers and estate managers, and the history of the buildings and their functions. Eric Griffiths's biography of Philip Yorke, owner of Erddig from 1770 to 1804, which includes important evidence from Cust's book, has a great deal of material relating to Philip Yorke's management of the Erddig estate, including the fabric of the house. However, it contains very little about Yorke's management of and relationships to his domestic servants, focusing instead on his tenants and estate managers.⁵ In more recent times, Professor Jeanice Brooks of Southampton University is conducting an ongoing survey project with Wiebke Thormählen and Katrina Faulds of musical materials in British country houses, and Erddig has been a prominent case study in their research. The focus of their research has been the harpsichord scores of Anne Jemima Yorke, one of the family's first keen amateur musicians (before her death at age 16 in 1770) as well as cataloguing the house's collection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scores.⁶

Attempting to assess whether Erddig was a 'typical' large country house would be a meaningless endeavour, since each had unique characteristics which only average out to become the 'typical'. Instead, considering the unique circumstances of each case study, and their consequences for musical life in that place, facilitates comparison with other similar cases with different characteristics. Focusing on a small, geographically limited community in this manner, bringing as many sources to bear as possible, is inspired by the micro-

³ Albinia Lucy Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig on the Dyke* (London: John Lane, 1914).

⁴ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, pp.14, 18-19.

⁵ Eric Griffiths, *Philip Yorke I, Squire of Erthig* (Wrexham: Bridge Books, 1995).

⁶ More about the project can be found at the University of Southampton website (www.southampton.ac.uk/music/research/projects/music-home-and-heritage.page, accessed 24.02.2020), and the over-arching Sound Heritage project of which it is part has its own website (sound-heritage.ac.uk, accessed 24.02.2020). Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 2, p.114.

historical work of Keith Wrightson and David Levine in their study of an early modern Essex village.⁷ Erddig is a different kind of community from a rural village, however, and the comprehensive tracing of individual biographies in the style of Wrightson and Levine was not practicable due to the local prevalence of common surnames such as Jones and Williams, the relatively high mobility of servants, and the incompleteness of Erddig records.

The eighteenth-century records that the landowning Yorke family kept at Erddig, now residing in the Flintshire County Archives, consist principally of account books, both personal and estate, letters addressed to the family (with a few notable exceptions, such as the very important servant letter D/E/550, which was neither addressed to the family nor written by them), and legal documents either regarding the estate – land deeds and such – or John Meller’s time as a magistrate. A lot of other, rather miscellaneous materials also survive, due to the Yorke family’s propensity for conservation (made manifest in the ‘Failures Gallery’ at Erddig, filled with unwanted, but retained, gifts and purchases). Erddig’s documentation is not a comprehensive or disinterested source of information about servants’ musical lives. Only occasionally did the family’s musical activities warrant specific mention in account books; and the musical activities of the family’s servants, of course, were almost exclusively at their own expense (hence invisible in account books) and of secondary importance for estate management (hence rare in letters). For instance, the only evidence of John Yorke (the nephew of John Meller) engaging with music is a 1711 letter to his uncle asking for money and apologising for incurring ‘trifling Expences’ such as spending 30s on flutes and ‘gratifications’ to his teacher.⁸ The important fact for both sender and addressee was the cost the family might assume, not the musicality of this purchase. Nevertheless, the exceptionally complete records of life at Erddig include a correspondingly unusual level of detail about servants’ lives – sufficient to document a number of opportunities servants had to engage with musical practices.

⁷ Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling 1525-1700* (London: Academic Press, 1979).

⁸ Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 1, pp.178-179.

This chapter will explore the ways in which Erddig servants' musical lives were shaped by the relationships between spaces and places. In particular, during the first few decades of the eighteenth century, Erddig was unusually strongly attached to London, as well as local centres like Wrexham and Chester. London lawyer John Meller, who bought Erddig, and the Yorke family who subsequently inherited it, often visited all three locations, taking servants along with them; much of the furniture, goods and chattels of Erddig was procured directly from London, and other goods (such as the clocks) from Chester, while foodstuffs were procured in Wrexham and its locale.⁹ Unlike more established estates, Erddig had been built recently, and bought by a London professional with relatively few friends in the region, as this chapter will explain. This microhistory, then, will consider the ways in which the country house could serve as a gateway to London, as well as being a node in a regional network with other country houses in the vicinity of Wrexham such as Marchwiell House and Wynnstay, as well as Wrexham's own important people.

The apparent fixity and continuity of a continuously occupied country estate belies the ways in which an estate like Erddig – its architecture, but also its position within regional and national networks – could be instrumentalised to a variety of different ends by different owners. Despite Erddig's stability of ownership by alternating generations of Simons and Philips Yorke (from the accession of the first Simon Yorke in 1733 to the transfer of ownership from the last Philip Yorke to the National Trust in 1973), the behaviour of the Yorke family and their relations to the outside world underwent something of a transformation between the 1740s and the 1790s. Previous antagonisms with local gentry during the tenure of John Meller had clearly settled down, and account books, letters and diaries show a much busier local social calendar and a refocusing of the family's connections away from London and towards the local gentry, in particular the Watkins Wynn family of Wynnstay. Wynnstay was well known locally for its musical entertainments and its idiosyncratic portraits of servants, both features Erddig emulated during the 1780s and 1790s.¹⁰ In addition, Philip Yorke worked for many years on a local history and genealogy

⁹ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, pp.24, 35.

¹⁰ Peter D.G. Thomas, 'Wynn, Sir Watkin Williams, fourth baronet', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: OUP, 2014, www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 22/08/2021); Jeanice Brooks, personal communication.

volume which modern historians have read as an attempt to tie the Yorke family to Welsh tradition.¹¹

Like most country houses, Erddig had a bilateral relationship with London; throughout the century, however, this was particularly strong, with clear flows of ideas, goods, migrant workers and genteel travellers. While London held 11.4% of the entire English population in 1700, all other towns and cities over 10,000 people combined held only 1.9%; London was by far the largest producer of manufactured goods in England and Wales, as well as the largest consumer.¹² Rural areas felt the impact of London's tremendous growth almost as much as the metropolis itself: the quality of roads, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century, increased considerably, and the seasonal migration of the gentry to and from their country seats affected the rhythm of the social calendar and the cultural dynamics of provincial towns.¹³ London's status as the economic centre of many trades, as well as its status as a region of incredibly high adult mortality, made migration to and from it a widespread experience.¹⁴ As Chapter 3 will discuss, servants who migrated to work in London and then returned, either seasonally or permanently, to the countryside experienced a considerably different economic system, with unusual patterns of labour relations and radically different interactions with luxury goods and leisure. For upwardly mobile servants like James Macdonald, London was a good place to find a new genteel employer, whom he would follow to their country seat and on other journeys.¹⁵

This is not to cast the nation beyond the capital as in any way peripheral: as the 'country dances' published in London discussed in Chapter 4 show, the metropolis could often be a staging post for the recirculation of goods, knowledge and people from one part

¹¹ Griffiths, *Philip Yorke I*, pp.154-155.

¹² Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp.2-4; Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), p.93.

¹³ William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: a Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp.118, 125.

¹⁴ E. A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750', *Past & Present*, 37 (1967), pp.44-70, pp.48-49; Peter Earle, *A City Full of People: Men and Women of London 1650-1750* (London: Methuen, 1994), pp.47, 264-265; John Lander, *Death and the Metropolis: Studies in the Demographic History of London* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p.47.

¹⁵ Macdonald, pp.74-75.

of the countryside to another. Favoured places outside the city where the gentry congregated, such as Bath, were important centres of musical culture, and servants and musicians alike followed the gentry to such places.¹⁶ The wealth and power of the landed gentry in eighteenth-century Britain exerted economic and socio-cultural gravitational pulls wherever they chose to spend their time: in London, in another town, or at their country seats.

Thus, there was a two-way flow of people and ideas between London, regional centres and the countryside, which had consequences not only for the economics of domestic service, but also the social experience of service. For instance, having experienced the relative fluidity of the urban labour market could lead to an erosion of traditional social hierarchies, relationships and controls, changing the ways former migrant servants related to their families and wider communities. This had its dangers; for instance, the misogynist abuses perpetrated in villages and towns across England by John Cannon and his fellow excise officers,¹⁷ or fraudulent dealings, a constant preoccupation of contemporary publications.¹⁸ Fluidity also meant precarity, and servants were rarely provided for in case of sickness in service, especially in urban areas where tradition and *noblesse oblige* (so much as it ever existed) played a smaller role in the employment relationship.¹⁹ Erddig during and shortly after the reign of John Meller is in a unique position to speak to these alleged effects, since Meller and his nephew Simon Yorke were not only accustomed to running a London household, but brought servants and furnishings and planted them in their Welsh estate. Erddig in this period truly straddled these two locales and the different languages and cultural norms they represented; its servants were therefore likewise in a liminal position between London and the rural country house, economically and socially.

¹⁶ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.23-25.

¹⁷ Tim Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny in the Life of John Cannon, 1684-1743', *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), 25-43, pp.37, 39.

¹⁸ Peter King, 'Making Crime News: Newspapers, Violent Crime and the Selective Reporting of Old Bailey Trials in the late Eighteenth Century', *Crime, History & Societies*, 13, 1 (2009), 91-116, p.99.

¹⁹ Meldrum, pp.89-90, 121.

However, as this chapter will explore, the liminal fluidity which country house servants experienced – having a legitimate, but conditional role in spaces and places they could not normally enter – enabled them to explore new worlds of luxury and pleasure, albeit in strictly limited ways.²⁰ Receiving a mistress's old clothes had long been a customary perquisite for maidservants, and tea and sugar – still costly imported goods – were allegedly expected by many servants.²¹ Nor was it only material goods to which servants were granted conditional access: a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry V* at Erddig in the 1780s was prefaced with an original verse about the house's servants.²² Servants were, it is implied, allowed to view this canonical masterpiece (when theatre-going would otherwise be beyond their means), but also thus granted an enduring textual legacy, albeit only in the words of their masters. The proximity between masters and servants produced an intercourse of goods and cultural experiences between them, an implicit social mobility, and sections of the literary elite (such as Daniel Defoe and Thomas Seaton) decried this undermining of the divinely ordained social order.²³ Such values were made manifest in the old 'sumptuary laws', restrictions on what luxury goods people of different stations could consume.²⁴ Country houses like Erddig were nodes in national and transnational networks, connecting its residents not only to different and distant places – from London to the West Indies – but also to markers of high status, both material and experiential.

Since the 1980s, the conventional historiography has been that the liminality that inherently belonged to servants, especially servants to the gentry, was profoundly isolating and alienating. This was powerfully articulated in Sarah Maza's pioneering study of domestic service in eighteenth-century France.²⁵ Caught between two stools, servants were apparently fully accepted neither in the genteel society that they served nor in the

²⁰ Meldrum, p.18.

²¹ Haywood, p.6; Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p.70.

²² Griffiths, *Philip Yorke I*, p.171.

²³ For instance, [Daniel Defoe], 'The Great Law of Subordination consider'd', in *The Behaviour of Servants Inquired Into* (London: H. Whittridge, n.d.), pp.14-15; Thomas Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* (London: T. Goodwin, 1720), pp.159-160.

²⁴ Paul Slack, 'Material Progress and the Challenge of Affluence in Seventeenth-Century England', *The Economic History Review*, 62, 3 (2009), 576-603, especially p.583.

²⁵ Cited in Meldrum, p.69.

communities they had come from.²⁶ This hypothesis has always had a strong spatial aspect, founded on architectural readings such as Lawrence and Jean Fawtier Stone's, which posit an increasingly segregated household, servants relegated to the marginal spaces of the house and with separate stairwells and service doors.²⁷ The isolated location of many country houses and the distance many servants had travelled from their homes also allegedly contributed to their position of vulnerability and lack of status within the local community.²⁸

This characterisation of a servant class as 'caught between two stools' certainly has its detractors – Carolyn Steedman and Tim Meldrum among them. The former emphasises maidservants' 'modernity', that is, their primary relationship being to the cash economy rather than the economy of obligation.²⁹ Consequently, servants seem to have had a nascent sense of class awareness, staking a claim over the fruits of their labour (even as their employers sought to depict them as mere instruments of their masters).³⁰ In this model, servants are not trapped by their masters but their own economic agents who, to a lesser or greater extent, know the value of their labour and seek fair treatment or pecuniary advantage. There is some suggestion of this 'modernity' in Meldrum's account of an earlier period, although he does not describe it as such; in his study of London service, he remarks on the freedom with which servants moved from position to position.³¹ However, the other striking finding from Meldrum's study is the embeddedness of servants within the urban community: not only experiencing a degree of kinship with their fellow servants, but also masters and mistresses in middling households, tradespeople, extended family (including old family friends) and neighbours.³² It was apparently common for maidservants to share a bed with their mistresses, if the latter were unmarried, widowed or had an absent husband, nominally for the preservation of chastity, but perhaps also for physical warmth and

²⁶ Hill, *Servants*, pp.110-112.

²⁷ As discussed in Meldrum, pp.77-78.

²⁸ Hill, *Servants*, pp.44-45.

²⁹ Steedman, p.25-27, 44.

³⁰ Steedman, pp.45-46, 56-58.

³¹ Meldrum, pp.20-24.

³² *Ibid.*, pp.82-83, 124.

companionship.³³ This is a strikingly different picture to the emotionally cold and deliberately isolating treatment of servants Bridget Hill infers from nineteenth-century sources.³⁴ Erddig, as a country house some of whose staff were very far from home, is different enough from Meldrum's London domestic service market or Steedman's humbler rural employers to provide another perspective on the liminality of servants.

This chapter begins by examining the spaces of Erddig within which servants might have encountered music, to contextualise the ways in which music interacted with and produced space in a specific setting (with the likely musical repertory to be explored in greater depth in Chapter 4). Next, the chapter moves beyond the house itself to explore Wrexham: how Erddig's servants could take part in musicmaking in different sociable and religious contexts there, and how their status as Erddig servants affected their relationships with local people (especially during the tenure of John Meller). The subsequent section will consider servants' liminal encounters with elite and London culture, focused around the servant artist Betty Ratcliffe and also Erddig letter D/E/550, an important piece of evidence of servant music-making in London, but also one that is highly revealing about the ways the letter's recipient, a servant at Erddig, and the sender, probably a former steward at Erddig, regarded both London and music. Finally, the chapter will examine how free Erddig's servants were to engage with music on their own terms, initially through an examination of servants' finances and how the estate paid out wages, and then through a critical examination of the famous painting of a Black coachboy depicted with a French horn that decorates Erddig's servant hall. The relationship between Erddig's owners and that Black coachboy and his legacy will be seen to be the furthest extreme of precarious liminality, one which white servants never experienced.

³³ Ibid., pp.80, 94, 118.

³⁴ See note 26.

Erddig – Internal Spaces

This section will explore the changing internal spaces of Erddig's main house over the course of the eighteenth century, examining the possibilities servants might have had to make or experience music within them, as well as the ways music, as a spatial practice, might have helped produce sociability in the kitchen, servants' hall and other spaces over which servants had more agency. Initial owner Josiah Edisbury's sketch plan of the ground floor (Fig. 2.1a) implies a layout not unlike that of Nether Lypiatt Manor, a small country house from the turn of the eighteenth century in which the ground floor is given over to a hall, dining parlour, common parlour (presumably for the entertainment of tenants and less genteel visitors) and a drawing room.³⁵ However, there are some unknowable aspects of Edisbury's room plan. The 'small parlour' (as it was described in Meller's day) to the left of the hall, with its closet and storage space, might represent an attempt at a state apartment, but this would be a lopsided arrangement without a similar apartment across the hall. The central hall – now the entrance hall – is a classic feature of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century 'formal plans', as Mark Girouard characterises them, but the complementary central saloon (or dining parlour) is apparently missing, with the back (east front) of the house a series of four rooms, none of them central and all ambiguous in purpose.³⁶ They could either represent state apartments, with one bedchamber and one dressing room/antechamber each, or a small saloon (second from left) with the rooms on the right hand side representing one apartment, while the small room in the top left-hand corner could be a servants' room for the amenity of the possible state apartment in the bottom left.

In 1714 the estate was taken over by John Meller, a successful London attorney.³⁷ Meller initially extended the house by two window bays on either side, rearranging the irregular back row of Edisbury's house to become a classic central saloon with two apartments opening from it, one of them a formal state apartment with its own, lavishly

³⁵ Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: a Social and Architectural History* (London: Yale University Press, 1978), pp.150-151.

³⁶ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, pp.135-138.

³⁷ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.24.

furnished drawing room.³⁸ Later, but before 1726, Meller extended the wings further, allowing the state apartment to have a dressing room, producing more space for basement offices, and starting work on a chapel, which was still incomplete according to a visitor's report in 1732.³⁹ Once the chapel was complete, music must have been made there regularly – likely in the form of psalmody (since Meller actively propagated books of psalmody locally as part of his SPCK activities, as described later) – but no references to music or worship in the chapel exist until well past the mid-century.⁴⁰ Genteel musical entertainments during the time of Meller or the first Simon Yorke, such as the dances at Erddig described by H. Grove in 1749,⁴¹ must have taken place in either the hall or the saloon, but neither would have been entirely optimal: the hall was notoriously draughty, despite a gilded leather screen used to ameliorate it, and the saloon was significantly smaller than it is today.⁴² Passing between the saloon, the dining parlour (now the drawing room) and the small parlour (now the library) necessitated passing through the hall, making circulation more difficult. In addition, relevant to this enquiry, access for servants to the saloon would have been more difficult with this arrangement, with the backstairs opening only onto the state apartment, dining parlour and hall, needing to pass through these spaces to access the saloon.

Philip Yorke transformed the ground floor of the house from his marriage in 1770 onwards, refacing in stone the west front, but more crucially altering the internal arrangement of spaces.⁴³ The state apartment was moved upstairs, making space for a more circulatory pattern of sociable rooms that had become fashionable in imitation of the Duke of Norfolk's London residence.⁴⁴ The saloon was enlarged, and the former state apartment became a grand dining room with ornamental stonework, freeing the former dining parlour to become a drawing room.⁴⁵ This meant that the backstairs corridor, used by servants as well as discreet callers, gave direct access to the dining room, drawing room and hall,

³⁸ [Oliver Garnett], *Erddig* (The National Trust, 1995), pp.8-11.

³⁹ Garnett, *Erddig*, p.11.

⁴⁰ For instance, there are no references to music in the chapel in Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp.298-299.

⁴² Garnett, *Erddig*, pp.48,56.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁴⁴ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, pp.194-195.

⁴⁵ See note 43.

allowing a freer movement of both guests and servants around the different sociable spaces. The nineteenth-century installation of an organ in the (entrance) hall is a possible indication that this room was the principal venue or genteel musicmaking in the house; the Duke of Norfolk's house in St. James's Square (which was a popular model for contemporary genteel spaces) places the music room only second in a long series of reception rooms, suggesting that music rooms were generally placed early in the sociable visitor's journey.⁴⁶ Following these changes to the architecture came references to semi-public music-making at Erddig, which will be described later in the chapter.

A 1726 inventory, from before Philip Yorke's changes, identifies both a 'New' and an 'Old' servants' hall. The present servants' hall is believed to be the former, which contained three 'long tables', a large number of stools, and some laundry equipment.⁴⁷ If Edisbury had been following classical seventeenth-century practice, the 'Old' servants' hall may well have been where the butler's pantry currently stands, underneath the main hall (an act of symbolic symmetry). Given its smaller size, it contained in 1726 less furniture than the 'New' hall; even so, both rooms must have been very well filled. They had to accommodate at least the 14 domestic servants listed in a 1725 wage account, including several maidservants and a coach team.⁴⁸ The numerous farm labourers and garden workers – whose accounts are always kept separate – may also have had access to the servants' halls. One long table currently nearly fills the servants' hall, while an enormous hearth dominates the other half of the room (see Fig. 2.1b and 2.1c), providing ample warmth and light for servants' social activities as well as cooking and laundry.

⁴⁶ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, p.196.

⁴⁷ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.30.

⁴⁸ 'Servants' Wages to Michaelmas 1725', D/E/368, Flintshire County Archive.

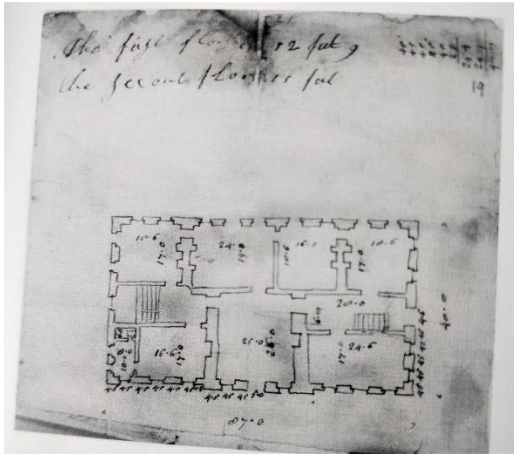


Figure 2.1a: Undated sketch plan of the first floor of Erddig during Josiah Edisbury's ownership, reproduced from the National Trust, Erddig, Wrexham [house guide] (Swindon: National Trust, 1995), p. 8.



Figure 2.1b and 2.1c: Two images of the Erddig Servants' Hall taken in August 2017, which could be identified with either the 'Old' or the 'New' Servants' Hall from the 1726 inventory. Note the huge size of the hearth (which now contains a late nineteenth/early twentieth-century enclosed range, but

would have been open or semi-open in the eighteenth century), and the length of the table, which might be of similar proportions to the three 'long tables' from the inventory.

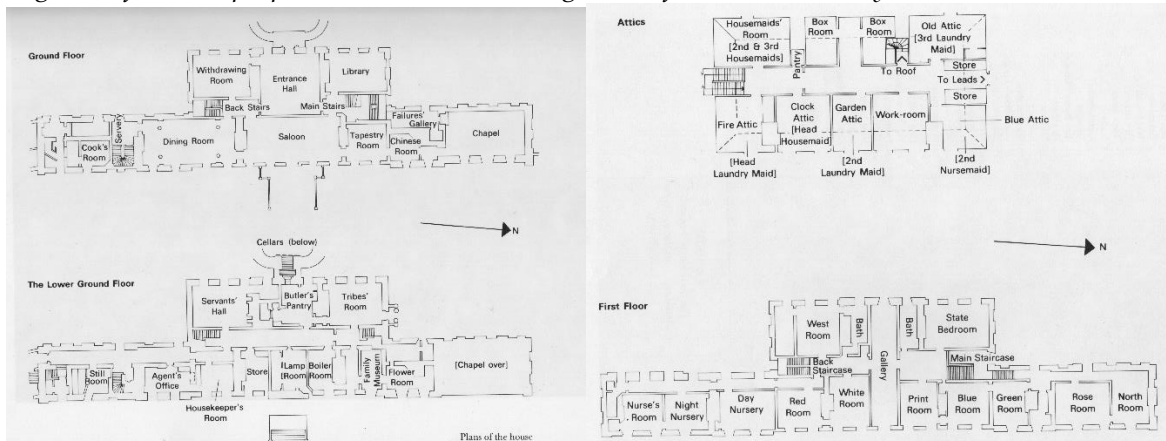


Figure 2.1d: Internal floorplans of Erddig, taken from Waterson, *The Servant's Hall*, pp. xxii-xxiii.

Although the three long tables and bulky laundry equipment would make this relatively small room very overfilled by modern standards (especially given the decidedly robust construction of eighteenth-century kitchen furniture), this might not have been an obstacle for musical entertainments. Images such as *A Servants' Dance* by Thomas Rowlandson (see Figure 2.2 below) suggest that servants moved tables up against walls to clear space for dancing; eighteenth-century genteel concert venues in which hundreds gathered, such as York Buildings, were not at all large.⁴⁹ Crowding at balls, dances and masquerades was so ubiquitous that Jonas Hanway hypothesised that therein lay their true attraction (although 'eating, drinking, music, and dancing, all unite to inflame').⁵⁰ With its tiled floor and very low ceiling (lowered still further by a large wooden wheel decorating the ceiling) the acoustics are also mediocre for music with the current furnishings, which are probably sparser than the eighteenth-century fabric. Making the space more amenable to music-making is the excellent soundproofing I experienced on my visit to Erddig in August 2017. Two doors down from the servants' hall was a very loud audio exhibit; just upstairs was another; but both were inaudible from inside the servants' hall, with its thick walls and solid floor. Hence, although the servants' hall is by the staircase up to the main house, and next to the butler's pantry, it would still have been relatively viable to make music there

⁴⁹ York Buildings' concert room was approximately 48 feet (14.6 m) long and 35 feet (10.7 m) wide, and yet held hundreds. Hugh Arthur Scott, 'London's First Concert Room', *Music & Letters*, 18, 4 (1937), pp.379-390, p.385.

⁵⁰ Hanway, pp. 417-418, 420-421.

without disturbing the family. There is no direct evidence of music-making in the Servants' Hall, however.



Figure 2.2: A late eighteenth-century satirical print by Thomas Rowlandson, *The Servants Dance* (National Galleries of Scotland, D 2375, www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/19038/servants-dance).

The presence of the two servants' halls in 1726 may speak to some kind of segregation between upper and lower, or indoor and outdoor servants; Erddig historian Merlin Waterson suggests the former.⁵¹ Servants' access to the servants' hall (other than at mealtimes) would also have been affected by where they slept. A few servants slept in the same basement corridor that held the servants' hall, but others (probably maidservants) slept in the garret rooms at the top of the house, while outdoor servants probably slept in the outbuildings (since demolished and rebuilt, although the nineteenth-century outbuildings certainly contain some kind of living space). Young outdoor servants, such as the coachboy, were apparently expected to help around the house: this probably also applied to the other livery servants (whose contracted duties were always somewhat nebulous).⁵² Meldrum suggests that even in the late seventeenth century the principle of

⁵¹ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.30.

⁵² Macdonald, pp.30-32.

gendered segregation in servants' living arrangements was well established; the arrangement of Erddig, itself a late seventeenth-century house, lends itself to such segregation, with the servant accommodation scattered thus across the house.⁵³ This gives the servants' hall a particularly important function as one of the only sites of heterosocial intercourse for servants, a function often performed by the kitchen in smaller houses.⁵⁴ Separating this function from the kitchen, however, might have had exclusionary consequences for those maidservants (or, in the case of Jack Nicholas, manservants) whose role required them to spend long hours in the kitchen.⁵⁵ Indeed, it is probable that the kitchen, as well as servants' hall, saw servants socialising and taking leisure. Once a large new kitchen was built, separate from the house for reasons of fire safety, in the 1770s, the dynamics of Erddig's social spaces must have changed once again, eroding the division between indoor and outdoor service.⁵⁶ Perhaps this is why the two servants' halls were whittled down to one by the nineteenth century.

The moving of the kitchen to a dedicated, carefully built outbuilding with high ceilings and large windows makes sense when one considers the function of an estate kitchen. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century kitchens have been studied comprehensively by Sara Pennell, her study encompassing not only their furnishings and fittings, their architecture and their cooking technologies, but also their social functions. The main thrust of Pennell's history is that the kitchen was a site of continuous technical innovation and genteel interest, contesting the twentieth-century belief that the kitchen had remained a bastion of unchanged medieval practice, kept away from genteel eyes and reforming interest, until the intervention of industrial home design.⁵⁷ Contesting Steedman's notion that the kitchen was a 'nowhere place', she argues convincingly that the kitchen was the nexus and heart of the early modern household, the place where industry coincided with

⁵³ Meldrum, pp.78-79.

⁵⁴ J. J. Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), pp.128-130.

⁵⁵ Jack Nicholas was a man who assisted with cooking at Erddig, commemorated in the earliest of the servant portraits with verses. The verse is transcribed in D/E/3586, p.3, Flintshire County Archives.

⁵⁶ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.13. See also Sara Pennell on the prevalence of, and reasons for keeping kitchens separate from living spaces, *The Birth of the English Kitchen, 1600-1850* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp.46-48.

⁵⁷ Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen*, pp.4-6, 25-26, 151-153.

domesticity.⁵⁸ Almost every economic activity on the entire Erddig estate would have involved the kitchen in some capacity, from laundry to brewing, farm work and even some industrial processes. It was usually the place where water was brought into the property, and one of the warmest and brightest rooms of the house, with a large fire continuously maintained. It was the room of the house that needed the most careful accounting, consuming so many perishable items, fuel, cooking supplies and equipment.⁵⁹ Carolyn Steedman even found some cooks with marginal schooling in literacy, in humble single-servant households, who kept their own accounts, aware of the necessity of doing so.⁶⁰ Both the unknown original location of the kitchen within the house, and Erddig's outbuilding kitchen, make sense in this context, then: it was an integral place within the household which required supervision from the housekeeper or estate manager (both of whom had offices in the cellar of the main building), but also a place where the messiest household tasks took place, such as handling coal, game birds and perhaps wood ash for soap. Unlike many large country houses, Erddig did not seem to brew its own beer, distil its own spirits or produce its own butter – probably because of proximity to a healthy commercial environment at Wrexham – but that may have been the aspiration, given the prevailing fashion for self-sufficient estates.⁶¹

If the economic activity centred around the kitchen was the reason for genteel interest in it, the social activity that gathered around it was often a reason for genteel concern. Being a bright, warm space where some servants spent much of their working day, where other servants often came in from time to time to avail themselves of the kitchen's utilities, and masters and mistresses only intervened occasionally, the kitchen was a natural hub of sociable activity among servants (and employers too in less socially stratified households).⁶² Newspaper stories and literature like the play *High Life Below Stairs* encouraged employers to imagine their servants were one step away from hosting rowdy,

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp.10-11, 15-16, 114-117.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.50.

⁶⁰ Steedman, pp.280-282.

⁶¹ Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen*, p.24.

⁶² Ibid., pp.105-109, 113-115, 147-148.

debauched parties at their expense in their kitchen.⁶³ Whether the Yorkes believed this of their own staff or not, siting the kitchen in an outbuilding, with high ceilings that cooled the room, might have made it a less hospitable space for servant parties. The cosy servants' hall was now under the nose of the estate manager (whose office was one or two rooms away) and at a considerable remove from the estate's food stores. It was also removed from the cook-maids and all of the ancillary staff who moved through the kitchen in the course of their duties. Waterson's speculation that the two servants' halls were for upper and lower servants might then find purchase in the new spatial arrangement of the house, in which those who toiled in the kitchen were kept physically separate from those who dined, supped and rested in the servants' hall. The kitchen's high ceilings, reverberant cubic shape, and concentration of bulky cooking equipment would most likely have made it less amenable to music-making than the servants' hall. Nevertheless, the ingenuity of eighteenth-century would-be musicians means that it is very likely that the servants' hall saw musical sociability, and only somewhat less likely that the kitchen saw it. Certainly Erddig letter D/E/550, discussed later in the chapter, shows that music-making took place even in the (usually cramped and dark) kitchen of a townhouse.

Besides music that servants made or organised for themselves, they may have heard music at events organised and paid for by their masters. Itinerant fiddlers and harpists toured North Wales, playing at public houses, weddings and private events, including at country houses: later in the century, the Yorke family employed 'Jack the Turner and his Boy' (the 'boy' either a child or a servant) to play for their children's entertainment in January 1784, February 1785 (for a Children's Ball, with a third musician) and January 1786 (for an 'Xmas Ball'), paying them a guinea between them each time. In December 1782 a guinea is spent on '2 Fiddles', probably referring to employing Jack and his boy rather than the purchase of instruments.⁶⁴ The butler's book, D/E/418, recording petty expenses from 1776 to 1779, lists two payments 'To harper by Misstres order', 5 shillings each time, on 26th

⁶³ Ibid., pp.148-151; Gillian Russell, ' "Keeping Place": Servants, Theater and Sociability in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain', *The Eighteenth Century*, 42, 1 (2001), 21-42, pp.23-29; also see Hecht's uncritical reproduction of this moral panic in *The Domestic Servant Class*, pp. 129-130, 133.

⁶⁴ Erddig estate papers D/E/385, Flintshire County Archive, commonplace book, entries for December 1782, January 1784, February 1785, January 1786, pp.167, 181, 203, 217

August and 16th October 1776.⁶⁵ These are substantial payments, significantly more than the shilling the mistress gives ‘a poor Man’ (a beggar); the two were both probably itinerant but it is clear that the harpist’s skills were appreciated and respected by the Yorkes. Such incidents are sometimes considered evidence of a shared pre-modern (or pre-industrial) culture that transcends class boundaries.⁶⁶ Yet Elizabeth Montagu’s censure of one ‘Lord T --’ who encouraged his son ‘in swearing, and singing nasty ballads with the servants’ demonstrates that the genteel use of vernacular culture could be, at least, controversial.⁶⁷ Whatever the Yorkes’ relationship to vernacular culture, Jack the Turner embodies Katherine Butler Brown’s model of musicians as liminal figures, able to access, in their role as performers (‘a service profession’), spaces they would otherwise have been barred from.⁶⁸

There is no evidence (of which I am aware) of the Yorkes putting on entertainment explicitly for their servants in the eighteenth century, although it is likely that servants would have been provided for at each of the family’s celebrations. A description of how this was organised comes from James Macdonald’s memoirs: around 1750, Macdonald was employed as a postilion to a minor gentleman who married the daughter of a local lord. As part of the wedding celebrations,

[the master’s new wife] gave a feast in my master’s own house to the blacksmiths, wheelers, harness-makers, painters, coachmen and postilions, and helpers, and all their wives and children. My master and mistress dined with them, and, after dinner, spent the evening abroad; leaving Mrs. Gibbs [the mistress]’s niece to conduct the entertainment at home, with plenty of wine, rum, punch, and ale, and a fiddler.⁶⁹

Balls organised expressly for servant entertainment occurred in some great houses towards the end of the century.⁷⁰ Account books and the other Erddig papers do not document any such grand wedding parties at Erddig in the eighteenth century, although the Sound Heritage research team did find surviving posters for an 1846 wedding at Erddig, detailing a

⁶⁵ Erddig estate papers D/E/418, butler’s book.

⁶⁶ e.g. Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1978), pp.23-29, 270.

⁶⁷ Elizabeth Robinson Montagu, *The Letters of Mrs. E. Montagu, with Some of the Letters of Her Correspondence* [sic.], Vol. 1 (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1809), p.33.

⁶⁸ Katherine Butler Brown, ‘Introduction: Liminality and the Social Location of Musicians’, *Twentieth-Century Music*, 3, 1 (2007), 5-12, p.6.

⁶⁹ Macdonald, p.17.

⁷⁰ J. Jean Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), pp.126-127.

comprehensive list of public entertainments (some musical) and a public tea with cake.⁷¹ It is entirely possible some public events like this did take place at Erddig during the eighteenth century, however – I find it difficult to fathom how else the estate could use 33 gallons of sherry in a little over 18 months, 27 May 1783 to 15 February 1785 (upon which date the butler ordered 37 further gallons of sherry and 9 gallons of ‘Mountain’, perhaps a reference to ‘Mountain Malaga’ dessert wine).⁷² For instance, the ‘Children’s Ball’ for which a fiddler was employed in February 1785 may well have included all of the estate children – tenants’ and long-term servants’ families. Certainly, the Prologue which Philip Yorke inserted into the text of Shakespeare’s *Henry V* for a performance by the family’s children in January 1786 – a similar time of year to the previous engagements of the fiddler – made explicit reference to servants in the audience (Mary Rice the cook, ‘Gard’ner John’, and Betty Jones, one of the housemaids).⁷³ If servants were participants in the previous years’ musical entertainments, they may well have resembled the kind of entertainment John Macdonald experienced. Chapter 4 discusses further what kind of repertory rural fiddlers might have played in northeast Wales and how they might have played it.

In terms of music at Erddig made by, organised by or paid for by the estate’s owners, there is a clear sense of change over time. There is no evidence of John Meller engaging with musical culture whatsoever. Apart from the dances at Erddig described by H. Grove in 1749, all of the evidence of participation in music-making by the Yorkes I have encountered comes from 1769 onwards, the earliest reference being a payment of 5 guineas in June 1770 ‘to Bach’s Concert yr. 1769’, presumably referring to an annual subscription to J.C. Bach and Carl Abel’s concert series.⁷⁴ This comes from the same year as the earliest music scores in Erddig’s library, according to Katrina Faulds and Jeanice Brooks.⁷⁵ The next two decades see an unprecedented increase in references to music – the employment of Jack the Fiddler for a

⁷¹ Personal communication.

⁷² Erddig estate papers D/E/418, butler’s book, p.27.

⁷³ Griffiths, *Philip Yorke*, p.171.

⁷⁴ Erddig paper D/E/385, commonplace book, p.20; Stephen Roe, ‘Bach, Johann Christian’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: OUP, 2004, www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 14/12/2020).

⁷⁵ Personal communication; also discussed in the blog post ‘Sounding Erddig: Workshops on Music and Sound’, *Sound Heritage* (sound-heritage.ac.uk/news/sounding-erddig-workshops-music-and-sound, accessed 24.02.2020).

series of balls in the 1780s, and the payments made to itinerant harpists in the 1770s, discussed earlier. However, there are also payments made for music-making in the local area. In early December 1782 the commonplace book records a present of 10 guineas 'to Band Musick' immediately after a bill for the White Lion (inn), Ruthin.⁷⁶ In August 1786 the family gave 1 guinea as a present to 'Ringers' and another guinea 'D^{to} [ditto to] Fidlers'; this appears to have been related to an annual event at Mold, since the following August (1787), another guinea is given to 'Ringers' and then another to 'Music ditto at Mold'.⁷⁷ This participation in local civic events may indicate that as the family intermarried and felt more rooted in the Wrexham area, their growing connections to other families encouraged music-making. As I will discuss with reference to Elizabeth Ratcliffe's letters, there is certainly also a deepening of ties between estate servants and the local area. Erddig's internal spaces were rooted within a wider context, and this shaped the musical experiences of those who inhabited them.

Erddig and Wrexham

Regardless of the relationship its owners had with the local gentry, Erddig was situated within a broader cultural, political and religious landscape, affecting the ways servants formed communities and interacted with them. Erddig's proximity to Wrexham gave servants access to all of the musical life a mid-sized provincial town could offer. The short journey there and back (about two miles) would have made an afternoon or evening in Wrexham an achievable goal, even on foot. Wrexham was a small town during the eighteenth century; according to Wrexham historian A. H. Dodd, the population grew very slowly over the period, reaching about 4,000 by the time of the 1801 census.⁷⁸ Buck's very accurate 1748 view of Wrexham from the south (see Figure 2.3) gives a good impression of the scale of the town, perhaps more intuitive than a map.

⁷⁶ Erddig paper D/E/385, commonplace book, p.165.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.227, 253.

⁷⁸ A. H. Dodd, 'Tory Wrexham', in *A History of Wrexham, Denbighshire*, ed. A. H. Dodd (Wrexham: Hughes and Son, 1957), p.96.



Figure 2.3: N. and S. Buck, The South View of Wrexham in the County of Denbigh, 1748. Reproduced in A. H. Dodd, ed., A History of Wrexham (Wrexham: Hughes and Son, 1957), frontispiece.

As a prominent Whig, Erddig’s owner John Meller immediately found a great deal of opposition from the militantly Tory, even Jacobite, gentry of Wrexham. In a letter dated 20th December 1720, he describes the region as ‘Governed by Fear’, claiming ‘those of large Estates do as much awe and tyrannize over the lesser Gentry as they do over the Poor’.⁷⁹ At first he had hoped to befriend the local gentry and win them over to supporting the new Hanoverian monarchy, he said, but he had given up hope in this strategy and instead sought to divide them. The most explosive moment in John Meller’s struggle against Jacobitism took place on 12 November 1722. Meller’s ruling (as a magistrate) ‘that no Dancing Master Stage Players or other Disorderly persons’ should be allowed to book Wrexham’s Town Hall led to a riot after a ball organised by a dancing master was cancelled by Meller’s agents, three of whom were beaten with sticks. The assault charges, tried by a grand jury after Meller sent them up to the Great Sessions, were dismissed, although Meller did manage to convict the ringleaders of the riot for disorderly conduct. Meller’s case papers state that the closing down of the ball ‘gave great Offence to Mr. Ellis and other persons in the Town’. This Ellis, not to be confused with the Ellis of letter D/E/550 below, was Meller’s fellow magistrate, and the ‘other persons in the Town’ are implicitly prominent, perhaps genteel

⁷⁹ Erddig estate paper D/E/1158, Flintshire County Archive, letter from John Meller to Philip Yorke of Hardwicke, 20th December 1720, p.2.

citizens. The clash between the apparent desire of the 'persons in the Town' for sociability and Meller's desire to prevent disorder disguised an ongoing violent sectarian tension. That same month, stones were thrown and violence had ensued in a clash between Jacobites and Loyalists over 5th November bonfires and celebrations of Guy Fawkes' defeat.⁸⁰

Although this series of events also hints at the kinds of tensions that servants would have experienced moving between Erddig and Wrexham, it at least implies some musical life took place in the town. There can be little doubt that some Erddig servants would have taken part in the massed 5th November celebrations; it is even possible that, had their master not attempted to ban the ball and cause a riot, the upper servants might have attended the ball themselves. In his time serving an aristocrat in rural Scotland, James Macdonald reports that the 'first and second cook went to dancing, or any merrymaking', frequently enough that he learned to 'dress supper' himself.⁸¹ Certainly some metropolitan aristocrats were surprised to find that rural balls, even those organised by aristocracy, were well attended by upper servants and tradespeople: Elizabeth Montagu in 1738 made fun of a rural assembly in Kent begun by 'Lady T-', who, 'to make up a number, is pleased, in her humility, to call in all the parsons, apprentices, tradesmen, apothecaries, and farmers, milliners, mantua-makers, haberdashers of small wares, and chambermaids'.⁸² She thought this a comical experience – indeed, she may well have been exaggerating – but some degree of non-genteel attendance she felt was a natural consequence of seeking to hold a grand ball in a lightly populated area at the end of the genteel season.⁸³ Chambermaids and apprentices never comingled in London entertainments, according to Lady Coke, who found a mixed ball to be 'strange' and a 'Novelty' when she attended one in Florence in 1774;⁸⁴ yet lady's maids and footmen were certainly present at most balls, whether in official or unofficial capacities. In Scottish balls, the custom was for servants to have 'a card hung at our bosom', but in

⁸⁰ Tim Jones, *Rioting in North-East Wales, 1536-1918* (Wrexham: Bridge Books, 1997), p.25.

⁸¹ Macdonald, p.31.

⁸² Elizabeth Montagu, *Letters*, p.43

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.44.

⁸⁴ Mary Campbell Coke, *The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke, Vol. 4* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), pp.291, 293-294.

England servants were not similarly distinguished from other guests save by the semiotics of their dress.⁸⁵

Below the level of balls marketed to the local gentry, there would have existed a variety of different musical spaces in Wrexham. Wrexham had been a market town specialising in livestock since the Middle Ages, attracting crowds to its March Fair.⁸⁶ Erddig's estate manager talks about one particular year's Wrexham Fair being a somewhat sad event: 'there was but a very few Cattle sold; and these very Cheap, there was not one Stranger in the Market to buy a Beast'.⁸⁷ Celia Fiennes recollects a similarly sad fair in rural Sussex, remarking: 'Beggar-Hill Faire being the saddest faire I ever saw, ragged tatter'd booths and people but the musick and dancing could not be omitted'.⁸⁸ Rural fairs provided opportunities for (semi-)professional music-making, from ballad singers hawking their wares, to fiddlers playing for entertainment (and, presumably, leading dances).⁸⁹ Such fairs were culturally as well as commercially important, hence why the 'musick and dancing could not be omitted' despite a paucity of wares to be sold at Beggar Hill. They were a fixture of rural courtship, and a place to meet acquaintances old and new.⁹⁰ The importance of fairs to the rural economy or to rural society did not diminish over the century, and the importance of entertainment within fairs only increased.⁹¹

Outside of fair time, alehouses hosted country dances,⁹² and churches featured psalmody. Wrexham, for a town of its size, had plenty of both. The 1833 survey map of Wrexham town (Figure 2.4) shows a huge number of public houses – at least 40 – some

⁸⁵ Note the presence of servants at a dance in Mary Campbell Coke, *The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke, Vol. 3* (Edinburgh, David Douglas, 1889), p.495; Macdonald, p.72.

⁸⁶ Dodd, *A History of Wrexham*, pp.36, 63, 79, 226-227.

⁸⁷ Erddig estate papers D/E/547, Flintshire County Archive, letter from Richard Jones to Simon Yorke, 9th June 1736.

⁸⁸ Cited in Ian Mitchell, 'The Changing Role of Fairs in the Long Eighteenth Century: Evidence from the North Midlands', *The Economic History Review*, 60, 3 (2007), 545-573, p.545.

⁸⁹ See examples from Chapters 1, 2 and 3; also see Mitchell, 'The Changing Role of Fairs', p.564.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.545, 550, 564.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.571.

⁹² For example, the (then countrified) Islington alehouse that was the venue for a mountebank: OBPO t17960217-36 (also see Chapter 4).

large, some small, some for the poor, some for the rich, some for Whigs, some for Tories.⁹³ The extent of political and religious division in the town made communal expressions of religious or political identity more fervent and demonstrative. One outstanding feature of the Buck print is the degree to which the parish church dominated the town visually; religion's importance for the people of Wrexham is shown in the riots of 1715, in which the town's Quaker meeting houses were extensively damaged.⁹⁴ Music was inextricably linked with religion in eighteenth-century Britain. As a member of (and legal secretary for) the Anglican SPCK, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, John Meller distributed 166 psalters in Wrexham in 1728, out of 1000 for the whole of Wales, suggesting that psalmody was still very important in the life of Wrexham's Anglican parish church.⁹⁵



Figure 2.4: 1833 map of Wrexham by John Wood, reproduced in *A History of Wrexham, Denbighshire*, ed. A. H. Dodd, p. 99.

⁹³ Dodd, *A History of Wrexham*, p.79.

⁹⁴ Tim Jones, *Rioting in North-East Wales*, p.23.

⁹⁵ Mary Clement, ed., *Correspondence and Minutes of the SPCK Relating to Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), pp.301-303.

Meanwhile, A. N. Palmer's history of Nonconformist groups in eighteenth-century Wrexham suggests that psalmody was also vitally important to the largest Dissenting congregation, the Presbyterians, in whose chapel a triple-decker pulpit was constructed for the use of the minister and ' "the clerk" ... who started the tunes, and in other ways assisted the minister'.⁹⁶ This implies that in Wrexham, well into the middle – and perhaps even nearer the end – of the eighteenth century, at least one of the town's congregations still 'lined out' the Psalms in what Nicholas Temperley calls 'the Old Way of singing'.⁹⁷ The smaller Independent (later Baptist) congregation was still meeting in a barn when John Meller arrived.⁹⁸ Their first purpose-built chapel, in 1762, was far too small for an organ; it seems likely they also lined out psalms.⁹⁹ One 'Samuel Jones of Erddig' was a trustee of this church in the 1770s and 80s, dying in 1785 – A. N. Palmer describes him as being a 'yeoman',¹⁰⁰ so it is possible he was a tenant farmer unrelated to activities at the main house, but a Sam Jones was employed as a servant at Erddig in the 1750s and early 1760s, his wages recorded in D/E/382. An additional piece of evidence implying that the two Sam Joneses might be the same person is a discussion of footmen in a 1768 letter from Dorothy Yorke to her son Philip Yorke I, in which she states: 'I would not change [my footman] for Sam[;] do tell me what sort of Christian he is now or if [he is] of service to you'.¹⁰¹ The remark about 'what sort of Christian' implies some form of conversion, perhaps to Nonconformism, and the date of this letter would line up, especially if Sam Jones was a footman reaching the end of his career (hence the question about whether he is 'of service'). It would not be unknown for a servant to become a tenant farmer on their master's former estate, either through marriage or as a form of retirement from service. Jones is, of course, a very common surname in eighteenth-century Wrexham, so that it would be optimistic to say that Sam Jones the Erddig footman definitely became a leading figure in Wrexham's Independent church.

⁹⁶ Alfred Neobard Palmer, *A History of the Older Nonconformity of Wrexham and its Neighbourhood* (Wrexham: Woodall, Minshall, and Thomas, 1888), p.65.

⁹⁷ Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church, Vol. 1* (Cambridge: CUP [1979], 1983), pp.91-98.

⁹⁸ Palmer, *A History of the Older Nonconformity of Wrexham*, p.48.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.102.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.101.

¹⁰¹ Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 2, p.31.

Wrexham was, however, not a frictionless space for Erddig servants. In the first place, the relative proportions of Welsh and English Bibles Meller was given by the SPCK for local distribution testify to the strongly Welsh-speaking character of the area;¹⁰² for those of Meller's servants whom he had brought from his London residence (such as Jane Ebbrell), this already created obstacles for free recreation.¹⁰³ One long-serving and otherwise successful Baptist minister in Wrexham created rifts in his congregation allegedly because of his poor knowledge of English.¹⁰⁴ In addition to linguistic divisions, Wrexham was a place of profound religious tensions. Alongside the 1722 riots in which John Meller found his agents targeted, in 1715, Jacobite rioting destroyed both the Presbyterian and Independent meeting houses as well as the Quaker Friends' House. Tellingly, the Jacobite-inclined local gentry did little to prevent or prosecute the rioting, and local colliers entered the town to protect the rioters, showing the ways geography and occupational identity shaped religious and political allegiance.¹⁰⁵ If John Meller's official agents in the town were attacked, it seems likely tension and liminality would have attended his domestic servants' experiences in Wrexham also. Eventually, through the second quarter of the century, the sectarian tension became eased in Wrexham, partly due to the ignominious failure of the Jacobite uprisings in the 1740s, and partly due to shifting local allegiances among freeholders.¹⁰⁶ Yet the obstacles to sociability were never all due to Wrexham's animosity: like all servants, Erddig's domestics would have needed permission to leave the estate (aside from those whose errands necessitated they travel there).¹⁰⁷ The two miles between Erddig and Wrexham, then, represents a greater obstacle than the walk alone, a far larger gulf in demographics and culture. Unlike urban servants (particularly those in smaller households), who were

¹⁰² In 1728 Meller was given 18 Welsh and 2 English Bibles to distribute by the SPCK in Denbighshire and Flintshire, the highest ratio of Welsh to English Bibles in the entire country (aside from Anglesey, where no English Bibles were distributed). Clement, ed., *Correspondence and Minutes of the SPCK Relating to Wales*, pp.302-303.

¹⁰³ This information is provided in an explanatory note by the final Philip Yorke (1905-1978) in a transcription of the verse on Jane Ebbrell's portrait, Erddig estate papers D/E/3586, Flintshire County Archive, p.2. Waterson appears to have believed this: Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.24.

¹⁰⁴ Palmer, *A History of the Older Nonconformity of Wrexham*, p.103.

¹⁰⁵ Jones, *Rioting in North-East Wales*, pp.23-24.

¹⁰⁶ Dodd, *A History of Wrexham*, pp.79-80.

¹⁰⁷ A servant's time was considered to belong to their master, and even the opportunity to attend church on a Sunday had to be requested from the master. Haywood, pp.6, 37.

integrated into the community of the street, rural servants in country houses could be as segregated from the local townspeople as their masters.

However, the inevitable rooting of a country house in the local economy, drawing not only its supplies but much of its labour (especially seasonal farm and garden labour) from the local area, meant that Erddig's servants may not have felt much of a sense of segregation by the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁸ The letters of Elizabeth Ratcliffe, a favoured maidservant who ran the household of the dowager Yorke at the time of writing, is an interesting counterpoint to this suggestion of Erddig as in any sense secluded. Her letters addressed to the wife of John Caesar, the Erddig estate manager, from the early 1770s (D/E/567), show the way that an estate 'Family', as Ratcliffe describes it, expressed their ties to each other and to the wider community. Their language demonstrates the reciprocal ties of obligation between Ratcliffe and other household members, former and current, through the expression of formalised affection and the paying of 'Respects'.¹⁰⁹ Although Ratcliffe had moved to a household near Chester with her mistress, she still had a godson working at Erddig, and worked hard to keep on top of news of her former fellow servants there, asking after John Caesar's illness.¹¹⁰ However, these close bonds did not develop solely out of isolation from the outside world. Ratcliffe asks Mrs. Caesar:

when you go to Wrexham, be so good as to tell Mary Jones [that] all her Daughters, and their Family's are well, I Called on Molly, last Monday Morning, she was very well and has a very fine Girl then leave the House then in apron as she goes out, and hav[word sliced off] -ford Street¹¹¹

It is apparent that Mrs. Caesar undertook regular trips to Wrexham, where she and Ratcliffe had mutual acquaintances. Ratcliffe's checking up on Mary Jones's daughters demonstrates that Ratcliffe had similar relationships of mutuality and obligation with Jones as with any current Erddig servants, despite Jones now living in Wrexham. Jones may have been a former servant, but in any case these letters demonstrate that the degree of separation

¹⁰⁸ As a point of comparison, Carolyn Steedman's examination of Frances Hamilton's servants, both temporary and permanent, demonstrates a reliance on a limited local labour market. Steedman, pp.68-69, 74-77.

¹⁰⁹ Erddig paper D/E/567, letter from Elizabeth Ratcliffe to Mrs. [John] Caesar, dated 9th October 1771.

¹¹⁰ Erddig paper D/E/567, letters from Elizabeth Ratcliffe to Mrs. [John] Caesar, dated 31st October and 8th December 1771.

¹¹¹ Erddig paper D/E/567, letter from Elizabeth Ratcliffe to Mrs. [John] Caesar, dated 31st October 1771.

between Erddig and Wrexham was perhaps less one of forced exclusion, and more a distinction between two different, but closely interlinked hubs of interpersonal connection. Erddig had many inevitable economic and social ties to Wrexham, but it was part of a geographical network which linked it to places much further afield, in particular, Chester and London. Servants at Erddig had conditional, liminal access to these networks and the benefits they brought. The next two sections will consider how service at Erddig facilitated, but also limited and mediated access to London, and what that meant in terms of musical practices and social distinction.

Liminality, Consumption and the City

'Liminality' is an anthropological concept relating to the threshold, a metaphorical space between (or crossing) social boundaries. The term has been used to apply to, for instance, professional musicians, who in their roles as providers of valued cultural services are able to inhabit exclusive (real or metaphorical) spaces they would otherwise be restricted from, such as Handel visiting the seat of the Duke of Chandos, or a blind itinerant harpist meeting Erddig's mistress.¹¹² Domestic servants certainly had 'liminality' in the sense of access to their masters' houses and (within prescribed limits) their clothing, food and drink.¹¹³ One of the questions this thesis seeks to answer, however, is how far they were able to access the most exclusive aspects of their masters' musical culture, something much more dependent on ambiguity or fluidity of social status.

Domestic service was a long-established practice, with a body of longstanding custom and law governing the relationships between servants and masters, preventing much true ambiguity of status. Sometimes these customs could be manipulated (to either the servant's or the master's advantage), but the actual status of a servant was never in doubt. Even when a servant was wearing clothing similar to that of their mistress, dancing alongside gentry at a ball or spending their wages on luxury goods, these were seen as pretensions disguising their true status, which remained (at least, as far as genteel observers

¹¹² Erddig estate papers D/E/418, butler's book.

¹¹³ Meldrum, pp.87-88, 197, 199-201.

were concerned) resolutely fixed. True ambiguity of social status could only be obtained through deception and disguise, a common trope of broadside ballads (and of course the main theme of *Youth's Safety*, the book about musical fraudsters).¹¹⁴

Servants did enjoy, however, considerable fluidity of social status, conditionally granted by masters to magnify their own prestige. Gifts of old clothes, the provision of tea, the use of unwanted theatre tickets, or the custom of the 'footman's gallery' were all social privileges temporarily granted to servants while they represented their masters.¹¹⁵ Sometimes this fluidity of status related more to personal intimacy than enjoyment of luxury and symbolic authority. For instance, maidservants sharing a bed with their mistress, which was perhaps liminality in its purest form – a form of association not usually permitted between two people of different social ranks, but conditionally permitted in a particular space under particular conditions. Of course, however, intimacy between mistress and servant did not render the two equal; the liminal space ceased to be if the mistress (or master) declared it so.

It is the absence of ambiguity and the conditional nature of any status fluidity that, for many historians, implies that servants were lonely and isolated. Bridget Hill extends Sarah Maza's conclusions about domestic service in rural France to the British Isles, contending that servants were caught in a place of isolation and vulnerability between the world of their masters and that of their peers, 'belonging' in neither space, since their acceptance in either was conditional and precarious.¹¹⁶ Servants' relationships with the towns and villages beyond their households have been the subject of previous sections, and though Erddig servants' relationships with Wrexham is complex, there is no evidence to suggest that domestic servants were considered a class apart from their friends, neighbours and acquaintances. They were members of the community, able to court, marry and befriend

¹¹⁴ Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650-1850* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), pp.9, 122, 132-139.

¹¹⁵ For clothes see note 113 above; for tea, see Hill, *Servants*, p.70; for the use of unwanted tickets, see Macdonald, p.67; for the 'footman's gallery', see Kristina Straub, 'The Making of an English Audience: the Case of the Footmen's Gallery', in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830*, eds. Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (Cambridge: CUP [2007], 2009), pp.131-144, pp.132, 134.

¹¹⁶ Bridget Hill, *Servants*, pp.44-48.

freely in such leisure time as their masters allowed them. Indeed, this section will examine the ways in which belonging to the liminal space of the master-servant relationship might have been a positive element in servants' lives, material and social.

Certainly, it is true that servants – while in physical proximity to (or indeed intimacy with) their masters' family and friends – inhabited a liminal space in which masters had significantly more power, solidified through cultural hegemony, maintenance of superior wealth and social capital. Yet the customs of domestic service, forged through centuries of master/servant relationships in a process of natural selection (in which unhappy servants left or misbehaved, and unhappy masters punished or sacked their servants), created some limited recourse for abused servants. For instance, courts in the early nineteenth century recognised the common eighteenth-century understanding that the annual hiring of a servant contractually implied 'a month's wages, or a month's warning', that is, either servant or employer could break the contract by providing either a month's notice or forfeiting a month's wages.¹¹⁷ On a less formal level, there might not have been a law against wage theft, but an employer who refused to pay their servants would have found it more difficult to fill vacancies, and obtained a poor reputation among local tradespeople. It was by no means a fair or balanced equation, but servants did have a certain amount of agency as co-creators (or co-curators) of the liminal space that was the master's household - after all, it was they who cooked the food, cleaned the floors, and answered the door.

Elizabeth Ratcliffe's unequal yet mutual relationship with her mistress displays this very well. She was in many ways in the power of the Yorke family, who provided her livelihood as well as much of her human companionship. Yet the elderly dowager Yorke, her mistress, could not live comfortably without Ratcliffe, her loyal carer and friend, who organises the material needs of the household. Elizabeth Ratcliffe's niece, Betty Ratcliffe the younger, was even a close companion of Anne Jemima Yorke, Dorothy Yorke's daughter, the latter frequently mentioning Betty in letters.¹¹⁸ Betty (Elizabeth) Ratcliffe, lady's maid, was a skilled artist in a variety of media (active at Erddig from the 1750s to the 1770s), often

¹¹⁷ Steedman, pp.322-324.

¹¹⁸ Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 2, p.33.

commissioned by the family and their friends to draw copies of prints, as well as to produce two elaborate, delicate sculptures, one a rendering of picturesque Roman ruins, the other a pagoda, an imitation of the ivory Chinoiserie popular with the upper gentry.¹¹⁹ Erddig and Dorothy Yorke's personal household in Chester, then, were as much Ratcliffe's project as Yorke's, something masters and mistresses came to appreciate over the course of the eighteenth century.¹²⁰

However, the liminality inherent in the master/servant relationship becomes clear in terms of the artistic education of both Betty Ratcliffe the younger and her friend, Anne Jemima Yorke. Anne Jemima bought from her £50 annual allowance an expensive Kirkman harpsichord, and Dorothy Yorke committed to keeping this a secret from the financially struggling Philip Yorke's wealthy uncle James Hutton; a secret harpsichord could bring no prestige to the family, except for the skills it would nurture in Anne Jemima Yorke.¹²¹ Her personal development was primary, and its immediate effects on the Erddig household apparently secondary. In contrast, in 1767 Dorothy Yorke commented on Betty Ratcliffe being commissioned to produce a piece for Philip Yorke:

Betty, 'the little,' is at work for you ; but pray, my dear, do not employ her in that way again for one year at least as all her improvements sink in drawing and then I shall have no service from her and make too fine a Lady of her, for so much is said on that occasion that it rather puffs up : few minds like her Aunt's [that is, Elizabeth Ratcliffe senior] and your good father's admonitions about her to me was not to set her up too much.¹²²

Regardless of what Dorothy Yorke meant by 'all her improvements sink in drawing' – either that Ratcliffe was losing skill in drawing due to being commissioned to make a sculpture, or that too much of her time was being wasted on drawing – she was clearly ambivalent about her servant being sanctioned to perform artistic endeavour. Both Yorke and Ratcliffe senior, forming a united front, feared that it might 'make too fine a Lady of her', in other words, raise her own perception of her social status above the servant role she was born into. Philip Yorke, in contrast, apparently felt that Ratcliffe's artistic skills could grace Erddig and help build the prestige of the family seat, perhaps commissioning his

¹¹⁹ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, pp.36, 38, 44.

¹²⁰ See forthcoming publication about the Erddig servant letters mentioned above.

¹²¹ 'Lost Voices of Erddig: a Secret Harpsichord', *Sound Heritage* (sound-heritage.ac.uk, accessed 11/3/22).

¹²² Cust, *Chronicles of Erthig*, Vol. 2, p.31.

servant as a cost-saving measure given his constrained means and expensive renovations to the exterior of the building.¹²³ For both Dorothy and Philip Yorke, however, Ratcliffe's artistry was to be encouraged only when it was in the family's interest (such as when Ratcliffe would sketch copies of paintings the Yorkes enjoyed when visiting other houses).¹²⁴ For the Yorke family, Betty Ratcliffe's artistic development appears to have been of secondary importance, a byproduct of the beautification of Erddig, despite the strong intergenerational emotional ties between the Ratcliffes and the Yorkes.

The nurturing of Betty Ratcliffe the younger's artistic skills, in the interests of her masters, speaks to broader controversies around the training and education of servants in the eighteenth century. The fraught relationship between the 'Milkwoman of Bristol', the poet Ann Yearsley, and her employer and commissioner, Hannah More (as discussed by Carolyn Steedman), demonstrates the tensions that arose when a servant's prestige threatened to grow beyond merely being the shadow of their social betters.¹²⁵ These tensions around servants producing art will be discussed in greater depth in the next section. However, even in terms of cooking skills, something archetypally appropriate for domestic servants, providing training could be a risk for masters. Sara Pennell discusses the iconography of frontispieces from cookbooks and housekeeping guides – as she acknowledges, a limited but indicative source.¹²⁶ She finds a distinct trend away from an ideal mistress who is pictured conducting the more prestigious, difficult elements of homemaking, such as distillation, on her own or with servants helping her, to an ideal mistress who manages a team of servants, instructing and directing.¹²⁷ This represents an attempt to tighten the master's or mistress's control over the liminal space of the servant household, taking up a less reciprocal role as a teacher rather than a negotiator. However, these attempts to mould servants into a more desirable form were undermined by the mobility of domestic servants, their willingness to leave for other households or occupations – an artefact both of London's demand for servants consistently outstripping supply, and

¹²³ Griffiths, *Philip Yorke I*, pp.25,109.

¹²⁴ Garnett, *Erddig*, pp.67-69.

¹²⁵ Steedman, p.283.

¹²⁶ Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen*, pp.21-24.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.22, 25. See also discussions of the ideology of the 'managerial mistress' in Meldrum, pp.41-44.

the very precarity earlier models of household control had perhaps fostered (during the time of mass itinerancy and poverty in the seventeenth century).¹²⁸ Servants continued to frustrate masters and exercise their agency in the household, however limited, to gain access to prestigious culture and luxury goods; many were willing and able to travel long distances to get the best possible bargain for their labour. The Yorkes were more successful with Betty Ratcliffe, who never moved to another employer nor produced art for any other family. Her intricate art continues to contribute to the Yorke family legacy, displayed at Erddig still.¹²⁹

Ratcliffe's artistic education which the Yorkes provided, and the necessary conditional access to elite cultural forms that it entailed, also demonstrates something more positive. At Erddig, liminality had its advantages as well as disadvantages for domestic servants. The cultural distance from Wrexham was sometimes interpreted as a symbol of upward social mobility, by master and servants alike. When estate manager Richard Jones told Meller about a new hire, a 'yong fellow ... born in this neighbourhood', he reassured him he 'has been abrad in Service for this Thirteen or fourteen Years' (perhaps starting, as James Macdonald did, at a very young age).¹³⁰ Of course, the experience in service was an obvious attraction: yet there is also considerable importance placed on having been 'abrad' (meaning 'abroad' in the sense of having worked elsewhere, not necessarily in a foreign country). Travelling to other places led to a broadening of both servants' skill bases and cultural experiences, something servants felt (and valued) themselves. A particularly important connection for Erddig servants was the frequent opportunities they had to travel to London. The family regularly paid for their servants' travel from Erddig to London and *vice versa* (as well as regionally important Chester and nearby Mold).¹³¹

London was the undisputed centre of the British textile industry, printing industry, luxury good industries, and leisure industry: in other words, for servants at Erddig, the

¹²⁸ Meldrum, pp.22-24; Steedman, pp.322-324; see also note 2.

¹²⁹ Garnett, *Erddig*, p.15, 67-69.

¹³⁰ Erddig estate papers D/E/547, Flintshire County Archives, letter from Richard Jones to Simon Yorke, dated 9th June 1736; Macdonald, pp.15, 19.

¹³¹ For instance, Philip Yorke paid £6 15s 'Expences for Coach-hire for 3 Serv^{ts} to Erddig' from London; Erddig estate papers D/E/385, Flintshire County Archives, commonplace book, accounts entry for August 1770.

place from which every desirable cultural commodity came. It is unsurprising, then that the estate manager said he faced 'abuse and sauciness' from a 'doget and surley' coachboy who believed the estate manager had prevented Meller from taking the boy to London with him. Refusing to help around the house (an example of young, junior outdoor servants assisting maidservants with the household 'drudgery', as Scottish livery servant James Macdonald recorded doing in his memoirs),¹³² he eventually gave his notice.¹³³ Such behaviour was reflected in contemporary cheap print, which thus both reified and criticised the desire to travel to London. The allegedly 'true' story of cross-dresser Elizabeth Ogden begins with her birth in Flintshire, after which, 'her parents meeting with some misfortunes in the world, they were obliged to remove to *London*'. After an upbringing with a farmer uncle near Wolverhampton, she was collected by her widowed mother and,

having a more natural propensity to pleasure than business ... and having the opportunity thro' her mother[']s indulgence of going to *London*, and becoming a little better acquainted with the world than she conceived was possible for her to be by staying in the country, without any reluctance, she took leave of her uncle, and set out with her mother to this grand metropolis.¹³⁴

From there her story began, illness and misadventure and hedonistic consumption all combined, a discourse which must have made London appear all the more tempting to Erddig's young coachboy.

Travel to London, for servants from the countryside, provided opportunities both material and cultural. James Macdonald describes how he leveraged existing contacts in London to secure a better job:

When I had been a week in London, I met the Irish Chairman that carried [my previous employers] when in London. I said to him, Do you hear of any place for me? By G-d, Johnny, I do; go to Major Libbelier ... [The major said] I'll give you fourteen shillings a week; and, if I go to Ireland, I'll give you sixpence more a day on the road.¹³⁵

Tim Meldrum also discusses the powerful information networks which allowed eighteenth-century servants to assess their future employers' reputations as well as improve their

¹³² Macdonald, pp.31, 77.

¹³³ Erddig estate papers D/E/547, Flintshire County Archives, letter from Richard Jones to John Meller, dated 25th June 1721.

¹³⁴ Anonymous, *The Female Porter of Shoreditch, a True Story, of the Surprizing Extraordinary Adventures of Elizabeth Ogden, alias Kath. Emery, alias Jemmy Preston* (London: T. Bailey, n.d.), pp.3-5.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.74.

economic positions.¹³⁶ An employer being in London also increased the likelihood of their receiving genteel visitors, increasing a servant's potential income from vails (tips given by guests and employers, which were as customary in the city as they were in the country).¹³⁷ Beyond the merely economic, servants who travelled to London enjoyed a variety of cultural enrichments impossible to obtain in provincial Wrexham. For instance, Erddig owner Philip Yorke is recorded as paying 5 guineas' subscription to J. C. Bach's 1769 concert series, a subscription arguably as valuable to Yorke's livery servants as to Yorke himself.¹³⁸ Not only did David Hunter find that some aristocrats paid for their servants' opera tickets, but some employers – such as James Macdonald's – felt obliged to purchase concert or theatre tickets but did not always wish to go, allowing their livery servants to go in their place.¹³⁹

Indeed, there might be some evidence of the family paying for entertainment for their extended household in account book D/E/422, detailing 'Sundry Disbursements from Nov.^r 18th 1780 to Nov.^r 18th 1781'.¹⁴⁰ As well as several small payments to servants, both their own and other people's (presumably vails) that indicate the kinds of obligations the Yorkes felt to servants – 3s 6d on 'Shoes for Nancy', £1 11s 6d on 'Robbin's Board' or 5s to 'M^{rs} Conway's Maid' – this account book keeps detailed records of a trip to London (albeit unfortunately without the dates on which payments were made). The journey itself cost them £24 14s 9.5d, presumably due to the cost of overnight lodgings, board and either hired coach fees or the cost of maintaining a coach team. Once they got to London, they visited music venues several times: spending £1 11s 6d at the opera (presumably three box tickets at 10s 6d each), 11s 6d for another opera (a less easily comprehensible sum), 1 gn. at the Pantheon, 1 gn. for oratorio, 3s 'in Church', 16s for a play, 10s for another play, 7s 6d at 'Astley's [amphitheatre]' (a circus venue in Lambeth), and several visits to Ranelagh. Accompanying all of these expenses were a tip/fee of a guinea to a coachman and 7s 6d for horse hire.¹⁴¹ This information is of clear interest to those who study the relative cost of

¹³⁶ Meldrum, p.20.

¹³⁷ Hill, *Servants*, pp.79-81.

¹³⁸ Erddig estate papers, D/E/385, Flintshire County Archives, commonplace book, accounts entry for June 1770.

¹³⁹ Macdonald, p.67.

¹⁴⁰ Erddig estate papers D/E/422, account book, p.5.

¹⁴¹ D/E/422, pp.7-8.

different cultural forms, since while in London they also renewed their newspaper subscriptions at a cost of £1 16s and spent £1 11s 6d subscribing to 'Copley's Print', either an art engraving or a book.¹⁴²

The Ranelagh (pleasure garden) visits cost the family between 6s and 8s 6d; one occasion is marked 'Ranelagh & Exhibition', but there is no other indication for the variety in cost. One anomalous visit to Ranelagh only cost 2s 6d, the cost of one ticket to a 'public breakfast' or an evening concert.¹⁴³ At such prices, the 7s 6d, 8s 6d and 6s 6d visits to Ranelagh are likely to include servants and/or additional purchases such as tea (for which tables were set up in the Rotonda).¹⁴⁴ Yet the wide range of sums spent at Ranelagh perhaps implies a variation in the number of people visiting these attractions, which almost certainly included servants. By 1762 a special amphitheatre at Ranelagh had been constructed explicitly to accommodate (and segregate) servants, who had often been admitted for free 'by mistake or favour' in earlier years, and freely commingled with genteel guests.¹⁴⁵ Despite the attempts to limit and contain servant attendance at Ranelagh, a letter to the *Morning Chronicle* in 1775 tellingly (albeit hyperbolically) asks 'is not Ranelagh as plebeian as the road?'.¹⁴⁶

Likewise, the guinea spent on 'Oratorio' represents two, or four to five, tickets depending on which entertainment Philip Yorke selected. In the March and April 1781 oratorio season, there were two competing entertainments: full oratorio at Drury Lane theatre (*L'Allegro il Penseroso ed Moderato* in March, and *Messiah* in April), and *Elfrida* at Covent Garden, a musical poem setting by Arne advertised as being 'performed after the manner of an ORATORIO' (see fig 2.5).¹⁴⁷ Yorke's guinea would pay for two box seats at

¹⁴² D/E/422, pp.8-9.

¹⁴³ Berta Joncus, ' "To Propagate Sound for Sense": Music for Diversion and Seduction at Ranelagh Gardens', *The London Journal*, 38, 1 (2013), 34-66, pp.38, 42.

¹⁴⁴ 'Ranelagh', *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 1810 (11 March 1775).

¹⁴⁵ Joncus, ' "To Propagate Sound for Sense" ', p.44.

¹⁴⁶ M.W., 'Letters from a Lady of Fashion, lately deceased, to her Daughter, on taking her from a celebrated Boarding School, Letter XXXI', *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 1799 (27 February 1775).

¹⁴⁷ Advertisement, 'At the Theatre-Royal, in Drury Lane ...', *The London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 4 April 1781; Advertisements, 'Drury Lane' and 'Covent Garden', *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 3696 (22 March 1781).

Drury Lane – which would almost certainly signify Yorke visiting the theatre with a social equal, such as the ‘Lady Lucy’ mentioned on the same page of the account book, rather than paying for a footman’s attendance in the second gallery, which was by this time not free at Drury Lane.¹⁴⁸ At Covent Garden, *Elfrida* was slightly cheaper, so that the sum might consist of two box seats and either two seats in the first gallery or three seats in the second gallery, which perhaps represents an unlikely family grouping, but most likely would have included servants. Given the variation in spending on ‘Play’ and ‘Opera’, multiple tickets were clearly being obtained and some degree of servant attendance is therefore implied.¹⁴⁹ In any case, once the family had returned to Wales, the musical gleanings from their London trip would have been audible to many Erddig servants: as soon as they had returned they spent £1 6s tuning the harpsichord.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Straub, ‘The Making of an English Audience’, p.140.

¹⁴⁹ Compare the sums listed in Figure 2.6 with the prices of tickets tabulated in David Hunter, ‘Patronizing Handel, Inventing Audiences: The Intersections of Class, Money, Music and History’, *Early Music*, 28, 1 (2000), 32-49, p.35. Theatre prices do not seem to have risen since the 1720s, given that the ticket prices advertised for the 1781 play *Dissipation* are equal to Hunter’s prices for ‘Drama, advanced’, and oratorio prices remain unchanged. Advertisement, ‘The Seventh Night’, *The London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 4 April 1781.

¹⁵⁰ D/E/422, p.9.

By Command of their MAJESTIES.
 THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.
THIS EVENING, March 23, 1781, will
 be performed
**L'ALLEGRO IL PENSOROSO ED
 MODERATO.**

By the late Mr. HENRY PURCELL.
 The principal Vocal Parts by
 Miss Linley, Miss Draper, Miss Prudom, Mr. Norris,
 and Mr. Reinhold.
 First Violin, Mr. Richards.
 End of the First Part, a Concerto on the Organ by
 Mr. Stanley.
 End of the Second Part, a Concerto on the Violin,
 by Mr. Cramer.
 Tickets to be had, and places for the boxes to be
 taken, of Mr. Fosbrook, at the Stage-door of the Thea-
 tre at Half a Guinea each.
 Pit 5s. First Gallery 3s. 6d. Second Gallery 2s.
 The doors to be opened at half an hour after five, and
 begin at half an hour after six.
 Vivant Rex & Regina.

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.
THIS EVENING, March 23, 1781, the
 POEM of
E L F R I D A
 Will be performed after the manner of an ORATORIO,
 With the Original Music as composed by the late
 Dr. ARNE.
 After which will be recited
COLLINS'S ODE on the PASSIONS.
 Accompanied with new Airs and Chorus by Dr. AR-
 NOLD, under whose direction the whole Music
 will be conducted.
 End of the First Part, a Concerto on the Hautboy,
 by Mr. LE BRUN.
 End of the Second Part, a Concerto on the Violin, by
 Mr. SALOMON, being his first public performance
 in this kingdom.
 To begin precisely at Seven o'Clock.
 Boxes, and places for Boxes, to be had of Mr. Brandon,
 at the Theatre.
 Boxes 7s. 6d. Pit 4s. First Gal. 3s. Second Gal. 2s.

The SIXTH NIGHT
 By His Majesty's Company.
 THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.
TO-MORROW will be presented a new Co-
 medy, called
D I S S I P A T I O N.
 The principal Characters by
 Mr. King, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Brereton, Mr. Bad-
 deley, Mr. Aickin, Mr. Bannister, jun. Mr. Suett,
 Mr. Waldron, Mr. Lamash, Mr. R. Palmer, and Mr.
 Palmer. Mrs. Cargill, Mrs. Brereton, Mrs. Love,
 Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Abington.
 With new Scenes, Dresses, and Decorations.
 The Prologue to be spoken by Mr. King,
 And the Epilogue by Mrs. Abington.
 To which will be added (for the first time) a new
 Pantomime Entertainment, in three parts, called
R O B I N S O N C R U S O E ;
 Or, **H A R L E Q U I N F R I D A Y.**
 The principal Characters by
 Mr. Wright, Mr. Grimaldi, Mr. Delpini, Mr. Suett,
 Mr. Gaudry, &c. and Miss Collett.
 With entire new Scenery, Machinery, Dresses, and
 Decorations.
 The Scenery designed by Mr. De Louthembourg, and
 executed under his direction.
 * Nothing under Full Price will be taken.
 Boxes 5s. Pit 3s. First Gal. 2s. Upper Gal. 1s.
 Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Fosbrook,
 at the Stage-Door.
 No person admitted behind the Scenes, nor any mo-
 ney returned after the curtain is drawn up.
 The doors to be opened at a quarter after five
 o'clock. To begin exactly at a quarter after six.
 Vivant Rex & Regina.

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.
TO-MORROW will be presented (for the
 first time) a new Comedy, called
S E C O N D T H O U G H T S A R E B E S T.
 The principal Characters by
 Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lee Lewes, Mr. Quick, Mr. Wil-
 son, Mr. Edwin, Mr. Wewitzer, Mr. Robson, Miss
 Younge, Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Satchell, Mrs. Wilson,
 Mrs. Morton, Miss Platt, Mrs. White, Mrs. Davennet,
 Miss Langrish, and Mrs. Yates.
 With new Scenes and Dresses.
 End of the Play, The Caledonian Shepherds, by
 Mr. Aldridge and Miss Besford.
 To which will be added
T H E U P H O L S T E R E R.
 Razor, Mr. Lee Lewes; Pamphlet, Mr. Wilson;
 Quidnunc, Mr. Booth; Rowell, Mr. Robson; and
 Belmour, Mr. Thompson; Harriet, Mrs. Whitfield;
 and Termagant, Mrs. Pitt.
 Boxes 5s. Pit 3s. First Gal. 2s. Upper Gal. 1s.
 Places for the boxes to be taken of Mr. Brandon
 (only) at the Stage door.
 No person admitted behind the scenes, nor no mo-
 ney returned after the curtain is drawn up.
 The doors to be opened at a quarter after five o'clock,
 to begin exactly at a quarter after six.
 Vivant Rex & Regina.

Figure 2.5: Advertisements for oratorio and plays in the season during which Philip Yorke spent a guinea on tickets, from the 23 March 1781 edition of the London Courant and Westminster Chronicle.

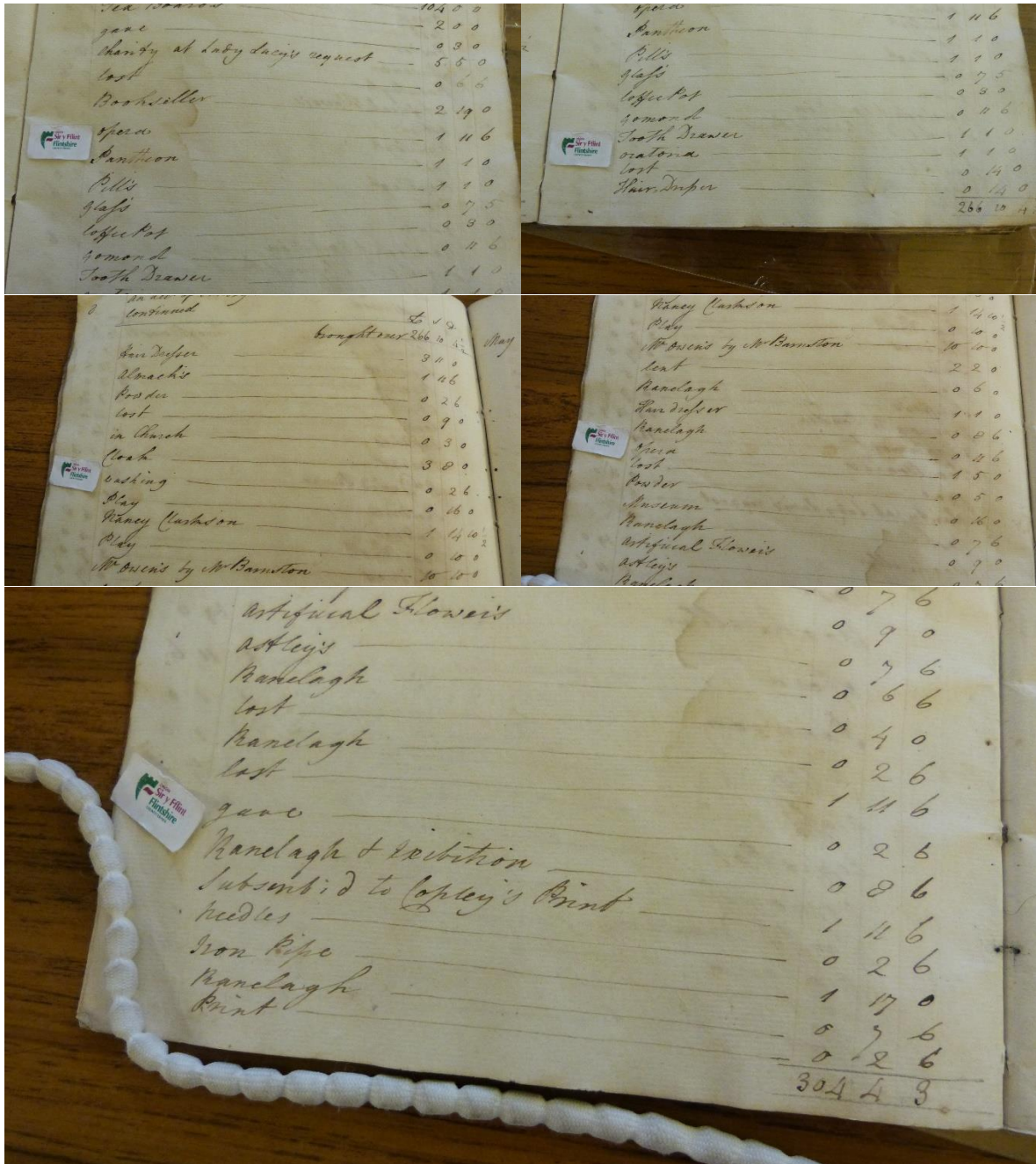


Figure 2.6: 'Sundry disbursements' from account book D/E/422 (pp.7-8), demonstrating the variety of sums spent on musical entertainments in London in 1781, and their context in terms of other payments made. Philip Yorke spent £8 8s 6d in total on musical entertainments in these pages, but he also spent £5 6s on hairdressing and 'lost' £3 16s (perhaps at cards).

Written during the Meller era, when Erddig's owners had less interest in musical activities, letter D/E/550 – addressed to Erddig servant John Jones from his brother (perhaps half-brother) John Williams – shows that some servants engaged in more self-motivated musical activities in London. Williams records how a fellow servant, Ellis, comes over 'every night' and 'sings his fine opera tunes' in the kitchen 'to the degree that our maids is quite

fallen in love with him', plied first with Welsh and Reading beer from his master's cellar.¹⁵¹ Ellis exploited his knowledge of operatic – or pseudo-operatic – music, gained either directly by accompanying his master to the opera or indirectly from other sources, to gain status and position among fellow servants.

Yet the underlying theme of D/E/550 is that of status – social status, but also economic status. Williams tried to dissuade Jones from leaving Meller's employment and coming to London, suggesting that 'places is very scarce now at London', and wondering why Jones would leave such a good place. Whether Williams is correct or not, service in London was far more insecure than service in large, established rural households like Erddig; it probably was, as Williams implies, in Jones' rational economic interests to stay at Erddig. Jones would have been far from home, and networks of community and support: most migrants to London came from the home counties and south Midlands by the turn of the eighteenth century.¹⁵² Most London migrant servants must have come from outside domestic service (for example, lace work or helping with the harvest), and many were from sufficiently close by that they could take advantage of seasonal economic opportunities in their home villages.¹⁵³ James Macdonald, with his experience of genteel rural service, only took his chances in the London service market because of his employer's marriage (believing he would not be a good servant to a married household, he gave his notice and was 'paid off' with his outstanding salary).¹⁵⁴ Jones would have been moving from a position of (potentially long-term) economic security with a solvent and stable employer to a market where manservants stayed an average of 14 months in their first position (and often considerably less).¹⁵⁵ Yet his desire to go to London was clearly extremely strong. That the absolute majority of manservants in London had travelled from outside the south-east of

¹⁵¹ Erddig estate paper D/E/550, letter from John Williams [to John Jones], dated 18th December 1725.

¹⁵² Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society*, p.4.

¹⁵³ Meldrum, p.21; also see my analysis of St. Clement Danes settlement examinations below. That 53 out of 89 migrant servants without a London settlement were from within 100 miles of London is indicative of transitory, short-term flows of people.

¹⁵⁴ Macdonald, pp.73-74.

¹⁵⁵ Meldrum, pp.23-24.

England indicates that Jones was far from alone in his willingness to risk all to experience London life.¹⁵⁶

Williams's account of music-making explains why this might be so. Williams, by experiencing the luxury of 'fine opera tunes' nightly, gains social and cultural status. He is enjoying prestigious and fashionable music-making, valued not only for its proximity to gentility (for opera has always been associated with royalty and aristocracy) but for its cultural distance from his origins. Even Jones would have shared in some of the prestige that his brother gained by listening to operatic music, being connected (even at the third degree) to fashionable London culture. The prestige which operatic music held for servants is bound up with the social-historical debate over the 'emulation' of elite tastes.

Few historians would maintain that Thorstein Veblen's concept of 'emulation' is as all-important a cultural ideal as historian of domestic service J. J. Hecht believed it was:

In one way or another, then, the subordinate classes gained a certain familiarity with the manners of the élite; and, for the most part, they sought to imitate it as closely as possible. This was natural.¹⁵⁷

Colin Campbell rightly questions the conflation of emulation, imitation and the 'trickle-down' of goods: those who purchased consumer goods or services previously only available to the aristocracy were not necessarily imitating them; those who were imitating aristocratic styles were not necessarily emulating aristocrats themselves.¹⁵⁸ Yet those studies which demonstrate the existence of particular 'middling' and 'poor' cultures whose values and priorities are considered distinct from those of the upper classes discuss social groupings fundamentally different from that of domestic servants.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.19

¹⁵⁷ Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class*, p.203.

¹⁵⁸ Colin Campbell, 'Understanding traditional and modern patterns of consumption in eighteenth-century England: a character-action approach', in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, eds. John Brewer and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993), 40-57, pp.40-41.

¹⁵⁹ For instance, Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Classes* (London: Methuen, 1989), p.10; Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), pp.29, 36, 42-43.

There is probably also a distinction here between the minority of servants (like those at Erddig) who served the gentry, often as a career in itself, and those for whom domestic service was a life-cycle occupation, spent serving working masters whose apprentices and journeymen were of similar status to themselves. For the latter, domestic service was simply a particular role to play in a social world to which they were already connected and within which they might one day shift their role (for example, to that of a wife, a tradesman, or innkeeper). For the former, in contrast, domestic service was a window into a world they had little prior experience of, and to which they could never – by reasons of birth – belong (aside from the rare, and frowned-upon, marriage of master and servant). For those who spent not only years, but decades of their life in service to the gentry, separate – to some degree – from the world in which they had grown up but to which they must one day return (due to illness, marriage or old age), and operating within a space which accepted them only so long as they maintained a servant's role, their service to the gentry could come to define them. This was certainly the case for James Macdonald, separated from his siblings and relatives, abandoning his lover and child, travelling across the world, his only consistent identity being that of a servant.¹⁶⁰ It is also probably true of Elizabeth Ratcliffe, neglecting her own elderly relatives to care for the elderly Yorke dowager. This was a life spent entirely in a liminal space, rather than one in which a liminal space was merely a formative experience.

In this context, 'emulation' takes on a different set of meanings. As Colin Campbell explains, even those who were consciously emulating the gentry did not always do so with the same motivation:

For example, does the maid's intention to compete with her mistress in the style and opulence of her dress merely imply a desire to rival her in fashionableness or does it stem from a more general ambition to be considered her social equal? Is she seeking, through this emulative conduct, to impress her fellow servants, her family and friends, her mistress, any strangers she meets on the street or indeed herself? Does this striving to impress stem from envy of her mistress, from a need to boost her own feelings of self-esteem, or from naked social ambition?¹⁶¹

Servants to the gentry, like this Ellis who sang 'fine opera tunes', or Williams as his willing auditor (and, through gifts of beer, his patron), emulated the behaviours of their masters

¹⁶⁰ Macdonald, pp.51, 74, 90.

¹⁶¹ Campbell, 'Understanding traditional and modern patterns of consumption', p.41.

perhaps not so much through admiration but as rebellion. Servants could never belong to the world of gentility, defined solely by aristocratic birth and/or vast wealth. However, by engaging with opera, these servants were affirming their capacity for equal participation in the genteel culture they materially supported, and experienced, but could never be accepted into. For career servants, this was a tactic – to borrow the terminology of Michel de Certeau – to make their permanent position of liminality habitable.¹⁶² For those servants who expected to leave service, by marrying into another household or undertaking another occupation, the appropriation of their masters' culture could represent a strategic accumulation of cultural capital (in the sense of Bourdieu).¹⁶³

Beyond music, there could be ample opportunities for Erddig servants to engage with different cultural forms, as described earlier with reference to Betty Ratcliffe's art and sculpture projects. These were, however, artistic projects distinctly unlike those which the maidservant poets of the same mid-century period (cook Mary Leapor, and pig-keeper Ann Yearsley in the 1740s, and former maid Elizabeth Hands in the 1780s) produced. As Carolyn Steedman suggests, despite the material relationships of genteel patronage, servant poets were frequently far from servile, taking on genres (such as epic poetry) considered unsuitable for them, or portraying household relations in a manner which subtly rebuked the doctrine that a home belongs solely to the master and mistress.¹⁶⁴ Ratcliffe demonstrated a great deal of creativity in her recreations of Classical and Orientalist scenes, far from being slavish reproductions; yet these specific forms of visual art were not a medium which allowed much discursive content. Her visual art was encouraged partly because it was a risk-free investment for the Yorkes, which paid dividends in terms of prestige. Ratcliffe provided them with many fine *objets d'art* – from the sketches of paintings at other country houses she produced in her youth to the tremendous sculptural works for which she is best

¹⁶² Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley: UCP [1984], 1988), p.xxi. See also discussion of de Certeau's concepts of strategies and tactics in Chapter 5.

¹⁶³ M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p.xix; see discussion of cultural capital in Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP [1979, 1984], 1996), especially pp. 22-23. The most eighteenth-century servants could aspire to is the state which Bourdieu characterises as 'educationally uncertified' cultural capital, itself a kind of liminal status in which holders of capital are required to performatively 'prove themselves, because they *are* only what they *do*, merely a by-product of their own cultural production'.

¹⁶⁴ Steedman, pp.283-293.

known – for a low price, while also demonstrating their generosity and skill as managerial masters and mistresses.

Ellis and Williams, the two protagonists of letter D/E/550, and Betty Ratcliffe the artist, demonstrate the two fundamental elements of liminality. Both were able to engage with cultural forms from which they would have been excluded outside domestic service. Yet their experiences of those cultural forms were inflected by the master-servant relationship: the moments in which servants experienced elite art forms were usually moments of spatial proximity to masters, which, combined with the conditional nature of servants' presence in those spaces, threw the social control, hierarchy and mutual dependence of 'mastery' into sharp relief.¹⁶⁵ For some, like Ellis, it is possible that appropriating the artistic forms associated with his master (and/or his master's peers) represented a subversion, whether his singing of 'opera tunes', in the kitchen to other servants without the master present, was parodic or earnest. For others, such as Betty Ratcliffe, their engagement with art was so dependent on their masters that subversion was very difficult. Given Ratcliffe's enduring loyalty to the Yorkes, however, the master-servant relationship upon which her access to materials and models depended may have been more a creative stimulus than a constraint. In either case, the relationship servants had to the elite urban cultural forms they encountered liminally is not one of simple Veblenian emulation, a parroting of their masters' tastes. The economic and social asymmetries between master and servant did shape the transmission of culture, materially and socially, but this does not imply an intention by domestic servants to imitate their social superiors.

Account Books – Servants, Money and Recreation

One of the most important pieces of evidence in the Erddig collection testifies to the economic ability servants had to engage with music in their own rights, besides the liminal access they received from their masters. D/E/382 is a record of actual dated payments made

¹⁶⁵ See Meldrum on personal proximity to masters, pp.84-88.

to servants from 1750 to about 1763, rather than (more common) records like D/E/368 which record servants' nominal annual wages. D/E/422's list of 'Disbursements for Wages' for 1781 demonstrates similar patterns of payment to D/E/382, but all of the payments are undated, making D/E/382 by far the most useful source to see the intervals at which servants got paid. Examining the actual payments made to servants demonstrates that these annual wages sometimes bore relatively little relation to the money servants received. However, the patterns I observed in the data suggest that this is less the result of employers attempting to manage their cash-flow through delaying payment of their staff and more a process of two-way negotiation between servant and employer. Individual servants have distinct patterns of payment which suggest some degree of personal preference.

Elizabeth Ratcliffe, probably the elder (the younger, according to the National Trust, born around 1735),¹⁶⁶ collected her income (a nominal £5 a year) only once every two years during the 1750s, in large sums. It seems likely that this represents a pattern of accumulation – waiting to draw out large sums in order to invest them. Requiring somewhat more frequent payment, but still asking for rational, regular sums, were 'The Coachman', who received £7 in one lump sum each year, and Sam Jones, who – with the exception of one or two lump sums – usually received £1 5s quarterly. In contrast, Elizabeth Davies, Philip Davies and Jonathan Davies – whose common surname does not necessarily imply they were related – drew small, erratic sums every few months, sometimes actually in advance of their salaries. This would seem to imply some kind of consumer spending – the amounts in question would not have been large enough to invest, but would provide a ready supply of spending money to supplement what they received from the Yorkes in kind (such as food, drink, lodging, and some clothing). Entertainments – including musical entertainments – might have been one purpose for this petty cash, alongside culturally important 'luxuries' such as tea and additional clothing. Martin Hillman, analysing similar account books documenting payments to musicians by the Edinburgh Musical Society, suggests such patterns of payment imply debts on the part of the payee, since creditors would find it

¹⁶⁶ 'Betty Ratcliffe, Artist in Service', *National Trust Collections Treasure Hunt* (nttreasurehunt.wordpress.com, accessed 10/04/2018).

harder to collect a slow trickle of petty cash than larger sums paid less frequently.¹⁶⁷ This is certainly one explanation for this pattern of payment, especially given the payment in advance occasionally evident in the three Davies' account entries. Debt, of course, also implies consumer spending of one kind or another; advice books listed theatre tickets and gambling among the principal sources of servant debt (although alcohol and clothing were probably more common reasons for borrowing).¹⁶⁸

Sometimes the records of payment show changing interpersonal relationships. A little while after the arrival of Elizabeth Davies in November 1754, the pattern of John Jones' withdrawals began to change. Previously he had infrequently withdrawn £3 or so, until he had saved up enough to receive a £10 lump sum in August 1755. Yet from December 1756 he began to withdraw money much more frequently, sometimes small sums and sometimes larger sums, every few months, a similar pattern to Elizabeth Davies, whose withdrawals become much more infrequent around the same time. One might infer from this that Elizabeth Davies had influenced John Jones' spending patterns, or that the two were socialising together (even maybe courting), reducing Elizabeth Davies' expenses while requiring John Jones to have more ready money about his person. Servants do not seem to have needed to tell the Yorkes' estate manager why they required the money, but in two cases the records did specify the purpose of the payment. In January 1760 John Jones was given 10s 6d to buy a 'Militiaman' – perhaps a militiaman's uniform or equipment; in March 1759 Jonathan Davies was paid 16s to buy 'Books'. Perhaps most remarkable is the way that all of these servants – clearly with a variety of financial preferences – treat their employer almost like a current account at a bank, withdrawing money when they need it or letting it accrue into larger sums.

Of course, the Yorkes of Erddig were financially stable and had few cash-flow problems, and the servants who withdrew their salaries flexibly like this were in service to the family long-term. More transitory servants, particularly maidservants who stayed less than a year, seem to have simply requested a lump sum on the conclusion of their service. It

¹⁶⁷ Martin Hillman, *Thomas Sanderson's Account of Incidents: The Edinburgh Music Society 1727-1801 and its Impact on the City* (Edinburgh: Friends of St. Cecilia's Hall, 2017), pp.86, 89.

¹⁶⁸ Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants*, pp.161-162.

is likely that servants would also have treated a financially unstable employer differently (and vice versa). However, D/E/382 presents an intriguing insight into the relationship between nominal salaries (presented in sources such as the St. Clement Danes parish settlement examinations) and servants' actual financial affairs. Further, it provides evidence of servants engaging in consumer spending and longer-term investment. Unlike payments in kind, expressions of *noblesse oblige* or accompanying their masters into exclusive spaces, cash payments provided servants with some access to cultural goods, spaces and experiences that was not liminal or dependent on their masters' continued goodwill. Nevertheless, the lack of investment opportunities meant that, for many servants, making their own investments in the moral or sociable economies of mutuality could make good economic sense.¹⁶⁹

Erddig's Black Coachboy and Social Death

Apart from opportunity for cultural engagement beyond what cash earnings could bring a servant, liminality could also mean – particularly for servants of colour – precarity and dependence, a life experience sharply visible at Erddig in an unexpected place. The paintings of servants, with comic verses attached, which the Yorkes began producing in the final decade of the eighteenth century, have been read by the National Trust as 'charming, light-hearted and full of affection for Erddig's loyal servants'.¹⁷⁰ However, considering these verses and images more carefully suggests other interpretations. The extremely elderly Jane Ebbrell is described as a wit, 'making many a happy Hit'; this is precisely the opposite of what Eliza Haywood described as proper deportment for a maidservant.¹⁷¹ The cook's assistant, Jack Nicholas, is described as loving snuff – particularly undesirable in kitchen work due to the fine powder making its way into food.¹⁷² These do, of course, have more the character of gentle jibes than serious complaints, but they do serve a purpose nonetheless. The verses all seek to portray the Yorke family as a loyal, beneficent employer who inspire

¹⁶⁹ Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor, 1780–1870* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), pp.28-30, 33-35.

¹⁷⁰ 'Unique Collection of Portraits at Erddig', *The National Trust*, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/erddig (accessed 17/04/2018).

¹⁷¹ Haywood, pp.32-33.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.8.

reciprocal loyalty in their servants (shown by Jane Ebbrell's seventy years' service and putting her children into service with the Yorkes) and allow their servants to live happy, modest, decent lives (as Jack Nicholas and blacksmith William Williams are portrayed as having) – despite their faults as employees.¹⁷³ Although he reads the verses more straightforwardly, Erddig historian Merlin Waterson understands the purpose of the narrative which the Yorkes present through these twee, facile verses praising their 'successes': 'their verse describes the relationship as the Yorkes wanted it to be; not necessarily as it was'.¹⁷⁴ The Yorkes were hiding their self-aggrandisement behind sentimental domestic naivety, as aristocratic families began to do in portraiture during the last decades of the eighteenth century.¹⁷⁵

In this context should be understood the image of the horn-playing Black coachboy (Figure 2.7), originally painted in the 1730s, which the family acquired and overpainted in the 1790s.¹⁷⁶ Erasing the name of the original sitter (John Hanby), they painted contemporary Erddig livery over his clothing and composed another of their comic verses to caption it.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ 'Few are his cares – delights enough!' writes a Yorke about Jack Nicholas; of William Williams they write 'In all things else this man was quiet / And very moderate in his diet'. Erddig estate papers D/E/3586, p.5.

¹⁷⁴ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.3.

¹⁷⁵ Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2006), pp.8-11.

¹⁷⁶ ' "John Meller's Black Coachboy" (painted over an early 18th century portrait of John Hanby, aged 25)', *National Trust Collections* record, number NT 1151289 (www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk, accessed 17/04/2018).

¹⁷⁷ Given that note 176 above maintains that the original painting is early eighteenth-century, and this article suggests the livery is late eighteenth-century, the livery must have been painted over the original sitter's clothing. Since the painting is a later acquisition by the family, Erddig's distinct livery pattern would need to be painted in to convey the fiction that this was Meller's servant. Jeremy Cragg, the National Trust, Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales, National Waterfront Museum Swansea, 'Everywhere In Chains - Wrexham's First African?', Wrexham Borough Council website (<http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/>, accessed 17/04/2018).

Of the Condition of this Negre
 Our information is but megre;
 However here, he was a dweller,
 And blew the horn for Master Meller.
 Here, too he dy'd, but when or how,
 Can scarcely be remember'd now,
 But that to Marchwiell he was sent,
 And had good Christian interment.
 Pray Heav'n may stand his present friend,
 Where black, or white; distinctions, end.
 For sure on this side of the grave,
 They are too strong, tw'ixt Lord & Slave.
 Here also liv'd a dingy brother,
 Who play'd together with the other,
 But, of him, yet longer rotten,
 Every particular's forgotten,
 Save that like Tweedle-Tum & dee,
 These but in notes, could [n]e'er agree,
 In all things else, as they do tell ye,
 We're just like Handel and Corelli.
 O had it been in their life's course
 T'have met with Massa Wilberforce,
 They wou'd in this alone, have join'd,
 And been together of a mind,
 Have raisd their Horns to one high tune,
 And blown his Merits, to the Moon.

Like the 1790s verses on servant paintings, it follows a pattern in which the family generously supports and remembers a flawed servant: in this case, the flaw was his discord with his brother. The Abolitionist sentiment is probably genuinely felt; the verse celebrates Wilberforce perhaps even more than it does Meller or the Yorkes. However, the Yorkes' close neighbours during the 1790s at Marchwiell House (Charles and Lucy Browne) were slave-owners returned from Jamaica, whereas the Yorkes do not appear to have owned any slaves.¹⁷⁸ The verse therefore takes on a subtext of moral superiority over their near neighbours, especially since it emphasises the footboy's Christian conversion (something seen as morally imperative for owners or 'employers' of Black people in the eighteenth century). Waterson finds a reference in a 1721 letter of John Meller's to the rector of Marchwiell about a Black servant being baptised, which he identifies with this coachboy: 'I know no reason, if the Major [Meller's brother-in-law] send his Black to me today, but that

¹⁷⁸ The Yorkes are not listed on the UCL *Legacies of Slave-Ownership* database, derived from probate records and compensation claims made by slave owners upon abolition. Record for 'Charles Browne', *Legacies of British Slave-ownership* database, <http://www.depts-live.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146649627/> (accessed 17/04/2018).

he may be christen'd this morning'.¹⁷⁹ However, this seems to be an optimistic reading. There is no suggestion that the Black man referred to worked for Meller (although a payment of £5 to 'the black' was reportedly recorded in 1719), and some ambiguity about whether he would actually be baptised.¹⁸⁰ The entire account given in the verse could be fictional, or heavily fictionalised. I examined Marchwiel's parish baptism records from before 1720 to after 1740, and could not see anyone described as Black, or with an unusual parish of origin, or unusual parentage. This is not conclusive, of course: Norma Myers discusses the difficulties inherent in tracing ethnicity through eighteenth-century parish records.¹⁸¹ Meller's unnamed coachboy (who could have been assigned a generic, European name) could have been baptised in another parish, or in London, or in Liverpool (the main port of entry for slaves in Britain), or abroad.



Figure 2.7: The Erddig Coachboy (painter unknown; hangs at Erddig House, Flintshire, kept by the National Trust).

¹⁷⁹ Waterson, *The Servants' Hall*, p.31.

¹⁸⁰ Jeremy Cragg et. al., 'Everywhere in Chains – Wrexham's First African?'

¹⁸¹ Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain 1780-1830* (London: Frank Cass [1996], 2006), p.31.

Black men playing the horn was a very common iconographic trope in eighteenth-century England. David Dabydeen, for instance, identifies Black horn players in the two oft-reproduced images below, one of them loosely depicting a real event, the other a comical mezzotint:

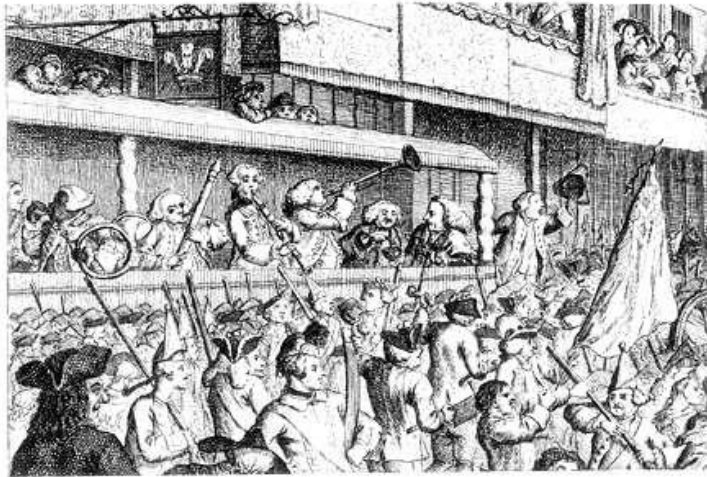


Figure 2.8: Detail from *A view of Cheapside as it appeared on Lord Mayor's Day last*, printed by John June for John Smith of Cheapside in 1761. Note horn player on left.



Figure 2.9: *High Life Below Stairs*, a 1772 print by William Humphrey after Elias Martin.

This trope, of course, penetrated beyond iconography into written discourse: ‘The Fiddling Footman’ suggested that ‘every black servant thinks himself qualified, by his complexion, to be an excellent performer on the [French horn]’.¹⁸² Meller’s horn-playing coachboy might simply be another incidence of this fictional trope, or he might have been a real person typecast as a horn player (and therefore a coachboy, since horns had a utilitarian role in signalling for coach operators) in reaction to the trope. Perhaps enslaved West Africans did have a genuine preference for the horn. Either way, the verse implies use of the horn that is more musical than utilitarian: ‘play[ing] together with the other’ implies musicality, or at least a performative element, as well as ensemble playing (which would not have been necessary for postilion horn signals). The references to ‘Tweedledum and Tweedledee’, ‘Handel and Corelli’, is clearly a mangled reference to the rivalry between Handel’s and Bononcini’s opera companies in eighteenth-century London, referred to as ‘Tweedledum and Tweedledee’ in an epigram by John Byrom.¹⁸³ It is possible that these references to genteel music-making are patronising jokes at the horn players’ expense, comparing the two Black coachboys’ signals to opera as a means of parody (in the way that the play *High Life Below Stairs* compares the socialising of the aristocracy to the apparently ridiculous pretensions of their servants, debasing both).¹⁸⁴ That would be absolutely in keeping with the clumsy humour of the comic verses written about other servants (especially if my interpretation of their intent is accurate).

However, even those who learned to play the horn for utilitarian reasons would, no doubt, employ those skills in their leisure time, given the opportunity. If the Black coach-boy existed, and played the horn musically, he might have had some of the same musical opportunities I have suggested that other Erddig servants had. However, for a Black servant in eighteenth-century Wales, the sense of liminality would have been even greater. David

¹⁸² See Introduction.

¹⁸³ Otto Erich Deutsch, *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (London: A. C. Black, 1955), p.180.

¹⁸⁴ Russell, ‘“Keeping Place”’, pp.23-24; also see Russell’s analysis of the Black characters in *High Life Below Stairs*, pp.26-27: ‘While an important element of *High Life Below Stairs* is concerned with exploring the reflexivity of high and low, the servant functioning as a mirror or double of the master and vice versa, the black servants are a means of containing the implications of that theme by reminding the audience and reader of another form of difference, that of race, which is seen to be absolute and unreflective’.

Dabydeen's history of Black people in British art of the eighteenth century (with a particular focus on Hogarth, whose images of Black people are particularly sophisticated and interesting) discusses the different styles of iconography depicting Black people, finding two kinds of image particularly prevalent. The first, and perhaps most relevant to Erddig, are images of aristocratic ladies (and occasionally gentlemen) with Black slave boys, sometimes visibly wearing silver manacles and chains (delicately gripped by the white woman).¹⁸⁵ Dabydeen suggests that these images are successors to those seventeenth-century portraits of ladies depicted with their pets, or men with their hunting dogs; indeed, several of the paintings designedly invite comparison between the Black sitters and animals.¹⁸⁶ Although I suggested white servants to the gentry may have come to identify themselves solely in terms of service, Black slaves brought to England to serve genteel masters (or sold to them in the slave auctions of Liverpool and London) had far less agency in the matter. As the composition of the paintings show, slaves (particularly child slaves, who were often requested specifically in newspaper advertisements) had little more freedom than a gentleman's hunting dogs.¹⁸⁷

Norma Myers' history of the Black community in eighteenth-century England discusses both the difficulties it faced and the impressive flourishing it achieved. Most Black people in England had ambiguous legal rights. Their position under the law – whether they could legally be kept as slaves, or were free by virtue of residence on English soil – continued to be contentious, with authorities such as Blackstone suggesting slavery was analogous to apprenticeship (since they both involved work without pay, ignoring the drastically different power dynamics).¹⁸⁸ Many, perhaps even most, Black people were brought into Britain as slaves; among the free population, some had run away from their

¹⁸⁵ A monochrome reproduction of an image found in the National Portrait Gallery's Heinz Archive, whose artist and sitter I am so far unable to identify, depicts a lady in a loose, flowing dress in pale colours left of centre in the painting, delicately gripping a light silver chain attached to a manacle around the neck of a young Black boy, otherwise apparently unclothed, but whose torso is hidden by the flowers and fruit he is holding. The Black boy is in the lower right-hand corner of the painting, foreground; above him in the background is a Palladian, symmetrical house set in lush vegetation.

¹⁸⁶ David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art* (Kingston-upon-Thames: Dangaroo Press, 1985), p.26.

¹⁸⁷ Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks*, p.23; Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.57-59, 62.

¹⁸⁸ Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.56-63, Meldrum, p.25.

masters, and others had been abandoned by them (although a significant proportion had been free sailors or had come through other means).¹⁸⁹ Even without the utter dependence on a master's whims that slavery brought, many free Black people found themselves nonetheless defined by service. Myers suggests that domestic service was probably the most common occupation among free Black people, partly since they were not permitted by order of the City of London Corporation to enter apprenticeship for a trade.¹⁹⁰

The second category of image Dabydeen considers is the frequent iconographic reference to Black people in the commercial art of eighteenth-century Britain. From pubs named for 'blackamoors' or 'the moor's head' (which were among the most common in the country), to advertisements, to woodcuts, Black people were a common stock figure.¹⁹¹ However, these illustrations were often far from complimentary, both in their exaggerated artistic style and the written discourses with which they were coupled. One frequently republished broadside ballad, coupled with images of Black men throwing children from the roof of a castle, is *A Lamentable Ballad of the tragical End of a gallant Lord and a virtuous Lady, and the untimely End of their two Children, wickedly perform'd by a heathenish Black-a-moor, their Servant*.¹⁹² The effect of such discourse among the white population is not difficult to guess. Norma Myers also discusses contemporary adverts which invoke the trope of the Black man as both servile and stupid.¹⁹³ In this context Black people would have found it difficult to forge a liveable identity in their leisure hours, and would have faced greater obstacles than white servants in engaging with the various forms of musical culture Wrexham – or Erddig – had to offer. For instance, the culture of sexual suspicion of Black men, who were considered to be 'lascivious', would have made it more difficult for the Black coachboy to

¹⁸⁹ Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.62-63.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.56, 62.

¹⁹¹ Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks*, p.18.

¹⁹² Two printings of *A Lamentable Ballad of the tragical End of a gallant Lord and a virtuous Lady, and the untimely End of their two Children, wickedly perform'd by a heathenish Black-a-moor, their Servant* are available at the English Broadside Ballad Archive (<https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>, accessed 24/03/2017), EBBA IDs 31227 and 32501, printed at The Printing Office, Bow-Church-Yard, London and Newcastle, respectively. Several more distinct prints are available through *JISC Historical Texts* (<https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk>, accessed 30/03/2017), printed in other London and Newcastle locations. A variety of woodcuts are used for the ballad, although the title is kept remarkably consistent for multiple prints of a broadside ballad.

¹⁹³ Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, p.48.

have won the heart of maidservants in the way that Ellis did in D/E/550.¹⁹⁴ Black servants thus experienced the kind of liminal isolation from the community within which their masters' homes were placed which Bridget Hill and others perhaps misleadingly characterise as the general experience of servanthood in eighteenth-century Britain.

Indeed, the Afro-Pessimism pioneered by Frank B. Wilderson, based on the sociology of Orlando Patterson, draws attention to the fundamental distinction between the relation of slavery (which has become inextricably imbricated with the very concept of Blackness) and other social relationships, no matter how oppressive or exploitative. Slavery, being the purchase of personhood and not merely labour, necessitates three conditions which Patterson defines as 'social death'. Firstly, the slave is always vulnerable to gratuitous, repetitive violence without pretext, as property with no (or negotiable) rights before the law; secondly, the slave is alienated from kinship, their personal history and relationships ignored and unrecognised; thirdly, the slave is 'dishonored in [their] very being ... dishonored prior to [their] performance of dishonored acts'.¹⁹⁵ The limited evidence of Black lives in eighteenth-century England suggest that all Black people, slaves or not, lived under these three conditions (and indeed Wilderson would argue this is the universal condition of Blackness).¹⁹⁶ The violent mockery and fear with which Black people were represented in both genteel and vernacular texts and art, the physical violence of enslavement and re-enslavement to which Black people were inherently vulnerable, and the liminal isolation from even other servants within the same household which these conditions engendered are thus comprehensible as part of the ritual of 'social death'. This 'violence against the slave is integral to the production of that psychic space called social life', Wilderson contends, a depersonhood which 'regenerates the knowledge of our existence [as people, as valid

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., pp.47, 51, 118-119.

¹⁹⁵ Frank B. Wilderson and C. S. Soong, 'Blacks and the Master/Slave Relation' (Interview), from *Afro-Pessimism: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Racked & Dispatched, 2017), 15-30, p.18.

¹⁹⁶ For example, through the real risk of enslavement or re-enslavement; occasional reports of racially aggravated murders; systematic discrimination that led to entrapment in cycles of poverty, and the systematic erasure of former names and identities. Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (Pluto Press, 2018), pp.22-25; Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.62, 72, 74-75, 95, 126; but see also p. 131-132.

subjects] for everyone else'.¹⁹⁷ Historians of eighteenth-century Britain must understand the conditions of Black servants to be utterly incommensurable with those of other servants.

Some Black people achieved remarkable economic and creative success despite being socially dead (to continue using Wilderson's terminology). Some were able to maintain a living as tradespeople despite the discrimination they suffered;¹⁹⁸ others, such as Ignatius Sancho, made their mark on genteel society through their impressive learning. Alongside his other scholarly accomplishments, Sancho also composed and performed music.¹⁹⁹ Sancho was, however, employed as a servant by the Montagu family; the encouragement of his talents was a source of prestige for the family.²⁰⁰ Through his social death, in other words, his (often self-deprecating) works became part of their identity.²⁰¹ For masters wishing to educate their Black slaves (or, indeed, white servants) in the arts, music was a largely politically unthreatening choice, at least compared to reading and writing. Ignatius Sancho's greatest legacy was a body of writing and a cultural precedent that helped undermine the system of British slavery towards the end of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. Black musicians, however, produced a transitory art liable to appropriation by the white gentry. This is the rather more unpleasant significance of the 'Erddig Coach-boy'; that this image of a Black musician had his name and dress erased to fit him into the Yorkes' self-congratulatory narrative. Even after physical death, even when they had learned music for their own enjoyment or self-expression, Black servant musicians were subject to a second social death, the violent deletion of their humanity in order to serve the self-expression of a white family.

Both the surviving records of Black lives such as that of the Erddig coachboy, and the absences in the documentary record, are expressions of how dependant the lives of Black people, especially servants, were on genteel masters or patrons. The unique difficulties

¹⁹⁷ Wilderson and Soong, 'Blacks and the Master/Slave Relation', p.20.

¹⁹⁸ Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.67-68, 74, 77.

¹⁹⁹ Vincent Carretta, 'Sancho, (Charles) Ignatius', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004 (www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 17/04/2018).

²⁰⁰ J. Jean Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants in Eighteenth-Century England* (Northampton, Mass: Smith College, 1954), p.42.

²⁰¹ Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, p. 133.

which Norma Myers describes in the documentation of Black lives demonstrates the kind of liminality which Black servants experienced – unlike their white counterparts, they lacked even those few records of existence and personhood which the eighteenth-century state provided. Their right of settlement in a parish, for instance – a prerequisite for a person to access parish services and poor relief – was disputed in the 1772 King’s Bench case of Charlotte Howe.²⁰² Unlike white (and predominantly only male) servants in large households, who could gain conditional access to exclusive spaces, luxury products and elite art through their employers, and could return from that life to their natal communities, Black servants (whether slaves or nominally ‘free’) were only granted conditional access to personhood, which employers could retract at any time.

Conclusion

Research into domestic service at Erddig has revealed a richly complex image of servant life in a rural context. A detailed examination of the house, family and geographical context allow the particularities of Erddig to become apparent – such as its relationship as a ‘Whig’ estate to ‘Tory’ Wrexham – as well as providing insights into rural service, and its relation to urban service. Contrary to the findings of Tim Meldrum and Peter Earle, who studied domestic service in an urban context, servants in grand country houses are seen to hold a liminal position between their local communities and the households they serve. However, for some servants this liminality was experienced as an opportunity: the liminal position of the country house between village, town and metropolis provided some servants with conditional access to goods, spaces and experiences from which they would otherwise have been restricted. For servants at Erddig, this included musical activities such as Christmas balls held by the Yorkes, local music-making in Wrexham and Mold, and attendance at musical events in London theatres and pleasure gardens. For servants who used these experiences to inform their own music-making, appropriations of their masters’ musical culture could have multiple significances, from classic Veblenian ‘emulation’ to parody or the performance of gender, class and geographical privilege (without the intention to emulate).

²⁰² Steedman, pp.105-106.

The musical experiences Erddig servants probably had exemplify the cultural tensions felt by eighteenth-century servants, particularly among those who served the gentry. In the early years of John Meller's ownership of Erddig, Meller's servants were affected by some of the conflicts between London's urban elite and Wrexham's rural gentry which Meller brought to Erddig through his membership within both communities. As an English-speaking household within a predominantly Welsh-speaking community, Erddig's connections to London became vitally important to Erddig's servants, not least for its social advantages. Depending on servants' statuses in terms of race, gender, religion, and language, some servants (such as the Ellis mentioned in D/E/550) experienced this liminality as an opportunity to enrich their musical knowledge, social prestige and material circumstances. For others, such as Jane Ebbrell, the maidservant whom Meller brought from London to Erddig, residing for decades in a town which spoke a foreign language, where her master was the subject of riotous violence, the liminality may not have been so positive.

Examining more carefully the portraits of servants the Yorke family amassed in the 1790s, particularly that of the Black coachboy, showed how power relations of race and class transformed these apparently innocent images (sanitised into 'affectionate tributes' by the National Trust) into self-congratulatory aggrandisement for the landowning family.²⁰³ The liminality of rural domestic service was a demeaning and isolating condition for Black servants, even in a household such as Erddig where even the most precarious (young or female) white servants were well connected with local communities and amenities. The distinction between the legacies of Betty Ratcliffe, the well-educated, white artist whom the family regarded as both very loyal and almost a social equal, and the unnamed Black horn-player whom the family ignored until it was politically advantageous to commemorate him could not be clearer. This demonstrates one of the points of difference between London and the countryside for Black people: the isolation of the countryside gave masters far more power over their non-white servants, making the latter more dependent on the patronage of the former.

²⁰³ See note 170.

The power relations between master and servant at Erddig are seen in a different light through the servant wages account book. This is a particularly important source, since most study of servant wages in the past (from Hecht to Kent to Hill and Meldrum) focused on their nominal annual wage, without having much information about how these wages were paid. Seeing the highly individualised and irregular ways in which pay was negotiated between servant and employer, on a weekly, monthly and annual basis, demonstrates the diversity of financial practices among servants and the variety of potential uses – including social and musical ones – to which money could be put, even on the limited nominal wages servants received. The value of cash wages in providing unconditional access to goods, spaces and experiences was critical in both town and country.

Chapter 3: Domestic Service, Geography and Musical Practices in St. Clement Danes

He sees an infinite number of different *Machines*, all in violent Motion, some *riding* on the Top, some within, others behind, and *Jehu* in the Coach-box, whirling some *dignified Villain* towards the *Devil*, who has got an Estate by cheating the Publick. He lolls at full stretch within, and half a dozen Brawny Bulk-begotten *Footmen* behind.

Some carry, others are carried: *Make way there*, says a gouty-leg'd Chairman, that is carrying a Punk of Quality to a *Morning's-Exercise*; or a *Bartholomew-Baby* Beau, newly launch'd out of a Chocolate-House, with his Pockets as empty as his Brains.

Here a footy Chimney-Sweeper takes the Wall of a grave *Alderman*, and a *Broom-Man* jostles the *Parson* of the Parish. There a fat greasie *Porter* runs a Trunk full-but upon you, while another salutes your Antlers with a Flasket of Eggs and *Butter*. *Turn out there you Country Putt*, says a *Bully* with a Sword two yards long jarring at his heels, and throws him into the Kennel.

Figure 3.0: a description of Temple Bar from Thomas Brown, *Amusements Serious and Comical* (Dublin: J. Watts, 1725), pp. 14-15.

Introduction

This chapter is a 'microhistory', or intensive area study, of a single London parish, a methodology popularised by Keith Wrightson and David Levine at the end of the 1970s.¹ Jeremy Boulton's detailed examination of one district within the parish of St. Saviour's, Southwark, demonstrates the value of this approach for the social history of early modern London. His study draws on sources such as sacramental token books, burial, baptism and marriage records, censuses, manorial records and tax assessments to examine the lives of hundreds of individuals and link them to the urban environment.² This enables geographical, economic and social topographies to be mapped at a human scale, so that social and physical mobility, personal relationships and economic change can be traced through hundreds of individual stories, contextualised by each other, within a known

¹ Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp.5-6.

² Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society*, p.7.

geography.³ In an era when most travel was on foot, and – as Robert Shoemaker has shown – most Londoners stayed within their particular range of the metropolitan area (those from the eastern suburbs of the city rarely visiting Westminster, for instance, and vice versa), a study of a parish can represent the study of a distinct urban community, even though its borders were permeable and its membership fluid.⁴ Although Boulton’s book has little to say about music, there are potential remedies in its methodology for problems within historical musicology.

Histories of eighteenth-century music in England frequently lack a geographical focus smaller than a region, and even then are more interested in exceptional musical individuals (especially composers, singers and aristocratic patrons) than their environments. Even histories of geographically fixed institutions, such as Tim Eggington’s history of the Academy of Ancient Music, tend to focus far more closely on personnel and repertoire than the Academy’s physical home until 1784, the public room of the Crown and Anchor Tavern, on the corner of the Strand and Arundel Street, a few hundred yards from St. Clement Danes parish church.⁵ This has a dual effect of distancing music from its roles in the creation and demarcation of space, and of radically limiting the base of people whose musical experiences are historically examined. Institutions like the Academy of Ancient Music were not constituted solely by their members and audiences, but by their spatial relations: within a building, within a street, within a parish, demarcated by both physical and social infrastructure – walls, roofs and pavements, but also cleaners, watchmen and chandlers. This chapter will show that musical culture is deeply embedded in, arises from and alters the geography and sociology of a building, a street and a parish.

These spatial relations also involved proximity to other forms of musical and aural culture, part of an ‘urban soundscape’. Soundscape studies, such as those by Bruce Smith and Emily Cockayne, do position musical and aural culture within physical and acoustic

³ For example, *Ibid.*, pp.176-180, 234-236.

⁴ Robert B. Shoemaker, ‘Gendered Spaces: Patterns of Mobility and Perceptions of London’s Geography, 1660-1750’, in *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype 1598-1720*, ed. J. F. Merritt (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), 144-165, pp.160-161.

⁵ Tim Eggington, *The Advancement of Music in Enlightenment England* (Boydell, 2014), pp.5-6, 76.

spaces, through meticulous attention to sonic detail and acknowledgement of sounds' social functions.⁶ However, like many studies of soundscape, both of these volumes only localise the soundscape, and its attendant social dynamics, within particular moments, diachronous and spatially discontinuous. A micro-historical focus can help to ground soundscapes in sociology and geography, since a focus on one parish prevents the researcher from pursuing the (perhaps unrepresentative) 'interesting' at the expense of the mundane. In addition, this chapter will not be a soundscape study, in the sense of focusing on sound: instead, the focus of this micro-history is the encounter between musical practices and domestic service, mediated by the specific geography of St. Clement Danes.

During the research for and initial drafting of this chapter, Francis Boorman's *Victoria County History of St. Clement Danes* was published.⁷ This was an extremely useful reference for my research, and a valuable counterpoint to previous histories of the parish, works by Victorian antiquarians primarily concerned with amusing anecdote, sometimes confusingly written and error-prone. The new volume explores the governance, economy and architecture of the parish with clarity and concision, presenting new evidence about the occupational makeup of the parish and the relationships between parish government and moral reform (anti-sex work) movements, among other aspects of the parish's history.⁸ However, the section on culture in *St. Clement Danes* is somewhat slight and does not consider important local figures such as John Henley or Joe Miller in any great depth.⁹ The Academy of Ancient Music is not even mentioned. This chapter, with its focus on domestic servants' relationships to leisure and other important cultural spaces, will help to present *St. Clement Danes's* rich musical, theatrical and intellectual spheres as more integral to its society and economy.

⁶ Emily Cockayne, *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England, 1600-1770* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007) e.g. pp.107-112; Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O Factor* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), e.g. pp.54-70.

⁷ eds. Francis Calvert Boorman, Jonathan Comber and Mark Latham, *The Victoria History of Middlesex: St. Clement Danes, 1660-1900* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2018).

⁸ Ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.15, 27-34, 88-89, 95-96.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.79-85.

This chapter is intended to be read with the St. Clement Danes collection I have written on the Institute for Historical Research's *Layers of London* website, transcriptions of which are collected into Appendix 1 of this thesis.¹⁰ These are directed towards a general audience but nonetheless academically rigorous, providing greater detail about the micro-geography of St. Clement Danes than is possible within the space of a single thesis chapter. The first section of this chapter, about the production of St. Clement Danes's different urban spaces, will contain several links to these more geographically specific posts. There are also considerable links between the posts in Appendix 1 and the sections on the economic geography of St. Clement Danes and institutions of leisure in the parish (such as public houses).

Following these discussions is an examination of domestic servant demographics in St. Clement Danes, using parish settlement examinations. It thereby replicates, expands upon and problematises D. A. Kent's 1985 study of female domestic servants based upon St. Martin-in-the-Fields parish settlement examinations.¹¹ The findings regarding wages from this study will then be placed within a broader context, considering servants' financial practices and uses of money. Money was an essential resource for engagement with musical culture, and the gendered ways in which it was distributed and used influenced the ability of female servants – that is, most servants – to perform music or see performances. The final section of this chapter considers the ways in which spatial proximity created avenues for encountering musical culture and its participants in varied and chaotic contexts. The dense overlaying of cultural practices in the urban environment of St. Clement Danes is exemplified in the phenomenon of John Henley's Oratory, a unique institution which brought together the worlds of Lincoln's Inn Fields and Claremarket, butchers and artisans with the sphere of bourgeois intellectual debate.

¹⁰ The original web address for this collection was www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/179 and has now been altered to www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800.

¹¹ D. A. Kent, 'Ubiquitous but Invisible: Female Domestic Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London', *History Workshop*, 28 (1989), 111-128.

St. Clement Danes as a Produced Space

St. Clement Danes is a very small parish on the eastern edge of Westminster. Its northern boundary encompasses part of Lincoln's Inn New Square, the back row of houses on the southern edge of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and before the nineteenth-century demolitions, all but the northernmost tip of old Claremarket, through Bear Yard, to take in the south-eastern side of Duke Street. Avoiding both sides of Princes Street (since demolished), it arrives at Drury Lane, the western boundary of the main part of the parish. The parish boundary then runs south, taking in the eastern side of Drury Lane until it split into (what used to be) Wych Street and Little Drury Lane. The boundary of St. Clement Danes runs a little way down Wych Street (demolished to make room for Aldwych), before turning due south once more, cutting a line through the houses to arrive at Hollowell or Holywell Street, which ran parallel to the Strand. Avoiding St. Mary le Strand church, it runs down the garden wall of the old Somerset House until it meets the Thames at the old Strand Bridge. The southern boundary of the parish then follows the Thames until a little past what was then Essex Stairs, at the conclusion of Essex Street; then it curves back up to Temple Bar, taking in Devereux Court. The eastern boundary of the parish runs north from Temple Bar, up what was Sheir Lane (taking in the western side of the street), to meet with the northern boundary at a right angle in Lincoln's Inn New Square. An enclave of the parish on the far side of the Savoy takes in what was then the southern side of Exeter Street and part of Burleigh Street, down to Exeter Exchange on the Strand; then a few blocks of housing between the eastern edge of the Savoy and the western edge of Cecil Street, between the Strand and the river. This section of the chapter will explore the practices which produced this space, using Henri Lefebvre's framework: from representations of space such as maps; to productive processes such as speculative building, opening public houses and driving coaches; to the roles of servants and London's underclasses employed in spatial production (as well as the opportunities thus afforded them).

Two maps are useful for understanding how the parish was represented: the first is Figure 3.1, a German two-sheet map of 1736, seemingly based on seventeenth-century maps (given the extent of London's new northern development mapped out), and most likely also

Robert Seymour's *Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, of which the second volume was published in 1735 (or likely one of its progenitors, such as Strype's 1720 *Survey*).¹² Its geometrical precision and accuracy is not perfect, and a few small streets are mislabelled. However, many of the more important courts and yards – such as Ship Yard or Boswell Court – do accord well with Seymour's description, and indeed that of Walter Thornbury, who described the area in the nineteenth century as it stood just before demolition.¹³ As a portable two-sheet map, this level of detail is greater than most of its contemporaries. Figure 3.2 is John Rocque's map of 1746, which as a survey map has an extremely fine level of detail mapped very precisely.¹⁴ As a plan which values geometrical precision and regular uniformity over all else, it does not perhaps express quite so well the way that different spaces and the links between them were experienced, the ways that people moved through the city. Interestingly, it considerably decreases the scale of open spaces such as Claremarket and Boswell Court, demonstrating the degree to which the earlier map was perhaps more impressionistic than precise, designed for practical travel rather than perfect knowledge.

¹² Robert Seymour, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark, and Parts Adjacent* (London: J. Read, 1735). The church of St. Clement Danes, its parish administration and a list of streets is given pp. 683-688; a description of the parish itself pp. 772-776. Being based on John Stow's 1598 *Survey*, the volume *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype, 1598-1720*, ed. J. F. Merritt (Cambridge: CUP, 2001) provides useful context to understand this source, especially J. F. Merritt, 'The Reshaping of Stow's *Survey*: Munday, Strype, and the Protestant City', 52-88.

¹³ Walter Thornbury, 'St Clement Danes: The law courts', in *Old and New London: Volume 3* (London, 1878), pp.15-25; available at *British History Online*, www.british-history.ac.uk (accessed 24.7.2018).

¹⁴ Peter Rauxloh, 'Mapping Methodology', *Locating London's Past*, www.locatinglondon.org (accessed 26.09.2018).

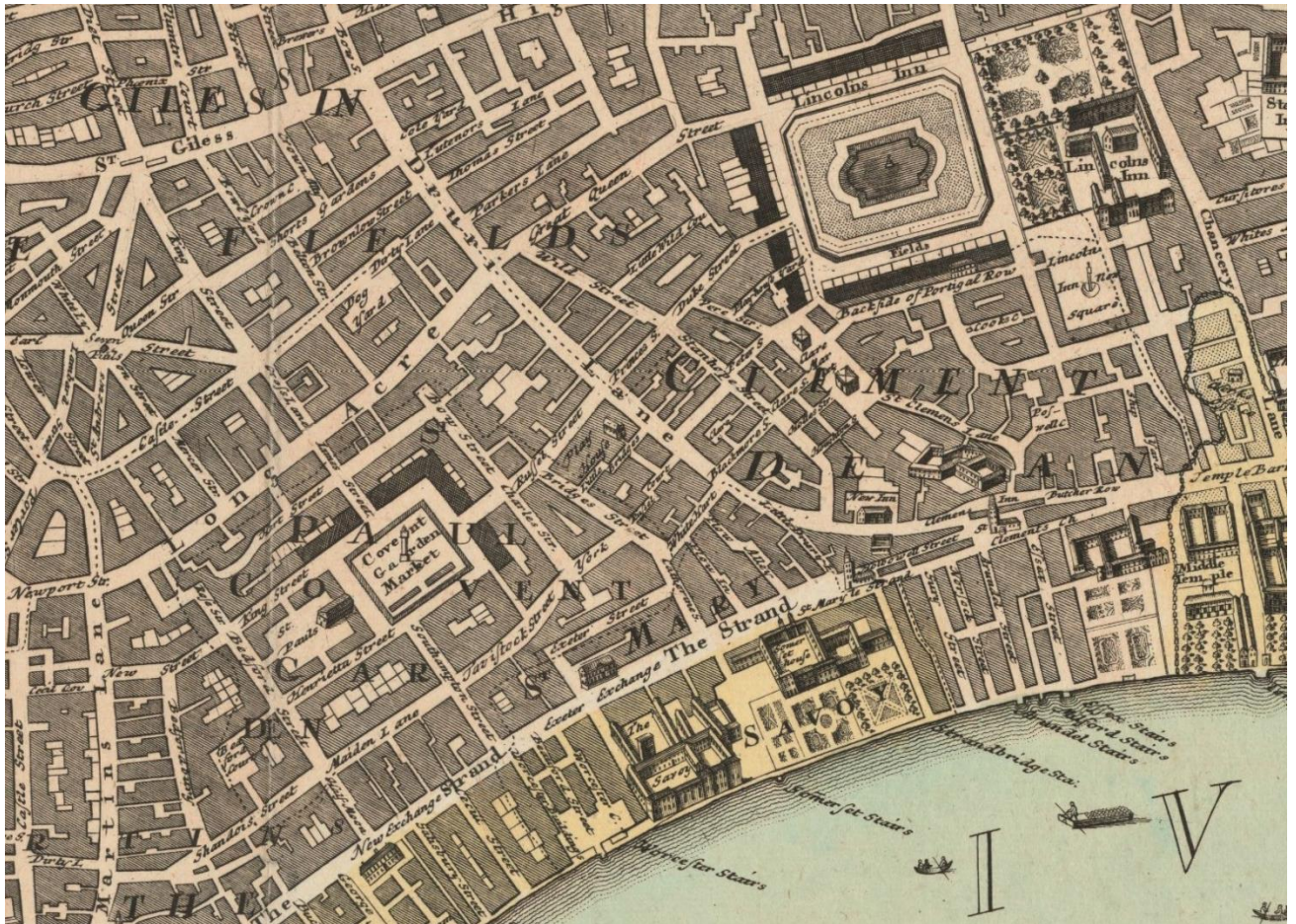


Figure 3.1: Detail from *Urbium Londini et West-Monasterii nec non Suburbii Southwark accurata Ichnographia* (Nuremberg: Homann Erben, 1736), Harvard Map Collection, digitised and available at <https://iif.harvard.edu>, accessed 26.09.2018. Note the fine dotted lines surrounding 'Clement Dean' [sic.].



Figure 3.2: Detail from John Rocque's *A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, and Borough of Southwark*, first edition (London: John Pine and John Tinney, 1746). Images taken from the now-defunct website www.motco.com (available at web.archive.org, accessed 28/08/2018). To travel between the two publication sites – John Pine's shop in Piccadilly and John Tinney's in Fleet Street – one would probably have passed through the parish of St. Clement Danes.

Both maps reflect a genteel perspective on the city.¹⁵ As such, neither map really expresses how servants moved through or conceptualised the parish, although they would

¹⁵ As Lefebvre relates, representations of a space (such as maps) are 'tied to the relations of [spatial] production and to the "order" which those relations impose' (Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith [Oxford: Blackwell {1974, 1981}, 1991], p. 33; also see discussion in Chapter 1). Although London's elite lacked the power to exert hegemony over the city – see Andrew Gordon, 'Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City', in *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster (London: Routledge, 2016), 130-139, p. 131 – Lefebvre's understanding, that a representation of space is an attempt to control that space through how it is conceived, is useful (Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 38-39, 40-42).

Both maps can thus be seen as an attempt to tame the city. The German map, labelled with remarks about hiring coaches, serves up London to a genteel audience by highlighting those features of interest to them, carelessly mapping and disregarding poorer areas. In contrast, Rocque's map imposes a totalising, rationalising gaze, similar to the sources discussed in Edward Said's *Orientalism*

have been aware of street maps like these (through print shops displaying them, or by borrowing maps from their masters or friends).¹⁶ However, the centrality of the street in both of these maps, as the only accessible, named, knowable places, perhaps represents an urban spatial order shared by all of the parties involved in creating London's spaces. Certainly, it stands in sharp contradistinction to maps from rural areas, such as the 1748 view of Wrexham (Figure 2.3), in which buildings are the primary features, and streets are compressed and de-emphasised. Andrew Gordon describes how the urban street changed, during the early modern period, from a mere 'space between buildings' into the embodiment of local community.¹⁷ Householders were required to maintain public pavements from the seventeenth century onwards, and although the street in Westminster was increasingly a concern of local government by the end of the eighteenth century, householders still had extensive communal responsibilities.¹⁸ This meant that their servants had a clear function in the street. Lithographs from the eighteenth century depict maidservants and charwomen industriously cleaning the front steps of, and pavements abutting, their employers' houses.¹⁹ In poorer courts and alleys, communal standpipes for water made the street a place of utility and sociability as well as responsibility.²⁰ Thus, maps probably intended for a genteel audience can provide insight into the 'representational

(Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* [London: Penguin Modern Classics (1978, 1995), 2003], pp. 12, 66-68). Every maze of narrow courts in which London's poor might pelt genteel coach-goers with firecrackers or pick their pockets is made visible, comprehensible, uniform (Gordon, 'Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City', pp. 136-137; Cockayne, *Hubbub*, p.179).

Maps like these can be understood as part of the colonial bureaucracy of Empire – expressing power over subjects by producing systematic knowledge about them. For example, see Jessica Hinchy's discussion of the imposition of contemporary British conceptions of gender on nonbinary Indian populations, 'Deviant Domesticities and Sexualised Childhoods: Prostitutes, Eunuchs and the Limits of the State Child "Rescue" Mission in Colonial India', from *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, eds. Hyaeweol Choi, Margaret Jolly (ANU Press, 2014), 247-279. However, Jessica Hinchy's article replicates these colonial frameworks by describing the hijra as 'male-born emasculates' and using other stigmatising Anglophone terms. For context, see Geeta Patel's article 'Home, Homo, Hybrid: Translating Gender', *College Literature*, 24, 1 (1997), 133-150, where her childhood fear of 'becoming a hijra' despite being a cisgender woman demonstrates the problems of Hinchy's conceptualisation.

¹⁶ John Macdonald 'perused' his master's maps in Dublin; Macdonald, p.67.

¹⁷ Gordon, 'Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City', p.134.

¹⁸ ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.56-58.

¹⁹ Dan Cruickshank and Neil Burton, *Life in the Georgian City* (London: Viking, 1990), p.16.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 87; Meldrum, pp.147-149.

spaces' (Henri Lefebvre's term for people's experiences of a space, filtered through all the symbolism and cultural practices accreted around them) servants moved through in the parish.²¹

However, turning to other forms of spatial practice, two difficulties arise for the historian. Firstly, since the eighteenth century there have been too many discontinuities in what Lefebvre would describe as the practices which 'secrete a society's space',²² such as maintenance, decoration, room use, ownership, and how spaces are perceived. Secondly, little has escaped the traumatic destruction of the nineteenth century, the removal of communities and vernacular housing and the imposition of larger roads (such as Aldwych and Kingsway) and national institutions (such as the Royal Courts of Justice, for which almost an entire ward of the parish was demolished).²³ Previously, in eighteenth-century St. Clement Danes, the dominant strategic mode of spatial production was speculative building.²⁴ Peter Guillery explains that this process involved maximising the profitability of relatively small parcels of urban land (in St. Clement Danes, usually the grounds of decaying sixteenth-century mansions) by building tall, narrow houses – sometimes less than 15 feet wide – either directly against the street or in narrow 'courts' that ran perpendicular to the street.²⁵ The post in Appendix 1 entitled '33 and 34 Surrey Street' discusses some of the architectural and social ramifications of this system of construction, with reference to one of the few eighteenth-century domestic buildings in St. Clement Danes to survive.

²¹ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp.33, 39.

²² *Ibid.*, p.38.

²³ Demolished houses and streets are described and listed in John Diprose, *Some Account of the Parish of St. Clement Danes, Past and Present, Volume 1* (London: Diprose and Bateman, 1868), pp.8-11. Compare with the list of streets in Sheer Lane ward, Seymour, *A Survey*, p.688. Also see ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, p.20.

²⁴ I borrow the distinction between 'strategic' and 'tactical' exercises of agency from Michel de Certeau *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press [1984], 1988), pp.xviii-xix. See Chapter 5 for an extensive discussion; 'strategic' power involves those with a legitimate institutional authority exercising control, while 'tactical' agency is the ways in which human agents negotiate existing structures to survive and make their lives habitable.

²⁵ Peter Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale UP [2004], 2009), pp.51-52.

Devereux Court, also described in detail in Appendix 1, is another key survival, a speculative development of the 1680s by Nicholas Barbon.²⁶ As such it is a useful microcosm to explore the different practices of spatial production, who was performing these practices, and why. Robert Seymour's 1735 *Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* provides a very detailed account of the parish, including Devereux Court:

It is a large Place with good Houses, and by Reason of its Vicinity to the Temple, has a good Resort, consisting of Publick Houses, and noted Coffee Houses; from this Court is a Passage into Essex-street.²⁷

This representation of the space is a good starting point to understanding some of the spatial practices that constituted eighteenth-century Devereux Court. Speculative building constructed much of the physical fabric, the 'good Houses', the 'large Place' (that is, the street of the court) and passageways. However, that physical fabric was adapted by the buildings' tenants to create attractive places of sociability, leisure and refreshment – the 'Publick Houses, and noted Coffee Houses'. Figure 3.3 shows the Grecian Coffee House in Devereux Court, which is still extant as a public house named the 'Devereux' (albeit with the fascia heavily altered in the mid-nineteenth century).²⁸ Long, wide bay windows dominate the ground floor, an expensive adaptation that would allow the coffee house within to maximise natural light, making the interior more hospitable (at the cost of privacy and loss of heat). The bust of the eponymous Greek founder of the coffee house, mounted above the front door, served as an important visual symbol for passers-by and ensured the Grecian could become an icon and a landmark. The large, ornate lamps outside the enlarged front door would have required considerable fuel and maintenance, but allowed customers to leave and enter with greater security. A public house's infrastructure was human as well as architectural, and it is notable that George Konstantinos (the original owner) paid his nephew Angelo Trogar a very high annual wage of £12 when the latter lived as a servant with him (at some point before 1722).²⁹ This might have reflected familial affection between uncle and nephew, but it also represents an acknowledgement of Trogar's value in producing space for the coffee house, either by maintaining the physical building or

²⁶ ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.10-11.

²⁷ Seymour, *A Survey*, p. 773

²⁸ '20 Devereux Court', *Historic England*, NHLE 1066888 (last amended 2017; historicengland.org.uk, accessed 17/08/2018).

²⁹ LLCDP WCCDEP358060242.

attending to the needs and wants of customers. Perhaps, too, Konstantinos wished to have a fellow Greek working there to make the Grecian distinctive. These adaptations to buildings and hiring decisions were some of the ways the owners of public houses and other businesses produced space, besides the provision of refreshment and furnishings. This could include music, which was a cheap and flexible way of generating a sociable space: William Shilcock was employed in 1740 to play the violin at a tavern booth in Tottenham Court Fair, for half a crown (2s 6d) a day.³⁰

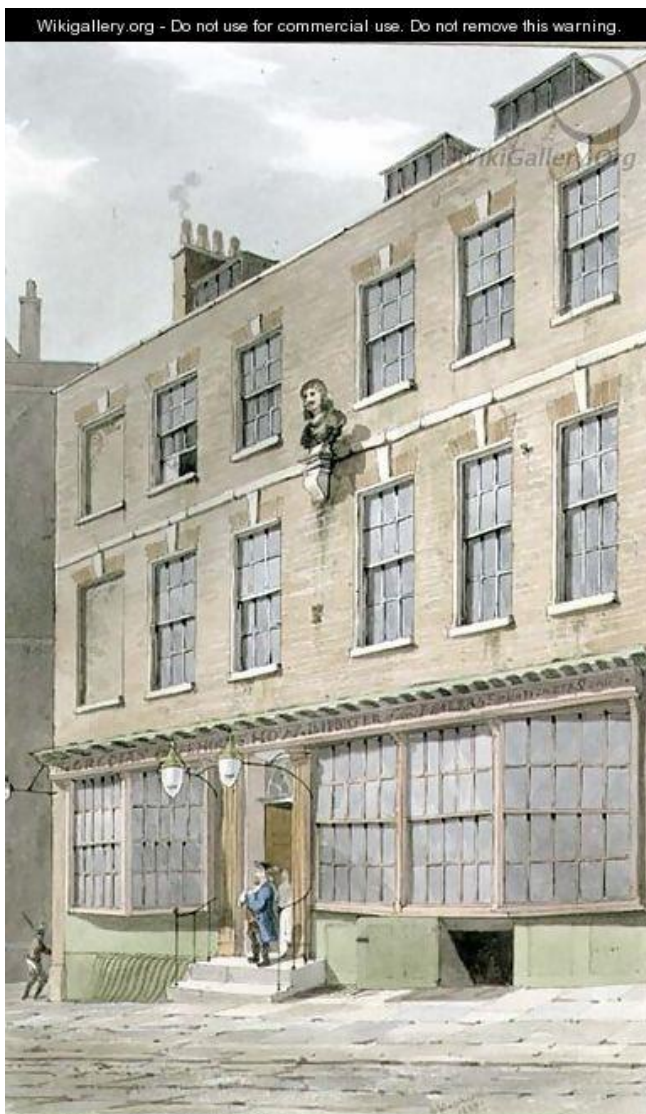


Figure 3.3: *The Grecian Coffee House in 1809*, painted by George Shepherd, available at WikiGallery (wikigallery.org, accessed 17/08/18).

³⁰ OBPO t17400903-55.

The impression of hospitality which public house owners needed to project was largely defined by the interests of their customers. In Devereux Court, as Seymour implies, public houses existed to serve the legal professionals of the Temple and their generally wealthy clients, as indeed they do today (a rare example of continuity with the St. Clement Danes of the eighteenth century). It is a contrast to the Seven Stars public house on Carey Street (established 1602, and still occupying a seventeenth-century building),³¹ which was sited within a principally theatrical context in the early eighteenth century – just around the corner from the Duke’s Theatre on Portugal Street – and now occupies a legal-professional one due to its proximity to the Royal Courts of Justice. There were few sociable spaces in St. Clement Danes that did not, however, focus on the needs of the wealthy. A murder case from 1718, in which a wealthy merchant (Motteaux) was allegedly killed in a brothel in Star Court (which even the optimistic Seymour describes as only ‘indifferent good and large, with an open Air’, since considered a slum and demolished to build the Royal Courts of Justice),³² demonstrates the importance of genteel customers even to the most disreputable institutions of sociability in the parish. The habits of the wealthy were sometimes tactically exploited: one moment of high drama in that case was the revelation that the coachman who had carried Motteaux to Star Court attempted to conceal from his employer the fare he had been paid.³³ Nevertheless, money was an instrument of spatial control which, along with control over parish governance and national politics, gave to a narrow elite hegemonic power over spatial production, even as that production was performed by others.

For example, with modest wealth came the ability to hire a hackney-carriage (or hackney-coach), and with great wealth a family could keep their own coach and team. The demands of carriage and coach traffic had only begun to make a mark on the city’s streets in the previous century, and the sedan chair was still a common sight as a cheaper alternative.³⁴ Yet it already had profound effects on the geography of St. Clement Danes: for instance, shaping where places of genteel entertainment were sited. Temple Bar (Figure 3.6), reducing

³¹ ‘Seven Stars Public House’, *Historic England*, NHLE 1244097 (last amended 1974; historicengland.org.uk, accessed 18/09/2020).

³² Seymour, *Survey*, p.774; Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 1, pp.11, 107.

³³ *OBPO* t17180423-1.

³⁴ Gordon, ‘Street Life of the Early Modern City’, pp.136-137.

the width of the roadway from 54 feet (16.46 metres) to 13 feet 6 inches (4.11 metres), was a bottleneck for all traffic, but especially vehicles, travelling between the City of London and the City of Westminster.³⁵ Thus, a 1717 ordinance of the Office for Hackney-Coaches and Chairs (based in Surrey Street, between the Strand and the River Thames) restricted coaches from 'stand[ing] and ply[ing]' (that is, waiting for new customers) extensively between St. Clement Danes church in the west, and Sergeant's Inn to the east.³⁶ This might explain why the Crown and Anchor Tavern (Figure 3.4), a large public house on the corner of the Strand and Arundel Street – just west of the porch of St. Clement Danes – had a large room for events, capable of holding allegedly thousands, used for a variety of concerts and other public gatherings (as the next section will explore).³⁷ It would also demonstrate why the theatre on the back side of Portugal Row, usually called the Duke's Theatre, closed in the 1730s, while new theatres opened up in Covent Garden, which was more accessible from the growing genteel developments in the west by coach, served by broader carriageways.³⁸ The old theatre required attendees to travel through the maze of narrow 'dark and obscure outlets' (as nineteenth-century historian Walter Thornbury described them) that connected St. Clement's Lane, Claremarket and Carey Street.³⁹ The importance of the coach to those who could afford them was partly as a safety measure: at 10 pm on a spring night in 1728 (when theatre attendees, actors or staff might have been returning home), a man was robbed in one of the narrow passages between Claremarket and the theatre on the back side of Portugal Row.⁴⁰ This suggests that the coach had a profound effect on the musical geography of London, influencing where genteel audience members might feel safe or unsafe, well or poorly served, as the position of the Crown and Anchor suggests.

³⁵ Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 2 (1868), pp.180, 197.

³⁶ John Way, Thomas Sutton, More Molyneux, Charles Barnard and John Idle, 'Orders, by-laws, and ordinances, for the good government and regulating of the persons licensed to keep and drive hackney-coaches, and their renters and drivers', pamphlet (London: Edmund Parker, 1717), British Library (General Reference Collection) HS.74/1245.

³⁷ Thornbury, *Old and New London*, pp.63-84.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.26-32.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.15-25.

⁴⁰ 'London', *London Journal*, 449 (9 March, 1728).



Figure 3.4: A view from the west, standing in the middle of the Strand, of St. Clement Danes in 1753, reproduced as the frontispiece to Diprose, *Some Account of the Parish of Saint Clement Danes*, Volume 2 (London: Diprose, Bateman and Co., 1876). The Crown and Anchor Tavern, with its pictorial sign, is in the foreground on the right-hand side. Coaches were allowed to stand and ply freely from the porch of St. Clement Danes westwards; in the other direction, severe restrictions on where coaches could stand and ply limited genteel mobility for the sake of traffic flow.



Figures 3.5 and 3.6: two images of Temple Bar from the west (left: from 1753, and right: from 1800), likewise reproduced in Diprose's Account. Only four coaches were allowed to stand and ply between St. Clement Danes church and Temple Bar: three of them had to stand where Butcher Row and the Strand converged, in the middle of the road, at least two yards apart.

However, the very existence of the coach reflected a tension between the gentry's strategic power over space (for instance, the requirement that even hackney coaches give way to 'any Person of Quality, or Gentleman's Coach, Chariot or Chaise'), and the necessity of the poor's presence in the city, which allowed them their own tactical appropriations (such as pelting pedestrian aristocrats with mud or stones).⁴¹ As Andrew Gordon suggests, the coach was a private, separate space, protecting the wealthy from the dangerously communal street, whisking them from one private space to another.⁴² The popularity of the cheaper sedan chair, a closed box carried at little above walking pace, demonstrates the importance of spatial separation from the street to the gentry and middling sorts; private space was the sedan chair's principal advantage.⁴³ Although the sedan chair allowed the illusion of control over urban space for its customers, the coach both required real control over the street and helped facilitate it, radically transforming London's urban fabric. Beginning at the end of the sixteenth century, and with renewed efforts in the eighteenth, medieval gravelled cartways and cobbled streets began to be levelled and covered with smooth flagstones, primarily to enable a smooth journey for coach traffic.⁴⁴ By the middle of the seventeenth century, the hackney carriage system was well established, and licensing and fares were strictly regulated within London's Bills of Mortality by a series of Parliamentary acts.⁴⁵ Yet the coach also controlled the street in a less direct sense. The loud screeching of the coach's iron-rimmed wheels against stone flags, and the danger of fast horse-drawn traffic, made London's wider streets more hostile to the pedestrian poor – and also to musicians, especially ballad singers, who depended on being able to attract a stationary audience.

⁴¹ Cockayne, *Hubbub*, p.179.

⁴² Gordon, 'Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City', p. 136

⁴³ Mary Anne Garry, 'Sedan Chairmen in Eighteenth-Century London', *The Journal of Transport History*, 37, 1 (2016), 45–63, pp.47, 49-50.

⁴⁴ Gordon, 'Materiality and the Streetlife of the Early Modern City', p. 135; Cruickshank and Burton, *Life in the Georgian City*, pp.13-15.

⁴⁵ 'An Act for Licensing and Regulating Hackney Coaches and Chairs; and for Charging Certain New Duties ... to be Raised for Carrying on the War, and Other Her Majesties [sic.] Occasions', *Anno Regni Annae Reginae, Magna Britannia, Francia, et Hibernia, Nono* (London: Thomas Newcomb and Henry Hills [assigns], 1711), pp.456-459.

Coach traffic between the City of London and Westminster was one of the drivers of demand for the genteel hostelrys in Devereux Court, including musical entertainments. However, Devereux Court, like many existing streets in St. Clement Danes, was too narrow for coach traffic, with awkward dog-leg corners and empty walls that could accommodate beggars and others whom the gentry would have preferred to exclude. Indeed, genuine seclusion was close to impossible in St. Clement Danes: Devereux Court was considered ‘a large Place’ by Seymour in comparison to the other courts, alleys and streets of the parish, and meaningful privacy would already be difficult enough there, where every window is overlooked by another. In less genteel courts, these problems would be compounded by thin walls (particularly internal walls) and outdoor utilities such as standpipes, outdoor waste disposal and sometimes communal ‘bog-houses’.⁴⁶ Consistory court testimonies show servants washing clothes at public faucets, or observing comings and goings from windows and doorways, or hearing intimate discussions from other rooms.⁴⁷ Without coach traffic, and far fewer mechanical sounds than in a post-industrial urban soundscape, singing and shouting voices must have been among the loudest sounds present in narrow lanes and courts. Thus, the genteel customers of the Twinings tea house or the Grecian coffee house were unable to completely seclude themselves, because the narrowness of Devereux Court both prevented them from driving coaches right up to the door, and forced them into close juxtaposition with others. Even the most powerful users had to compromise with the existing built environment: like all of the spaces in St. Clement Danes, eighteenth-century Devereux Court resulted from tension between different forms of strategic power: in this case, between speculative building and coach driving.

Servants’ role in the economy of leisure was not as mere inhabitants, but as active participants who helped to shape the ways people moved through and used space. The parish settlement examinations discussed in this chapter show that a large proportion of servants worked in victualling or retail,⁴⁸ partially responsible for serving customers,

⁴⁶ Cockayne, *Hubbub*, pp.142-144, 189.

⁴⁷ Meldrum, pp.96, 147.

⁴⁸ Out of the 412 service positions in my sample with masters’ occupations listed, fully 71% of servants worked for a victualler, artisan, craftsman, merchant, or tradesman; in comparison, out of 796 servant depositions in the consistory court proceedings Tim Meldrum examined, only 40% worked for employers in these occupational categories. Even accounting for differences in

excluding the undesirable and curating the shop displays that attracted respectable customers.⁴⁹ Servants – either of gentry themselves or of hackney-coach companies (who, while not technically domestic servants as such, had remarkably similar responsibilities) – drove the coaches, helped gentry to and from them, and waited on them. Servants accompanied their masters and mistresses from shop to shop, carrying goods, or were sometimes sent out on errands alone to buy necessary household goods.⁵⁰ Servants who became pregnant unexpectedly or had been out of place too long might well have ended up among London’s begging population, targeted by the spatial control other servants implemented on behalf of their masters.⁵¹ They acted as human instruments of strategic control over space, wielded by public house landlords and residential tenants.

Servants’ interests were partially, but not wholly aligned with those of their masters, and they had some ability to tactically manipulate space to their own advantage. Piped water was convenient for masters who could afford it, particularly those owning places of refreshment; yet for servants, although water was a heavy burden to carry (most likely upon their heads, as women still do in places without piped water),⁵² venturing out onto the street for water could become an opportunity to socialise with neighbours and friends, and witness the unfolding drama of the street.⁵³ Servants, along with the rest of the local poor, sometimes tactically protected well-established local beggars from the vagaries of the law, perhaps aware of their own precarity, or simply protecting their communities in expectation

categorisation, this suggests St. Clement Danes had unusually high levels of victualling (14% in Meldrum’s sample versus 25% of mine), retail and trades related to retail. Meldrum, p.22. Also see occupational data from Westminster election poll books, ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, p.28.

⁴⁹ Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp.261-264; 268-270.

⁵⁰ In 1717, the horse of John Lewis was stolen after his servant hitched it to a post outside a shop the servant had entered, presumably alone on an errand. *OBPO* t17170111-24.

⁵¹ Hanway, p.368; Earle, *A City Full of People*, pp.127-129.

⁵² A young boy who was run over by reckless driving in 1719, Robert Pound, along with his sister and another woman had been walking ‘with Goods on their Heads, singing’. *OBPO* t17190903-34. Also see broadside ballad ‘The Staffordshire Maid’ (London: no printer, n.d. [c. 1763]), EBBA ID 31091 (<https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu>, accessed 14/10/2020), in which a maid gathers up all of her earnings and possessions, places them in a box, and then ‘With it on her head from her master she goes’.

⁵³ Meldrum, p.147.

of customary reciprocity.⁵⁴ The interactions between landlords, residents, customers, beggars and servants in places like Devereux Court, then, manifest the tensions inherent in the production of a hegemonic spatial order by human agents with their own interests.

The producers of space with the least agency were the underclass of charwomen, laundresses, piece workers and street sellers who facilitated economic activity in St. Clement Danes. They produced space by stocking homes and shops with cheap textiles, distributing goods across the country (along with male chapmen), and maintaining buildings' appearance and the cleanliness of their residents and employees. Many women, especially older unmarried or widowed women, combined these occupations to make a living. Alice Gray, born in Andover (Hampshire) and condemned to death in 1707 at the age of 32,

had all along workt very hard for her Livelihood ... she had liv'd several Years (both a Wife and a Widow) in the Parish of St. Clement's Dane; and had since her Husband's Death (as in his Life's time) maintain'd her self by her honest and constant Labour; she making-up Cloaths for Souldiers , and sometimes going to Washing and Scowring , and at other times Watching with Sick Folks, and being a Nurse to them.⁵⁵

Likewise, Elizabeth Pryce, 37 when she was condemned in 1712 for serial burglary,

had follow'd, sometimes the Business of picking up Rags and Cinders , and at other times that of selling Fruit and Oysters , crying Hot-Pudding and Gray-Peas in the Streets , and the like[.]⁵⁶

Subcontracting a char was so frequently condemned in advice literature for servants that it implies the practice may have been commonplace, freeing younger and more respectable maidservants to perform lighter duties or to have a little leisure time.⁵⁷ Women taking in laundry not only lessened the burden on other domestic servants (and household spaces such as kitchens and outdoor 'areas'), but were crucial to the lifestyles of working bachelors such as lawyers and musicians.⁵⁸ Young musician John White (whose 1799 account book was discovered in 2018 by Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson) was on an incredibly high income for a single man, earning £246 in the year 1799-1800, but was spending very little, perhaps to save up for marriage. He had cut all expenditure on food, drink, travel, lodging and clothing to the absolute minimum, including by lodging with an employer like a servant, but one of

⁵⁴ Tim Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 3 (2005), 478-498, p.482.

⁵⁵ OBPO, *Ordinary of Newgate's Account*, May 1707 (OA17070502).

⁵⁶ OBPO, *Ordinary of Newgate's Account*, October 1712 (OA17121031).

⁵⁷ e.g. Haywood, p.27.

⁵⁸ Meldrum, pp.146-147.

the most substantial expenses still remaining was paying laundresses wherever he went.⁵⁹ In the final chapter of my thesis I explore the economic and reputational precarity which eighteenth-century women experienced, and how it contributed to the circumstances which made these acts of very cheap labour a necessity. The compelled or cheapened labour of poor women allowed St. Clement Danes to become a central node in the network of London's burgeoning leisure and retail economy. The spaces in which leisure activities (including musical ones) could be staged had been produced: by the makers of maps, speculative developers, public house owners, but also through the labour of domestic and commercial servants, charwomen and doers of odd jobs.

Servants and the Economy of Leisure and Sociability in St. Clement Danes

The economy of St. Clement Danes was shaped by the convergence of two vital east-west routes with an important north-south one. Almost all vehicular traffic between the City of London and the populous southern parishes of Westminster had to travel through the Strand, since the only other east-west routes able to bear heavy traffic were High Holborn, considerably to the north, and the River Thames to the south, which required changing vehicles. Drury Lane was a direct north-south route which joined together all three of these east-west routes, and within the parish of St. Clement Danes was the point at which Drury Lane fanned out into numerous narrow lanes that communicated with the Strand and the Thames. There were two additional centres of economic activity in St. Clement Danes: Claremarket, established by Parliamentary decree in 1656,⁶⁰ which was a meat and livestock market (see post in Appendix 1), and the various Inns of Court in the area between Lincoln's Inn, Drury Lane and the Strand. This mixture of different economic activities benefitted one sector in particular: victualling and entertainment.

Given the paucity of privacy and seclusion in private homes, each household in the parish having (based on 1694 and 1739 taxation records, likely to be an underestimate) an

⁵⁹ Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, 'Getting and spending in London and Yorkshire: a young musician's account book for 1799-1800', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, 51 (2020), 137-148, pp.139, 148.

⁶⁰ Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 2, p.17.

average of at least 4.3 people per dwelling in 1708,⁶¹ public houses played an important role in both confidential business dealings and private affairs. The *Old Bailey Proceedings* and London newspapers are filled with meetings in the public houses of St. Clement Danes, from attempting to buy and sell livestock,⁶² to South Sea Company stockholding consortium meetings,⁶³ to sexual hook-ups.⁶⁴ The posts entitled 'Drury Lane' and 'Claremarket' within Appendix 1 explore the different ways in which these public houses were used in greater depth.

However, the public houses of St. Clement Danes, like its coffee houses, were also essential infrastructure for London's other entertainment industries. William Hogarth, London's foremost engraver and visual satirist, drank in several public houses in the parish, notably in the Black Jack Tavern in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with playwrights, comedians and actors, perhaps drinking alongside 'running footmen of the nobles who lived hard by', as Diprose alleges.⁶⁵ *Joe Miller's Jests*, a 1739 jokebook written by the Black Jack circle (inspired by one of their number, comedian Joe Miller), ran to several editions, its individual jokes circulating even more widely.⁶⁶ 'Claremarket butchers' were stock figures in the comic sketches of the periodical press, influential figures from which, such as Joseph Addison of the *Spectator*, also spent their leisure time in the parish.⁶⁷ The public houses which proliferated around the Strand, Drury Lane and Claremarket, their spaces kept clean and warm, their pantries stocked and deliveries made by servants,⁶⁸ were essential to the creative interactions which produced theatre, music, printed materials and visual art.

This can be seen in the clusters of intellectual and musical activity around concentrations of victuallers, and the centres of economic activity that catalysed the growth of public houses. From 1739 a printing company apparently specialising in scientific print

⁶¹ Tim Hitchcock, Sharon Howard and Robert Shoemaker, 'St. Clement Danes', *London Lives, 1690-1800* (www.londonlives.org, v. 2, accessed 15/10/2020).

⁶² OBPO t17291203-21.

⁶³ 'It's earnestly desir'd, That all Persons ...', classified advertisement, *Daily Post*, 218 (13 June 1720).

⁶⁴ OBPO t17280228-41.

⁶⁵ Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 2, pp.59-61.

⁶⁶ Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 1, pp.33-36.

⁶⁷ Thornbury, *Old and New London*, pp.63-84.

⁶⁸ Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp.202, 205-206, 227-228.

set up shop in Stanhope Street, just outside Claremarket.⁶⁹ Prolific publishers John Walsh and Thomas Cahusac printed sheet music from their shops in the Strand near St. Clement Danes, assured of easy goods access and passing trade as well as public house infrastructure.⁷⁰ Besides the Drury Lane theatre and the Covent Garden Theatre Royal, both of which were only a block outside the parish boundary and very close to Drury Lane, St. Clement Danes had its own theatre in the early eighteenth century. Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, commonly known at the time as the Duke's Theatre, was on the back side of Portugal Row near Claremarket (hence why some called it Playhouse Street), it was used regularly for theatrical and musical performances from 1695 to 1744. John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* was premiered there in 1728.⁷¹ Catherine Harbor's examination of music venues in Restoration and early eighteenth-century London, based on newspaper advertisements, found a number of musicians (generally those in wealthier and more prestigious positions, at whose residences tickets for elite entertainments could be purchased) living just to the north of the parish, very close to Claremarket, and a few more living in the recent developments between the Strand and the River Thames (Figure 3.7).⁷² Perhaps the most important music venue in St. Clement Danes, however, was itself a victualler: the Crown and Anchor Tavern on the corner of Arundel Street and the Strand.

⁶⁹ 'Memoirs of the Royal Society ...', classified advertisement, *London Evening Post*, 1857 (6-9 October 1739).

⁷⁰ Frank Kidson, *British Music Publishers, Printers and Engravers: London, Provincial, Scottish and Irish* (London: W. E. Hill, 1900), pp.21-22, 134-145.

⁷¹ Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, p.37; Diprose, *Some Account*, pp.77-78.

⁷² Catherine Harbor, 'The Birth of the Music Business: Public Commercial Concerts in London 1660-1750' (PhD thesis, 2012, Royal Holloway University of London), pp.62-78.



Figure 3.7: a mapping of musicians' residences and performance venues (after 1700) from Catherine Harbor's list in *The Birth of the Music Business*, pp.603-628, 722-729, using the 1736 map (Figure 3.1).

The function room of the Crown and Anchor tavern (84 feet by 35 feet) allegedly entertained 2,000 banquet guests in 1798, and was the home of the Academy of Ancient Music (originally the Academy of Vocal Musick) from its foundation in 1726 until 1784.⁷³ The ability of cabs to stand and ply from the porch of St. Clement Danes westwards, that is, from right outside the front entrance of the Crown and Anchor, may have been a factor in the Academy's comparative success and longevity; it did not long survive the move to a new venue. Towards the end of the century the Crown and Anchor's function room became well-known for rallies by radical (and reactionary) politicians, an indication of the way in which many spaces in St. Clement Danes were shared between, and contested by, several distinct communities with their own interests.⁷⁴

However, just like the retail spaces and streetscape of St. Clement Danes, musical spaces required hired labour to produce heat, light, cleanliness and other comforts. From the St. Clement Danes bastardy examinations, it is known that in December 1760 Susanna Strugnell was working as a maid in the Crown and Anchor tavern, where she had a sexual

⁷³ Diprose, *Some Account*, Vol. 1, pp.53-54; Eggington, *The Advancement of Music*, pp.5, 76.

⁷⁴ ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.81-85.

relationship with James Cowen, a waiter.⁷⁵ Tim Eggington reproduces the minutes of the Academy of Ancient Music's foundational meeting, which includes a summary of expenses. Drink is paid for, and an additional shilling and sixpence allocated for the drawer, that is, the man who drew their drinks during the meeting.⁷⁶ Drinks continued to be served at the Academy's meetings, as far as the documentary record can establish; James Cowen was probably among those who served food and drink in the Crown and Anchor's function room.⁷⁷ Strugnell herself was unlikely to come into contact with the Academy of Ancient Music, since maidservants were more commonly employed with the housewifery involved in an institution like the Crown and Anchor tavern, away from the eyes of the public: moreover, waiters – both male and female – are generally recognised as such in bastardy examinations. Yet her intimate contact with James Cowen meant that she was exposed to a mediated form of the Academy's learning, since young men like Cowen often sought to demonstrate their cultural capital (as Bourdieu used the term)⁷⁸ while courting, by singing or playing what they had heard in elite performance venues. This is a commonplace in fiction (see Chapter 5), but also has some basis in reality, as Erddig letter D/E/550 in Chapter 2 demonstrated. The Academy of Ancient Music required the labour of Susan Strugnell, but excluded her from the cultural capital that labour had helped create; she could access only traces of it, indirectly, through personal acquaintances such as James Cowen, or accessible vernacular musical performances influenced by elite styles (see Chapter 4).

Nevertheless, the servants who helped to produce musical spaces for the socio-economic elite were granted different degrees of liminal access to musical practices, and therefore had different degrees of ability to recontextualise and appropriate them. In order to understand the opportunities the servants of St. Clement Danes had to experience music, musical leisure and sociable interactions with their peers, it is productive to examine their sociological and economic positions quantitatively.

⁷⁵ LLCDP WCCDEP358190197.

⁷⁶ Eggington, *The Advancement of Music*, p.8.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁷⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP [1979, 1984], 1996), pp.2-4.

Parish Settlement Examinations: Servants' Migrations and Gendered Wages

This section will use quantitative data to produce insights into the migrations and residences of servants in St Clement Danes, and their wages – two vital factors which could shape their access to music, both in geographical and economic terms. The principal body of quantitative data regarding servants' lives in St. Clement Danes comprise the parish settlement examinations, undertaken by the Overseer of the Poor (appointed by the parish vestry from among their number, and rotated regularly). Its purpose was to establish that a Poor Relief claimant – or mother of an illegitimate child – was legally resident in the parish. To be eligible for poor relief from St. Clement Danes' parish funds, the claimant had to prove that they (or their husband or father) had (a) rented a property worth more than £10 annually in the parish; or (b) been apprenticed to a master within the parish; or (c) lived as a 'hired servant' – a legal term meaning any kind of salaried employ – for more than a year with a master in the parish. I collated data from 623 parish settlement examinations, undertaken between February 1739 and December 1762, digitised as part of the London Lives project.⁷⁹ This represents every single 'hired servant' examined during this period whose annual wage was recorded, almost all of whom will have been live-in servants.⁸⁰ My study builds upon D. A. Kent's 1989 investigation of the parish settlement examinations of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, a large Westminster parish adjoining St. Clement Danes to the

⁷⁹ Tim Hitchcock, Robert Shoemaker, Sharon Howard and Jamie McLaughlin, *et al.*, *London Lives, 1690-1800* (www.londonlives.org, version 1.1, 24 April 2012, accessed 23/10/2020). Servant examinations with wages unrecorded were omitted.

⁸⁰ Among the 'hired servants', it seems likely that the vast majority lived with their employers, board and lodging provided, judging from the kinds of wages declared in the parish settlement examinations. A subsistence wage for those 'living out', that is, having to provide their own board and lodging, was usually valued at about £15 *per annum* in London, according to Meldrum, pp.196-198; this figure is justified by analysis of other occupations' *pro rata* pay, which would have worked out at about £25-50 over a year of constant employ, but was seasonal and unstable, meaning that a stable annual salary of £20 would have similar economic value (Guillery, *The Small House*, p.15). Given that virtually all of the 'hired servants' in the St. Clement Danes settlement examinations earned much less than £20 – indeed, the highest-paid woman earned only £9, and only a very few men earned more than £20 – it is logical to assume that these were servants who lived with their masters. Tellingly, the examination of Michael Castledine, one of the few servants to earn £20, unusually makes explicit that 'meat, drink and lodging' were provided alongside his salary (LLCDP WCCDEP358190280). Since the purpose of the settlement examination was to prove residence, there is a clear reason for live-in service to predominate in these records.

southwest.⁸¹ He used a sample of 695 exclusively female servants examined between 1750 and 1760.⁸² My work is therefore in a position to test Kent's hypotheses, such as the notion of some women actively preferring the alleged economic independence of service to marriage. Modern data processing also allows me to systematically analyse other aspects of the parish settlement examination data, including parish of settlement, locations and occupations of masters, and any changes to wages over the course of the first half of the eighteenth century. In addition, the wages and migration histories of servants are understood in a different context, as representing not only the working lives of servants but also in terms of opportunities for engaging with and encountering urban music-making.

The live-in servants examined in these records can to a large extent be understood as domestic servants, since even if their primary function was to assist with their master's business, they were likely to have had some domestic duties as well.⁸³ Perhaps, given that the home was usually the principal site of business, some degree of interconnection was inevitable. Isabel Gery, who had an unusually clearly-delineated role as a nurse to a pawnbroker's child, was allegedly able to steal goods from her master's warehouse, placed on the first floor next to the nursery.⁸⁴ Sara Pennell recounts cases of servants sleeping in

⁸¹ D. A. Kent, 'Ubiquitous but Invisible: Female Domestic Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London', *History Workshop*, 28 (1989), 111-128.

⁸² Kent, 'Ubiquitous but Invisible', p.115.

⁸³ In single-servant households (an absolute majority of servant employers), servants of all genders would have been expected to assist with both domestic and occupational tasks (Meldrum, pp.15, 131-134, 153-158). The home was the primary site of production in many of eighteenth-century London's industries, from silk-weaving and instrument-making to stay-making and even livestock rearing. Understanding shop servants as at least closely adjacent to, if not identical with domestic servants (for there were still differences in emphasis and expectation), makes particular sense in an urban servant's context where the fluidity and seasonality of the job market weakened occupational identity (Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.71-73). The free movement of these shop servants to domestic service in private households and back also implies a continuity between serving a master's business and serving their family (Earle, *City Full of People*, p.128). Although serving in a shop or workshop was defined as distinct from domestic service for the purposes of Lord North's servant tax later on in the century, the boundaries between different forms of service were much hazier in the first half of the eighteenth century (see Steedman, pp.129-139). Indeed, even in the legal disputes over servants' roles brought about by the servant tax, thoroughly described by Carolyn Steedman, the difficulty of fairly and consistently resolving whether a servant was primarily a business employee or home help lay in how far these roles were usually intertwined (Steedman, pp.57-58).

⁸⁴ *OBPO* t17341016-4.

kitchens.⁸⁵ Spatial proximity and the use of the same rooms for sleeping, eating and working encouraged ambiguity in the roles of servants. Indeed, the creation, curation and delineation of different spaces within the household was a key responsibility of all servants in eighteenth-century London, as discussed earlier.

A few men whose service was described in the settlement examinations are clearly not analogous to domestic servants, like a former articled clerk to an Inner Temple barrister,⁸⁶ or the few men who graduated from apprenticeship to being a 'hired servant' (who might have had a prospect of taking over their master's business),⁸⁷ or worked at large manufactories in London such as sugar refineries (where the environment is quite different from that of a home).⁸⁸ Yet the number of men whose position is clearly distinct from that of a domestic servant is very low. There is no reason to believe that a man who stated that he had served a carpenter for £6 a year was doing an entirely different job from a woman who stated she had served a carpenter for £4 a year. The demography of my sample is also similar to other specifically domestic service datasets such as Tim Meldrum's collection of consistory court witnesses; thus I am inclined to understand the men examined in this sample as at least similar to domestic servants. For instance, many of the male servants in the parish settlement examinations probably had roles in 'outdoor service' of some kind, such as stabling, driving, grooming, gardening, or working as a porter. This is a likely explanation for the cluster of men employed in Boswell Court, for instance, described by Seymour as mostly stabling for the surrounding residential streets.⁸⁹ A few male servants' examinations also explicitly state that they looked after horses for their employer, living in stables on a site slightly distant from their employer's house.⁹⁰

I tabulated the following pieces of information from the parish settlement examinations: the servant's name, their gender (as declared in the examination), their

⁸⁵ Sara Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen, 1600-1850* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp.41-43, 124-126.

⁸⁶ LLCDP WCCDEP358140278.

⁸⁷ LLCDP WCCDEP358040201.

⁸⁸ LLCDP WCCDEP358160114.

⁸⁹ Seymour, *Survey*, p.775.

⁹⁰ LLCDP WCCDEP358030266, WCCDEP358110221, WCCDEP358130083.

marital status during service, age at beginning of service (where recorded), wage, the year their period of service began, how long the period of service was, the occupation of their employer, the street and parish in which they'd served, and the date of examination. So, for example, Elizabeth Jones was female, single when she began service in 1713 at the age of about 30, worked in a coffee house on Wych Street (off Drury Lane, in St. Clement Danes), earning £4 or 4 guineas, and was examined on 3rd February 1753.⁹¹ Often the same person was examined multiple times; I treated each distinct period of service as a different instance. However, when it was clear the same period of service was being described across multiple examinations, I used my judgement to decide which examination had the most detailed information and disregarded the other examinations.

Elizabeth Jones's case, of course, shows some of the limitations of these examinations: she was recalling her period of service from some 40 years' distance, and like many people in the eighteenth century, did not know her date of birth or the precise dates of important life events. The examiner described her as being 'aged up^{wds.} of 70 Years', which is both imprecise and improbable given the extreme brevity of London life expectancy in the eighteenth century.⁹² She could not remember if she was paid £4 or 4 guineas, a substantial difference – the extra 4 shillings could have bought a night in the theatre or multiple music books. The irregular patterns of payment seen in Erddig's account books (see Chapter 2), if they were widely practised in London, would not have helped her memory. She also could not remember how long she served, although this is obviously a very important piece of information to the parish examiner, nor when exactly she served, save that she 'quitted her sd. Service near 40 Years ago'. Fortunately, most examinations are not quite this imprecise, but there are valid questions about how well people were able to recall facts about their life in the forms the parish examiners expected. With regular censuses and other official records of age a century away, even the recording of dates of birth, death and marriage could be unreliable (as scholars examining parish baptism records have found).⁹³ Only days such as

⁹¹ LLCDP WCCDEP358110166.

⁹² John Landers, *Death and the Metropolis: Studies in the Demographic History of London, 1670-1830* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p.180.

⁹³ e.g. Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain c. 1780-1830* (London: F. Cass, 1996), pp.31-32.

Michaelmas and Christmas – often days when annual hired workers were paid – are ever mentioned precisely in the parish settlement examinations.⁹⁴

The parish settlement examinations show which street, lane or court servants worked at, meaning individual servants can be added to the historian's imaginative reconstruction of eighteenth-century spaces and places – bringing to light James Cowen at the Crown and Anchor, for instance, or Angelo Trogar at the Grecian Coffee House. Also, although the purpose of the examination was to try to prove residence in St. Clement Danes, and thus be eligible for poor relief, a considerable proportion of the examinees admitted residence in other parishes, the places they had lived before coming to St. Clement Danes. The parish settlement examinations, then, show a geography of domestic service on both a macroscopic scale – the migrations of people to Westminster from other parts of the country and other parts of London – and a microscopic scale, the kinds of servant who populated each street. These flows of people could also represent flows of musical knowledge and practice, as the final section of this chapter will discuss.

Out of 623 examinees, 263 had a parish of residence outside St. Clement Danes. 172 of these came from elsewhere within London, and only 89 had a parish of residence outside

⁹⁴ Considerable ink has been spilt considering different understandings of time in the eighteenth century, but mostly considering the timescale of the hour rather than the year. E. P. Thompson's belief that the eighteenth century saw a transition from 'task-oriented' to 'time-oriented' organisation, from a day understood in terms of the tasks that needed to be performed to one measured by the clock and disciplined by the workplace (E. P. Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past & Present*, 38 (1967), 56-97, pp.60-70), has been undermined by subsequent empirical work (Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift, 'Reworking E. P. Thompson's "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism"', *Time & Society*, 5, 3 (1996), 275-299, p.284). For example, Hans-Joachim Voth's study of working time and the organisation of the day, based on the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, shows an urban population accustomed to clock-time and already somewhat alienated from natural cycles of sun, season and tides (Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Time and Work in Eighteenth-Century London', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58, 1 (1998), 29-58). Certainly domestic servants in central London would have been at least somewhat aware of what E.P Thompson would have called clock-time, with a high density of churches marking the hours with clocks or bells, the pall of coal-smoke that obscured the natural rhythms of the sun, and the pressures of commerce and officialdom which bore on their masters. Yet the parish settlement examinations represent servants' interaction with official and legal conceptions of time, but on the larger level of years, rather than hours or days. Such large-scale official conceptions of time – calendar-time, perhaps, a regular progression of months and years measured precisely – seem to have far less saturation among the population, perhaps because it required greater literacy.

London. This does not reflect the demography of London domestic service, which other sources have established comprised around 75% migrants from other parts of the country.⁹⁵ Rather, it is a consequence of the process of parish settlement examination. Examinees wanted to establish settlement in St. Clement Danes or, at the very least, another London parish, so that they could claim parish poor relief in times of straitened circumstances. Given that the requirement for settlement was only spending 12 months in service with a single employer – which need not even have been continuous (since it seems one examinant was granted settlement in St. Clement Danes, after one stay of 9 months and another of 6 months, with a break between)⁹⁶ – it was only the most unfortunate, or those who had moved to London recently, who needed to declare their home parish as their place of settlement.

Those servants whose parish of settlement was another London parish (but not St. Clement Danes) conform to the pattern outlined in Robert Shoemaker's study of Londoners' movements around the city (unsurprisingly, since parish settlement examinations were one of the sources he used).⁹⁷ Of these 172 servants, 68 came from Holborn or elsewhere in Westminster; 10 came from the tiny Liberty of the Rolls and 10 from the small parish of St. Paul's Covent Garden, both adjoining St. Clement Danes; 14 came from fashionable developments in the northwest; 6 from St. Giles in the Fields; and 49 from the City of London. Only 10 came from the metropolitan parishes east or south of London, and 4 came from Clerkenwell to the north. This confirms Shoemaker's view that, although many Londoners had migrated long distances to reach the metropolis, and although servants were more mobile within London than most, people tended to return to a particular urban area once settled there.⁹⁸ Thus, the urban geography of where an eighteenth-century servant worked in the metropolis – how close by theatres, public houses, pleasure gardens, Wells (such as Sadler's Wells and its imitators) and other musical venues were – may have been of greater significance to their musical experiences than their origin.

⁹⁵ Meldrum, p.19; Lander, *Death and the Metropolis*, p.47.

⁹⁶ LLCDP WCCDEP358190282.

⁹⁷ Shoemaker, 'Gendered Spaces', pp.148-149.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.157-161.

The hypotheses of historical demographers are confirmed by those examinees whose parish of residence was still, for whatever reason, listed as the rural parish where they were likely born and brought up. The rate of migration to London declined in the eighteenth century compared to the seventeenth, with much more of that migration being from the countryside around London rather than the long-distance subsistence migration caused by extreme rural poverty in the period before and during the civil war.⁹⁹ Out of the 89 examinees who gave a parish outside London as their residence, 53 were from within about 100 miles of London. Very few were from northern England, and very few indeed were from beyond England's borders.

Table 3.1: Parish of residence and gender

Region of parish of residence	Women	Men	Proportion female
St. Clement Danes	266	94	74%
Westminster	36	7	84%
City of London	30	19	61%
Holborn	18	8	
Liberty of the Rolls	8	2	79%
Covent Garden	10	0	
St. Giles-in-the-Fields	5	0	
Clerkenwell	1	3	
Eastern suburbs	5	0	79%
South of the Thames	5	0	
Outside London (total)	50	28	64%
<15 miles	17	9	65%
<100 miles	18	9	67%
>100 miles	15	10	60%
Ireland	1	5	
Wales	2	2	36%
Scotland	1	0	

Women, although a clear majority of servants examined overall (despite a systematic bias towards male servants, since widowed women often provided details of their husband's settlement rather than their own, and women with no other claim to residence gave their father's settlement, but men never gave their mothers' or wives' settlements), constitute a minority of those whose parish settlements were outside England. Assuming that there is no particular bias towards either men or women providing a parish of residence outside St. Clement Danes, the varying proportions of men and women in the different

⁹⁹ Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society*, pp.2-4.

subsets of the sample detailed in Table 3.1 above probably represent a significant finding. It would indicate that men were more likely to come to London from further afield, perhaps because they had greater prospects of economic independence. This greater experience of travel, primarily on foot, travelling with employers or taking multiple employers along the journey, would provide them with greater opportunities to disseminate and engage with a wide variety of musical practices.¹⁰⁰

Greater financial resources would also have facilitated musical opportunities for servants than poorer ones; it would also impact a servant's opportunities whether their wages increased with experience as a servant's career went on. Whatever the imprecisions on an individual level regarding the recording of age and wage, the parish settlement examinations are useful sources of information on these data in the aggregate. Since examinees' ages and wages were recorded as incidental details rather than vital criteria for receipt of poor relief, there was no systematic bias towards either higher or lower wages in the parish settlement examinations. However imprecise people's memories of their wages, if the imprecision is random, a sample of sufficient size will not be unduly skewed. Indeed, the kinds of wages people reported are entirely in line with the limited servant wage data Meldrum derived from consistory court records, similar to those J. J. Hecht derived from newspaper advertisements, and indeed completely in keeping with D. A. Kent's study (see Table 3.2). A pilot study I performed on (the very small parish in the south-east of the City of London) St. Botolph without Aldgate parish settlement examinations returned a somewhat different, but certainly comparable income distribution and mean average – it was, after all, a very different parish, in a different part of the city and with different principal economic activities.

¹⁰⁰ Meldrum, p.20.

Table 3.2a: Comparing Servant Wage Distributions

Proportion of sample earning less than	St. Clement Danes – women (n: 447)	St. Botolph without Aldgate – women (n: 119)	D. A. Kent, St. Martins-in-the-Fields (n: 712)
£3	10%	3%	9%
£4	29%	13%	28%
£5	60%	35%	59%
£6	88%	70%	88%
£7	96%	85%	96%
£8	98%	92%	98%
£10	100%	95%	99%
≥£10	0	5%	1%

Table 3.2b: Comparing Mean Average Wages

	Male	Female
St. Clement Danes (n: 176, 447)	£7.782	£4.259
<i>Standard deviation:</i>	£3.637	£1.294
St. Botolph without Aldgate (n: 64, 119)	£7.227	£5.294
<i>Standard deviation:</i>	£3.599	£2.164
J. J. Hecht, average 1700-1759 (n: 22, 15)*	£5.958	£5.300
Tim Meldrum, average 1690-1749 (n: 8, 45)	£6.750	£4.042

**Hecht examined adverts for footmen and maids, specifically.*

A more serious source of sample bias is in the kinds of people who needed parish poor relief, and therefore required an examination. Margaret Hanly suggests that although a very wide base of the poor used parish poor relief as a seasonal or occasional resource, its terms were sufficiently harsh that it required a measure of desperation to seek it.¹⁰¹ Thus the sample is still somewhat more likely to favour those with smaller support networks or fewer financial resources. This may well account for the unusually high number of older unmarried women in service seen in parish settlement examinations. For Kent this suggests women deliberately choosing a career in domestic service over married life, an expression of economic ‘independence’.¹⁰² As Bridget Hill points out, domestic service could hardly be

¹⁰¹ Margaret Hanly, ‘The economy of makeshifts and the role of the poor law: a game of chance?’, in *The Poor in England, 1700-1850: An Economy of Makeshifts*, eds. Steven King and Alannah Tomkins (Manchester: MUP, 2003), 76-99, pp.77, 96.

¹⁰² Kent, ‘Ubiquitous but Invisible’, pp.115, 117.

considered ‘independent’ in any meaningful way;¹⁰³ one simply traded the possibility of an abusive or controlling husband for that of an abusive or controlling master. Yet, if true, Kent’s hypothesis would imply greater musical opportunities for older women in service, since economic independence would allow greater indulgence in leisure and discretionary spending.

Testing Kent’s hypothesis requires comparing parish settlement examinees to other sources of information on domestic servants’ demographics. The periods of service described in the parish settlement examinations may not have been either the first nor the most recent place that servant had held, since positions held for less than a year – which Meldrum suggests were common in an urban context – would not have qualified a servant for settlement.¹⁰⁴ Consistory court records studied by Meldrum consider servants’ whole careers, and therefore are a good supplement to parish settlement examinations: Meldrum’s analysis suggests that most migrant servants deliberately undertook a 12-month service position in London as soon in their career as they could, to ensure they were eligible for parish support.¹⁰⁵ Occasional references in parish settlement records support this: the bastardy examination of Ann Mason indicates she was still in service in 1746, four years after quitting the service position she described in her settlement examination.¹⁰⁶ This being so, the period of service indicated in the parish settlement examination might represent the starting-point of their career, as is probably the case for the many older unmarried women describing places they had served in their teens.

In contrast, servants had their current age marked in the consistory court depositions, so if the two populations were comparable, Meldrum’s sample drawn from consistory court depositions should tend to be somewhat older than the parish settlement examinations. Indeed, this is the case for male servants. Yet the current maidservants among Tim Meldrum’s dataset are somewhat younger than those in parish settlement examinations

¹⁰³ Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.46-50.

¹⁰⁴ Meldrum, p.24.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.23-25.

¹⁰⁶ LLCDP WCCDEP358030203.

– more than 75% of maidservants being under 30.¹⁰⁷ This can only be explained by a difference in the population from which the samples are drawn – most likely, that a higher proportion of older women in service were claiming parish poor relief than other servants. The greater proportion of older maidservants seeking poor relief probably indicates turning to domestic service in later life more from economic necessity rather than from a desire for financial ‘independence’. This would suggest that Kent’s hypothesis is false, and that maidservants could expect severely limited economic resources throughout their careers.

Table 3.3 – Age Distribution	St. Clement Danes: Women (n: 333)	St. Clement Danes: Men (n: 42)	D. A. Kent (St. Martins-in-the-Fields)*	Tim Meldrum (Consistory Court witnesses): Women currently in service	Tim Meldrum (Consistory Court witnesses): Men currently in service
Upper Quartile	34	32	35-39	25-29	35-39
Median	23	23	25-29	20-24	25-29
Lower Quartile	19	17	20-24	20-24	20-24
Percentile	St. Clement Danes (all genders) (n: 375)				
10%	16				
20%	18				
30%	20				
40%	22				
50%	23				
60%	27				
70%	29				
80%	38				
90%	45				
99%	66				

**The differences between mine and Kent’s data are explained by the fact Kent recorded age at time of leaving the period of service described to the examiners, while I recorded age at time of starting the period of service.*

Bridget Hill’s study of the memoirs of Mary Ashford, a domestic servant in the final quarter of the eighteenth century, also suggests a return to domestic service in later life might imply economic desperation; she had to return to service after the death of her first husband to provide for her children, but she found a second husband as soon as she reasonably could.¹⁰⁸ Certainly, the parish settlement examinations, at first glance, evince no

¹⁰⁷ Meldrum, pp.16-17.

¹⁰⁸ Hill, *Servants*, pp.204-205.

suggestion of growing professional expertise or the value of experience. Among male servants there is a small positive correlation between age and wage, although the sample size is insufficient to place any great confidence in this interpretation (due to so few ages being recorded for male servants). In contrast, testing the correlation between female servants' ages and wages in the St. Clement Danes data yields a very small r value (measure of correlation strength) of 0.19 and no clear trend (see Figure 3.8), despite a considerable sample size. Older women were paid neither more nor less than younger women, on average.

This might, of course, disguise a number of trends among subsets of the female servant population. Some maidservants probably did gain expertise and position, the way that Mary Ashford built up cooking and housekeeping knowledge and therefore had a wider range of employment options to be leveraged to her advantage.¹⁰⁹ Wages were, of course, only one among many considerations a maidservant might have when choosing a position: benefits such as kinder employers, better perquisites, a more reasonable workload or better opportunities for vails could be just as important.¹¹⁰ Conversely, the existence of charwomen – usually older women subcontracted by live-in maidservants to perform the most dirty and undignified elements of housekeeping for tiny sums of money – suggests a subset of older maidservants left in extreme economic insecurity.¹¹¹ Figure 3.8 (below), which plots the age of each servant against their wages suggests this might be the case. There appears to be more variation in wages among maidservants in their 30s, 40s and 50s than among those in their 20s. Indeed, the standard deviation (a measure of average difference from the mean) is £1.406 among female servants in their 30s, and £1.420 among those in their 50s and above, compared to £1.074 among those in their 20s, a modest but considerable increase. This interpretation – two opposite trends balancing to create an appearance of no correlation – would help to reconcile D. A. Kent's hypothesis with the data.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.202.

¹¹⁰ Meldrum, pp.199-201.

¹¹¹ Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.116-117, 126-127.

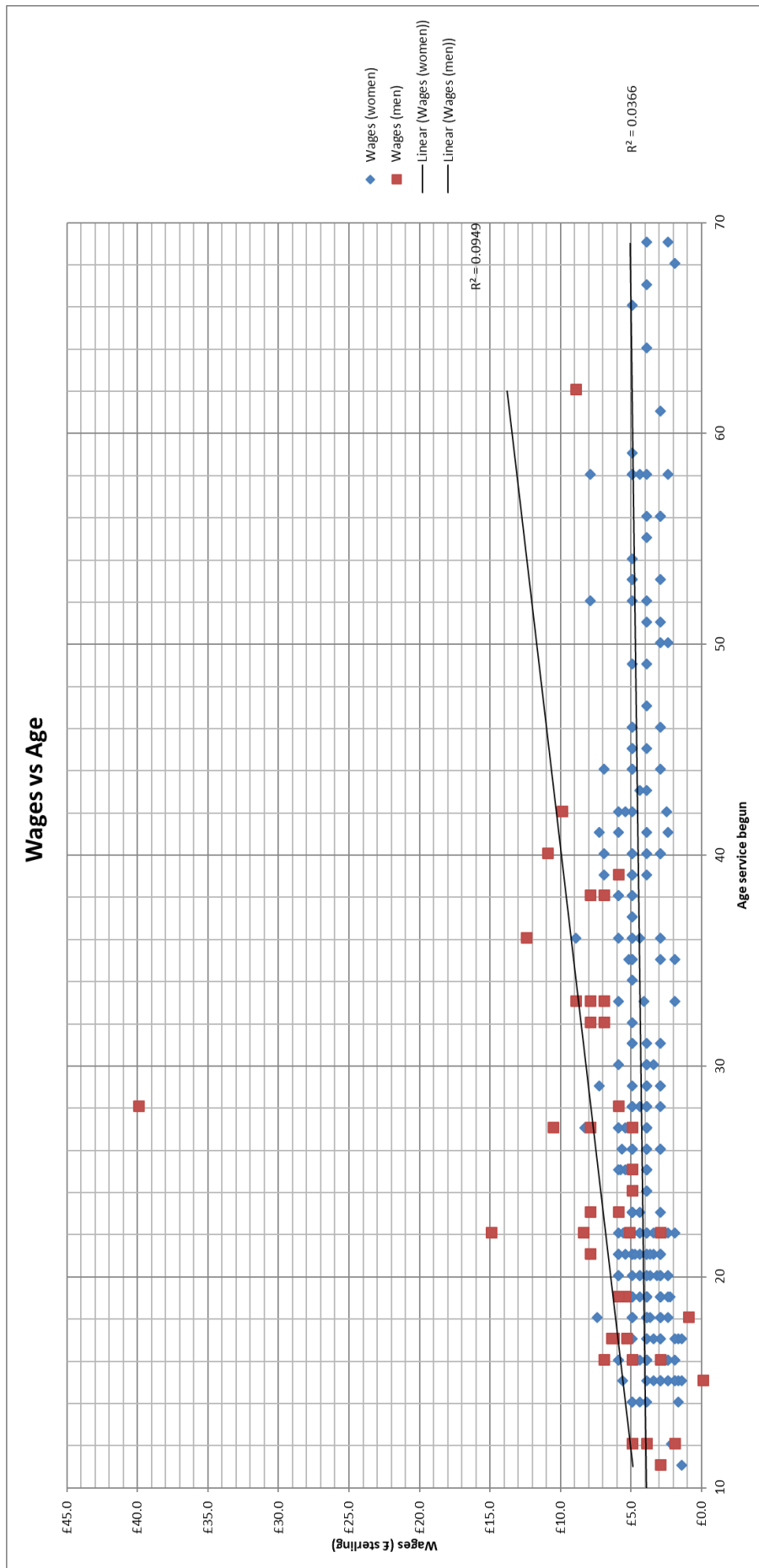


Figure 3.8: A graph plotting servants' ages against the wages they received, based on St. Clement Danes parish settlement examinations.

However, it would still require the important caveat that older women were more often driven to service by economic necessity and/or insecurity than by a desire for 'independence' or a sense of occupational pride – that much is clear from the relatively high proportion seeking poor relief. Indeed, this is further demonstrated by the fact that many of the male servants whose service is described in the parish settlement examinations are not, themselves, claiming poor relief. Often, these periods of service are being described by their widows, daughters or wives, when the women themselves had no claim to residency in the parish. Relatively few men actually claimed poor relief for themselves. This has significant implications for the ways wage data must be interpreted, especially regarding gender.

What the distribution of wages (Table 3.4) certainly shows is that the vast majority of female servants were paid considerably less than their male counterparts, but also suggests women were given a strikingly uniform annual wage. 26% of the sample were paid exactly £4, and 26% were paid exactly £5; fully 76% of the sample earned between £3 and £5. Since the poorest part of the sample consists primarily of servants describing the positions they undertook in the country – mostly as teenagers – wage rates within London itself must have been more consistent still. Also important to note is the degree of consistency across time of these wage rates. The periods of service described in the examinations ranged from around the turn of the century to the early 1760s; the graph Figure 3.9, drawn from the same data as Figure 1.2, shows that there is no overall trend for this period, especially among women's wages (minor fluctuations seen in Figure 1.2, tracking the general economic context, notwithstanding).

Table 3.4: Income percentiles*	St. Clement Danes – women (n: 447)	St. Clement Danes – men (n: 176)	St. Botolph without Aldgate – women (n: 119)	St. Botolph without Aldgate – men (n: 64)	D. A. Kent, St. Martins-in- the-Fields (n: 712)**
10%	£2 14s	£3 10s	£3	£4	~£3 2s
20%	£3	£5	£4	£4	~£3 12s
30%	£4	£5 8s	£4 2s	£5	~£4 1s
40%	£4	£6	£5	£6	~£4 8s
50%	£4	£7	£5	£7	~£4 14s
60%	£5	£7 12s	£5	£7	~£5
70%	£5	£8	£5 14s	£8 8s	~£5 8s
80%	£5	£10	£6	£10	~£5 14s
90%	£6	£12	£7 2s	£11 12s	~£6 4s
99%	£8	£30	£13 12s	£18 18s	~£9

*Percentiles signify the proportion of the sample earning the amount shown or less. For instance, 80 % of St. Clement Danes maidservants earn £5 or less.

**D. A. Kent presents his data in the style of Table 3.3. The values here have been approximated from a cumulative frequency graph using a line of best fit.

Women, perhaps more than men, received non-monetary perquisites from employers, gifts from tradesmen, and treats from suitors and friends.¹¹² These might include free tickets or informal entry to musical events, as shall be discussed later. They were certainly required to undertake reciprocal forms of unremunerated service, from care for children, the ill and elderly, to cleaning and cooking for relatives and husbands, to exchanging gifts with friends and neighbours.¹¹³ There is some suggestion, then, that women were somewhat less fully enmeshed in the cash economy than their male counterparts. In this context the extreme standardisation of women's wages compared to men's – which are not only larger but significantly more diverse – makes sense, as a nominal sum rather than an expression of the maidservant's value to her employer.

¹¹² e.g. Hill, *Servants*, pp.72-75; Meldrum, p.203.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.31-32.

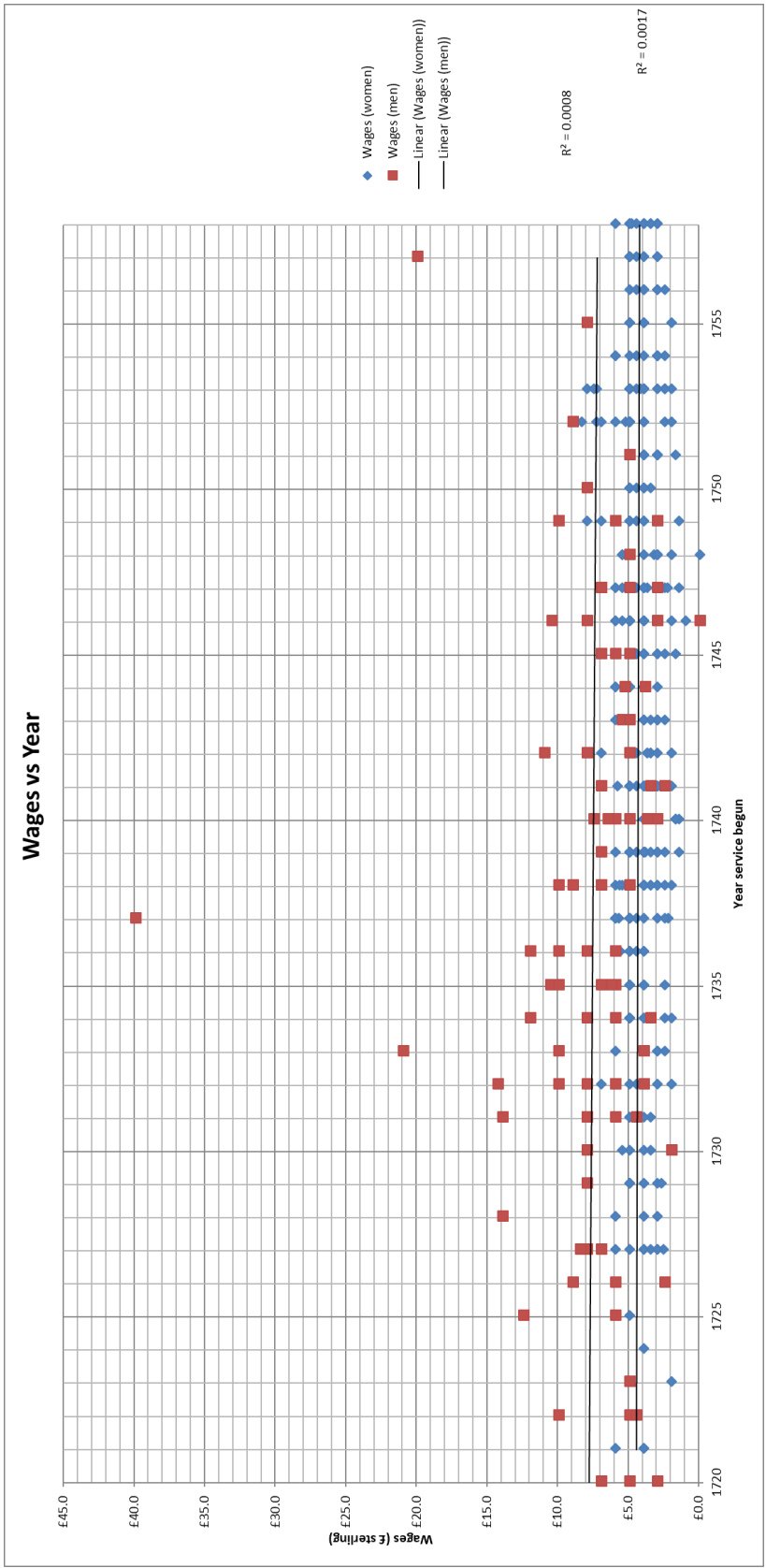


Figure 3.9: Graph plotting servants' wages against the year they began service, based on parish settlement examinations. There is no correlation and no overall trend.

This examination of the St Clement Danes parish settlement examinations has provided considerable insight into the lives of servants in the parish. Taking a quantitative approach allows useful generalisations to be formed about the patterns of servants' careers, such as the ages they went into service, their migrations to and around London, as well as their wages. Women have been shown to be paid considerably less, and treated as virtually interchangeable, at least in terms of their salaries. Although my wage data is highly consistent with D. A. Kent's study of neighbouring parish St Martin-in-the-Fields, the St Clement Danes parish settlement data and its context suggests a different interpretation. Where Kent sees the older women in domestic service as in some sense making a deliberate choice to improve their economic independence, comparison with other datasets and with men in service – as well as the context of the records as an application for poor relief – implies limited economic agency and perhaps desperation driving older women towards domestic service. Another key finding from this large sample of wage data has been the relative consistency of wages across time and across a servant's career, implying little sense of career progression or growth in value from experience.

Contextualising Wages and Disposable Income

Although this body of data on servants' wages is inherently valuable, especially given the limited datasets historians of domestic service since Kent have utilised, it requires context if it is to speak to servants' access to music. This section will draw on servants' wills to examine servants' ability to accumulate musical objects, such as instruments and music books. Conduct books for servants, tempered by case studies from Erddig, suggest ways that even servants with very limited incomes could engage with music-making, and reasons why they might choose to do so. In line with several other social historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I argue that the poor, especially women, had a clear economic incentive towards spending on sociable activities (such as drinking and music) compared to saving.

Belonging to another's household meant limited space for personal possessions, and the near-certainty of always belonging to another's household discouraged the collection of

bulky items. Migrant servants also often returned from London to their rural homes, either on a seasonal basis or as they moved into a different stage of their life cycle.¹¹⁴ Many servants' wills held by the National Archives belong to 'servants' of an entirely different class, housekeepers to dukes and royal households, often of comfortably high social status themselves. Many bequeathed over a hundred pounds in named sums (not counting the presumably considerable residue of their estates). Yet few named many possessions among their legacies, and almost all of these possessions were clothing, small household items and a few pieces of furniture (excepting the will of Ann Marriott, former housekeeper of Windsor Castle, who describes a long list of possessions including, uniquely, books).¹¹⁵ More typical of the kind of servant examined for poor relief eligibility by the St. Clement Danes parish overseer – although, presumably, more economically successful – are servants like Maria Goodiff or Sarah Wright. The former – a maidservant from St. Pancras whose will was dated 1788 – bequeathed (to various family and friends) £23 6d which she had invested in the bank, yielding £1 15s annually; £2 in cash; at least £4 to pay for her funeral out of the residue; clothing and other wearing apparel; bustles; and 'Spoon'.¹¹⁶ The latter, whose will was dated 1794, was a housekeeper to Rev. William Fitzherbert at St. Paul's College London. She left her sister £25 but named no other cash sums, bequeathing to various family members a gold watch, various clothing and wearing apparel, and some fine silk and satin gowns.¹¹⁷ This is indicative of the limited material accumulations common among female servants.

This certainly accords with the gendered ways in which men and women have been seen to engage with vernacular music-making elsewhere in the thesis. As far as my research has shown, performance of instrumental music in public, especially notated music, was strongly associated with men and masculinity (except among the socio-economic elite); instruments required cash to obtain and maintain. They also required users to collect

¹¹⁴ Meldrum, p.21.

¹¹⁵ Will of Ann Marriott, 11 December 1750, Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/784/289 (National Archives, Kew).

¹¹⁶ Will of Maria Goodiff, 5 January 1788, Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1161/45 (National Archives, Kew).

¹¹⁷ Will of Sarah Wright, 20 January 1794, Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1241/33 (National Archives, Kew).

enduring material objects (even a wooden flute requires a case and a cleaning cloth). Women below the level of the elite were discouraged from amassing material things, through a variety of systems of control (including the combination of low wages and expectation of unremunerated work maidservants experienced).¹¹⁸ For instance, the churn of short service placements – the maidservant carrying all her belongings on her head from household to household – militated against collecting unnecessary objects, or even excessive savings.¹¹⁹ This would account for the lack of evidence of women below the level of the elite owning musical goods.

Good clothing and small household items, the principal possessions listed in female servants' wills, were easily portable, were common perquisites given freely by employers, and sometimes were required of servants (advice books are full of injunctions to neat dress).¹²⁰ Clothing, watches, jewellery and other apparel were both deeply personal and practical, used every day in the construction of essential identity and the performance of work. In addition, exotic foods such as tea and sugar served in the production of social identity. Indeed, two 'washerwomen' were committed to Bridewell in 1785 after they deserted their posts, their employer providing 'no sugar to their tea'.¹²¹ Men recorded as servants in their wills often have similar sets of possessions to female servants – albeit with somewhat more emphasis on household goods than on wearing apparel. To identify themselves as servants in their wills, however, they must have been career servants, who lived, like women, with the expectation of dependence on another's household. The similarity of their wills – transcending the many differences in status between male and female servants – demonstrates that the rarity of poor women living independently is deeply interconnected with the ways poor women interacted with and collected material objects. Poor women's material and financial practices seemed to prioritise present enjoyment and sociability rather than future investment or collecting possessions.

¹¹⁸ See Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.130-150 for discussion of women as independent tradespeople, and the ways in which gender shaped their occupations and livelihoods.

¹¹⁹ See note 52.

¹²⁰ See Chapter 5, note 81; Hill, *Servants*, pp.65-71.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.70.

This is entirely rational given the conclusions one might draw from servant wages and servant wills. Maria Goodiff invested in the bank £23 6d, four to six times most St. Clement Danes maidservants' entire annual wages. The £1 15s she received annually was a good return on her investment, but a miserably insufficient insurance against long-term unemployment, old age, disability or illness, and most likely less than she could have earned even as a despised charwoman. No financial investment within maidservants' reach gave returns large enough to provide security; the only useful insurance which could be bought was perhaps the building of social relationships (through gifts, mutual aid and sociability) key to developing a livelihood in eighteenth-century London.¹²² Marriage often brought capital and an enlargement of both parties' social networks: thus, the best way to use their cash earnings, then, was firstly to invest in their appearance, through fine clothes and cosmetics, making them more attractive to prospective husbands or employers. Secondly, money could be used to cultivate the social networks of acquaintances, friends and neighbours who helped them to find and retain good employers and fiancés, or directly assisted them in times of need.¹²³ A counterpart to Maria Goodiff might be Hannah Hughes, an Erddig maidservant employed by the Yorkes from around August 1755 to October 1756. During this period she only drew out £3 4s in cash earnings, suggesting an annual wage of £3, placing her among the poorest of the St Clement Danes maidservants. Yet the sums she drew out – for instance, 4s 6d in January 1756, and £1 2s 6d in March – would be more than enough to accommodate an evening's entertainment.¹²⁴ For comparison, the Spring Gardens at Vauxhall advertised that their 'Evening Entertainments' (likely to include some music-making) on 19th May 1763 would cost one shilling for admittance.¹²⁵ Informal entertainments more accessible for servants in the Erddig context, such as tipping a fiddler at a public house, would be unlikely to cost any more than that. Such experiences, and the sociability it engendered, was likely to be much more valuable than the pennies a maidservant could make by investing that sum, even assuming access to banking was frictionless for them.

¹²² Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.146-154.

¹²³ Lynne MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor, 1780-1870: the Value of Virtue* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), pp.33-34.

¹²⁴ Erddig paper D/E/382.

¹²⁵ 'Spring-Gardens, Vauxhall', advertisement, *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 10666 (18 May 1763), p.2.

For although domestic service retained a high degree of customary reciprocal obligation and non-cash earnings (such as room and board), both Meldrum and Steedman have argued that London domestic service was similarly characterised by an open labour market where servants (whose services were always in demand) could, and did, leave places after a few months, to find better pay and conditions elsewhere.¹²⁶ Information about potential masters seems to have flowed easily around the city and to the countryside, and masters do not seem to have favoured people from the same part of the country as themselves (as Leunig, Minns and Wallis's work on apprenticeship during this period implies).¹²⁷ The customary relationship between servant and master in eighteenth-century London was fluid, easily broken and reforged with the invocation of 'a month's notice or a month's wages'. This fluidity led to an erosion of traditional social hierarchies, relationships and controls, which had its dangers; the misogynist abuses perpetrated by John Cannon and his fellow excise officers,¹²⁸ or fraudulent dealings, a constant preoccupation of London publications.¹²⁹ Fluidity also meant precarity, and servants were rarely provided for in case of sickness.¹³⁰ Thus, investing money and time in building durable relationships in this transitory world of urban service – perhaps by donning a stylish outfit and going to pleasure gardens or theatre – was a good financial practice.

Such monetary practices are, indeed, precisely what maidservants are accused of in advice literature and moralising satire. Eliza Haywood decried maidservants' habit of tea-drinking (an expensive, but sociable pursuit) as a gateway to dram-drinking and the evils of alcoholism; she also accuses them of dressing beyond their true station, 'imitating your Betters in point of Dress'.¹³¹ Defoe echoed Haywood's concern over maidservant dress,

¹²⁶ Meldrum, pp.23-24, 60-64; Steedman, p.44.

¹²⁷ Tim Leunig, Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, 'Networks in the Premodern Economy: The Market for London Apprenticeships, 1600-1749', *The Journal of Economic History*, 71, 2 (2011), 413-443, pp.428, 431.

¹²⁸ Tim Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny in the Life of John Cannon, 1684-1743', *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), 25-43, pp.37, 39.

¹²⁹ Peter King, 'Making Crime News: Newspapers, Violent Crime and the Selective Reporting of Old Bailey Trials in the late Eighteenth Century', *Crime, History & Societies*, 13, 1 (2009), 91-116, p.99.

¹³⁰ Meldrum, pp.89-90, 121.

¹³¹ Haywood, pp.6-7, 22.

worrying about the health of the eighteenth-century social hierarchy.¹³² Such values were made manifest in the old ‘sumptuary laws’, restrictions on what luxury goods people of different stations could consume.¹³³ Jonas Hanway made explicit the link to financial practices, choosing as his example of a virtuous maidservant a (fictional) woman who bequeathed £80 of savings to her family upon her death.¹³⁴ The habits he discouraged were mostly sociable and transient pleasures such as dancing and the ‘clang of music’; those he encouraged were largely solitary and commodified, such as reading good books.¹³⁵ Eliza Haywood also believed music, indeed any entertainment, was inherently beyond a servant’s proper station:

It is those expensive [Allurements], I mean, which drain your Purse as well as your Time: Such as *Plays*, the *Wells*, and *Gardens*, and other publick Shews and Entertainments, Places which it becomes no body to be seen often at, and more especially young Women in your Station. ... Nor is it any Excuse for you that a Friend gives you Tickets, and it costs you nothing; it costs you at least what is more precious than Money, your Time ... They are a kind of delicious Poison for the Mind ... the Music, the Dances, the gay Clothes, and Scenes make too strong an Impression on the Senses, not to leave such Traces behind as are entirely inconsistent either with good Housewifery, or the Duties of your Place.¹³⁶

The spatial implications of the language Haywood uses – ‘the Scenes’ that ‘make too strong an Impression on the Senses’, ‘entirely inconsistent ... with ... the Duties of your Place’ – merit a fuller interpretation in Chapter 4. From an economic perspective, however, this quotation strongly suggests the gifting of concert and play tickets among servants, perhaps as a form of investment in those strong social relationships which brought long-term security.

Advice books and moralistic writings about servants have a tendency to amplify the most sensational alleged servant behaviours, even when they are uncommon (or even entirely imagined). For instance, Hanway’s narrator figure in *Virtue in Humble Life* (the fictional maidservant’s father) describes a woman who traded sexual favours to actors for theatre tickets; this cannot have been a regular route of informal access to the theatre for

¹³² [Daniel Defoe], *The Behaviour of Servants Enquired Into* (London: H. Whittridge, n.d. [c. 1726]), pp.14-15.

¹³³ Paul Slack, ‘Material Progress and the Challenge of Affluence in Seventeenth-Century England’, *The Economic History Review*, 62, 3 (2009), 576-603, especially p.583.

¹³⁴ Hanway, p.282.

¹³⁵ Hanway, pp.407-410, 418.

¹³⁶ Haywood, pp.40-41.

many.¹³⁷ Yet in the case of female servants' spending habits, it seems more likely these writers are simply describing the most extreme examples of widespread practice. Not only are there the examples discussed above of servants demanding access to tea and good clothes, but historians of consumption have found a broad base of evidence for increasingly wide dissemination of these luxury goods, through direct economic spending or through networks of acquaintance.¹³⁸

The same is likely true of theatrical music, which conduct book *Youth's Safety* (described below) alleges was known by servants and former servants, and which Chapter 4 demonstrates was known even by vernacular fiddlers in rural North-East Wales.¹³⁹ Furthermore, where their presence caused a scandal, servants' presence in the theatre and in pleasure gardens is well documented in newspaper reports. Besides the footman's gallery theatre riots which Kristina Straub relates,¹⁴⁰ newspaper reports from the pleasure gardens demonstrate that St Clement Danes servants could routinely access theatrical music, through legitimate means or otherwise. In June 1736, the Master of the Spring-Gardens, Vauxhall, complained that his staff were buying tickets back from guests and charging him for the difference, not only defrauding him, but effectively lowering the price of entry to the gardens such that 'Servants [of the Gardens] may be induced to encourage great Numbers of the inferior Sort to come to the Gardens, since this would be so much to their Advantage'.¹⁴¹ By this means, a servant with an acquaintance that worked at Vauxhall Gardens could gain free or considerably cheaper access to the Gardens, paying less than the nominal shilling's entry and still accessing the Gardens' full entertainments, including theatrical music by Arne and Boyce.¹⁴² As the discussion of Ranelagh Gardens in the previous chapter suggests, the

¹³⁷ Hanway, p.411.

¹³⁸ Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp.57, 73-76, 150-151.

¹³⁹ 'If [a footman with intentions of becoming an accomplished fraudster] has any tolerable Voice, he learns to Sing something tuneable, by imitating in the Upper Gallery at the Play-House'. J. W., *Youth's Safety, or, Advice to the Younger Sort, of Either Sex* (London: E. Whitlock, 1698), p.28.

¹⁴⁰ Kristina Straub, 'The Making of an English Audience: the Case of the Footmen's Gallery', in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830*, eds. Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (Cambridge: CUP [2007], 2009), 131-144.

¹⁴¹ 'London', *Daily Post*, 5222 (8 June 1736), pp.1-2.

¹⁴² Berta Joncus, ' "To Propagate Sound for Sense": Music for Diversion and Seduction at Ranelagh Gardens', *The London Journal*, 38, 1 (2013), 34-66, pp.47-49.

situation was similar in other London pleasure gardens, where servants had extensive access to the entertainments, both legitimate and illegitimate. Expending a few pence on entry to a pleasure garden would be a sound investment in one's own cultural capital, even for a maidservant.

Yet, as the Erddig financial records demonstrate, servants used money in very different ways. Moral criticism of maidservants' spendthriftness probably came not only from the genteel classes but from within maidservants' own communities. Tea and cotton were still relative novelties, and maintaining a cash reserve – inadequate as it would have been for long-term protection – helped cushion the blow of sudden unemployment (being 'out of place'). Spending time 'out of place', often living in an expensive inn, was an experience most servants would have had during their careers, especially in London, where service positions were often short and servants were usually separated from their families by a considerable distance. There were therefore economic and cultural factors encouraging servants to save some cash, to weigh against the sound economic rationale for spending on clothes and socialising.

Different servants would therefore have struck different balances between spending and saving. Spending money and time on one's appearance and acquaintance network was the best long-term investment, but could be a risky proposition. Sartorial codes are fluid and transient; human relationships are always uncertain, and as Chapter 5 will show, the spectre of sexual assault loomed large over poor women. Various kinds of fraud and deception flourished in the urban environment, where traditional ties of community were eroded and new, young migrants sought fast friends.¹⁴³ The risks of investing in human relationships, then, could be almost as high as not investing in them. Nevertheless, being friendless led to extreme vulnerability, without any witnesses to defend a woman's honour, or any contacts to learn about trustworthy employers. Migrant servants, largely friendless in xenophobic

¹⁴³ MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor*, pp.19-21, 30.

England, clearly feared this vulnerability, since aristocratic employers considered them very obedient and pliable, almost desperate for their patronage.¹⁴⁴

The economics of domestic service were drastically different for men. Firstly, male servants' wages were much higher than women's, at every level of domestic service. Returning to the St. Clement Danes parish pauper examinations, fully 80% of women were paid £5 or less; only the poorest 20% of men earned £5 or less. Since they had a great deal more leisure time than female servants – they predominated in outdoor service and livery service, both of which meant occasional requests rather than daily drudgery – men also spent a great deal of money on socialising.¹⁴⁵ Male servants were repeatedly seen drinking in public houses: in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, in the memoirs of James Macdonald, and consistory court cases.¹⁴⁶ They bought (or otherwise obtained) musical instruments, books, newspapers, even music books, using them in a variety of social contexts to entertain and build relationships.¹⁴⁷ These included regular heterosexual trysts, necessary to demonstrate masculine identity.¹⁴⁸ Trysts could also lead to marriage, which was economically beneficial for men, with the economic and social relationships between husband and wife being as important as the sexual one.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, investing in homosocial bonds between men was as important to a man's future career as investing in tools or training. Building a good reputation was important to tradespeople and artisans, since lines of credit were extended and sales made on the basis of interpersonal trust alone.¹⁵⁰ Although men had more economic options available in the event of unemployment, illness or disability – hence making up less than 10% of London's begging population – networks of acquaintances were still an important resource in times of hardship, too.¹⁵¹ For instance, male servants enjoying

¹⁴⁴ J. J. Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants in Eighteenth-Century England* (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College, 1954), pp.27, 31.

¹⁴⁵ Meldrum, pp.164-174.

¹⁴⁶ According to a defence witness, gentleman's servant Isaac Sowter sung several songs with the man he claimed stole his watch, a sign that they had reached a convivial agreement. *OBPO* t17800913-20. Macdonald, p.78; Meldrum, p.120.

¹⁴⁷ See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the availability of instruments.

¹⁴⁸ Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, 'Introduction', *English Masculinities 1660-1800* (London: Longman, 1999), 1-22, p.8. See also Chapter 5.

¹⁴⁹ Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.110-113, 122.

¹⁵⁰ MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor*, pp.23, 29, 43-44.

¹⁵¹ Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets', p.481.

informal or illegitimate access to the theatre is well documented in sensational incidents in contemporary newspapers. In December 1736, the *Daily Post* publicised a bitter dispute between the management and players of Drury Lane Theatre and Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, where the former was accused of hiring a mob to disrupt entertainments at the latter. This mob included a bookseller's servant, and met at the Lyon and Cat public house (since lost to history), on Carey Street in St Clement Danes.¹⁵² Such opportunities for cultural enrichment arose from building up a network of acquaintances. Thus, although men's socialising took a different shape and had slightly different purposes, it was still a responsible long-term investment.

The extra economic capacity and flexibility of expectation which male servants enjoyed could be used to not only maintain but grow their social capital, and profit thereby. The 1698 advice book *Youth's Safety* connects social mobility among men with both music and fraud. This book presents a number of fictional biographies of urban fraudsters of different social grades, all from humble origins, and most of whom use domestic service as a path to developing their skills in faking their social class. All use music to deceive their marks, from the 'Gentile [sic.] Town-Shift' who takes his country-gentleman mark (victim) to a 'Musick-house' and 'Play-house';¹⁵³ down to the 'ordinary Town-Shift' who deceives apprentices with 'Bawdy Songs, and by herding among the *St. Giles's* Scrapers; he is taught some lamentable tunes on the Violin', as well as experience on 'the Flute, or such-like Wind-Instrument', derived from contact with servants.¹⁵⁴ These narratives reflect contemporary advice books' anxieties about music, seemingly rooted in a belief that it could be used to disguise origins or embezzle cultural capital from one's betters (or, in the case of Jonas Hanway, also ruin health through its energetic movements and crowded venues).¹⁵⁵ Urban environments like St Clement Danes had to be the stage for all of these encounters: a place where people might not recognise a former servant who, 'like a Snake, cast[s] his Skin of a Livery',¹⁵⁶ and a space full of opportunities to learn and perform the arts of deceit.

¹⁵² 'To the Author of the Occasional Prompter', *Daily Post*, 5399 (31 December 1736), p.1.

¹⁵³ J.W., *Youth's Safety*, pp.16, 21.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.47

¹⁵⁵ Hanway, pp.417-418, 420-421.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.28.

The socialising seen in Erddig letter D/E/550, in which men drink their master's alcohol in their master's kitchen, singing for the attention of women, shows that money need not always have been expended on developing a network of acquaintances. However, it also shows the different expectations placed on men and women when socialising together. The letter-writer, John Williams, was the one who invited Ellis into the house. Ellis and John take on leading roles in each evening's entertainment, singing and providing drinks; the women seemingly take a passive role. As Chapter 5 will demonstrate, socialisation among non-genteel people displays similarly gendered patterns in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* and other sources. This, naturally, had an effect on male servants' patterns of spending: while Eliza Haywood warned maidservants against the theatre or the pleasure gardens even when they were given tickets by others, Seaton, whose *Conduct of Servants in Great Families* targets mostly male servants, did not really acknowledge the possibility of free access – for Seaton's target audience, socialising meant spending money.¹⁵⁷ The restrictions on money, investment opportunities, time and storage space for servants shaped the ways they engaged with musical culture in gendered and socially stratified ways.

Cultural Mixing: Servants and Culture

In 1771, a man arrested for 'singing a seditious ballad, grosly reflecting on the greatest characters' on Wych Street was rescued by 'the mob'.¹⁵⁸ This musical performance must have represented a flashpoint of tensions between the different participants in St. Clement Danes life: from the distant powerful figures being satirised in the song, to parish officials and magistrates trying to enforce the law, to a 'mob' whose composition would have been highly mixed. This took place only a five-minute walk away from the Academy of Ancient Music's home at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, or from Drury Lane theatre. In this incident, music was perhaps used to occupy space, a political song transforming the street singer's

¹⁵⁷ Haywood, p.40; Thomas Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* (London: Tim Goodwin, 1720), pp.161-162.

¹⁵⁸ *General Evening Post*, 16-18 April 1771, p.4. Quoted in David Atkinson, 'Street Ballad Singers and Sellers, c.1730-1780', *Folk Music Journal*, 11, 3 (2018), 72-106, p.80.

surroundings into an ideological zone of control that (to a lesser or greater degree depending on the singer's skill and the nature of the space) compelled auditors to respond with either condemnation or support.¹⁵⁹

This section will demonstrate that musical activities, even elite musical practices, were embedded in a physical geography which engendered cultural mixing, with consequences for both servants' access to elite music and also their impact upon music-making. It has two focuses: firstly, an attempted abduction of a gentlewoman from outside the Lincoln's Inn Theatre in 1722, and secondly, about 20 yards away, the Oratory of John Henley, which opened in Claremarket in 1729. Once the dynamics of these cultural mixtures are explored, this 1771 incident would appear not only to be an isolated event but indicative of how tensions in the eighteenth-century London street were, to a considerable degree, formative for contemporary musical practice. The two questions which arise from this hypothesis are: firstly, how such spatial tensions affected elite musical practices in the nearby venues, and secondly, how servants contributed to, and were impacted by, the spatial discourses of the eighteenth-century urban street.

A 1722 newspaper report provides some insight into these questions, by demonstrating that everyone involved in theatrical entertainments moved through a space with its own rules, values and tensions on their way to seeing many of these same tensions playing out on stage. The protagonists of this particular drama were gentlewomen, a 'Rabble' of St Clement Danes butchers, and, implicitly, footmen. The newspaper report contains different discursive strands that illuminate the interplay of space, class and gender:

A few Nights ago, a young Gentlewoman coming out of the New Play-House in Lincolns Inn Fields, was tost [tossed] by an unknown Hand into a Gentlemans Coach, which drove forthwith with the greatest hast [haste] into Claremarket, where the young Lady Cry'd so loud for Help, that in a Minute there were Fifty Butchers, and a great Rabble after the Coach, crying stop the Coach: Whereupon our Spark who had thus surprized the young Lady, and was in the Coach with her, threw himself out in the Street, and ran into Bear Court, where he found shelter, upon which the young Lady got out of the Coach, and after giving abundance of Thanks to the People for her happy Deliverance, went safe off.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ See Chapter 4 for more exploration of this.

¹⁶⁰ 'London', *London Journal*, 133 (10 February 1722).

The woman exiting the Lincoln's-Inn Theatre was leaving a relatively controlled space, with a staff of porters and ticket inspectors to maintain its cogency, and entering the street, which was not so much a coherent space as a set of physical constraints within which multiple distinct, meaningful spaces coexisted. One of the subsidiary spaces that existed within the street – and unusually, one physically rather than solely socially defined – was the coach, characterised by seclusion and privacy. To be suddenly and nonconsensually thrust into such a potentially intimate space with a man was clearly a prelude to another coerced intimacy. The perpetrator of the crime apparently presumed the coach was a more-or-less impenetrable space, in which he could have his way without the world outside knowing, or at least, being able to interfere. Claremarket, however, was a space where large numbers of people worked well into the night, since butchery and other food marketing required supply chains to continue long after usual retail hours were concluded. Some poor householders might even still be shopping at this hour, hoping to find an easy bargain.¹⁶¹ A populated, narrow marketplace was not a place a coach could traverse easily, giving the woman an opportunity to enlist the assistance of nearby crowds, who – despite the thorough-going misogyny of even the cheap press – felt sufficient solidarity with her to stop her kidnap. Then the kidnapper abandoned the attempt and ran off to Bear Court, built as a failed attempt at an expansion of Claremarket, and according to Seymour 'ill-populated' (which has a double meaning, either synonymous with 'lightly populated' or 'populated by the poor and disreputable').¹⁶² Such places, considered the crucible of criminal activity, were feared by the gentry by the end of the century, but for the young genteel kidnapper in this story, Bear Court's value as a place to avoid detection outweighed its danger to the visibly wealthy. This case is, then, all about different spaces around the theatre and how they interacted with each other: the privacy of the coach, the chaos of the street, the curious and fleeting allegiances that grow from spatial proximity and discursive relationships.

Patriarchy shaped the contours of these allegiances and relationships. For instance, it seems likely from the tone of the piece, and the considerable quantity of detail provided

¹⁶¹ Anonymous, *Low-Life: or, One Half of the World, Knows Not How the Other Half Live* (London: T. Legg, n.d.), p.3.

¹⁶² Seymour, *Survey*, p.774.

relative to coverage of other incidents, that this story was considered amusing. The man who kidnapped and attempted to assault a woman is described as 'our Spark', that is, a fiery romantic with whom the audience is expected to have some affinity (given the possessive pronoun), 'who had thus surprized the young Lady', considerably understating the terror and coercion of this attack. The Claremarket butchers, already a stock comic figure, are a perfect *opera buffa* chorus for this allegedly humorous scene.¹⁶³ The way the situation is described, as a curious anecdote where sexual violence is used as a punchline, is highly reminiscent of the humorous popular literature Simon Dickie analyses.¹⁶⁴ Another similarity to that popular literature is the way this scene unfolds like an eighteenth-century rape trial, the jury of Claremarket butchers convinced of the woman's innocence by how loudly she screamed and how satisfactorily she resisted (both essential ways for a rape victim to prove her innocence to a sceptical criminal court, as Chapter 5 explores). Dickie demonstrates how the courtroom drama of rape trials, often coupled with crudely misogynist punchlines that imply no rape was ever unwanted by a woman, resonated throughout eighteenth-century popular literature, in joke books to curated collections of 'comical' trials.¹⁶⁵ Newspapers existed in a reciprocal relationship with popular values and morals; the way this anecdote itself is constructed is a spatial discourse, and the form of a rape trial both reflected and was formative to the behaviours and attitudes of the people acting in this story. In the streets of St. Clement Danes, the gendered relationships implicit in the courtroom and the press became manifest, spatialised.

The threat of sexual assault, and the ritualised humiliation that accompanied it, resulted in a fundamental precarity underlying all women's engagement with spaces like the theatre and the concert hall, as well as influencing the cultural mixture of the street. Although some women in eighteenth-century London did legally own or lease a variety of

¹⁶³ e.g. 'An Elegy of Jemmy Spiller, Written by a Butcher of Clare-Market', *Universal Spectator and Weekly Journal*, 20 (22 Feb 1729).

¹⁶⁴ Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: UC Press, 2012), pp.198-199.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.194-195; 200-201.

spaces, from concert rooms to alehouses,¹⁶⁶ print shops to private businesses and homes,¹⁶⁷ their reputation – vital for receiving help in times of need, and means of livelihood – required them to police their own behaviours and be constantly wary even in those spaces. Elizabeth Sayer, the alehouse owner accused of sleeping with the criminal by whom she was robbed, demonstrates that principle well.¹⁶⁸ Whether in a criminal court, consistory court or merely the court of public opinion, the emphasis on having witnesses testify to a woman’s maintenance of her chastity compromised women’s ability to construct and maintain agency over the spaces they moved through. Even within the private home, maidservants customarily shared a bed with their mistresses (when she had no husband, or he was absent) to safeguard their chastity, and just as important, their reputation.¹⁶⁹ Any space in which one might be alone with a man was a position of danger; the interconnection of different spaces diffused this threat across even those spaces curated or produced by women, compromising their ability to freely engage with musical culture.

Footmen often accompanied genteel women to the theatre in order to prevent incidents like the 1722 assault documented in the newspaper report, so that the precarity which genteel women experienced gave footmen surprising leverage. David Hunter’s recent book has argued convincingly that genteel women were instrumental in the creation of eighteenth-century theatrical experience, as patrons who lent both financial support and social standing to theatrical endeavour.¹⁷⁰ Yet footmen also had an ability to influence theatre from their customary places in the second gallery, occasionally becoming riotous in their distaste for certain productions, especially those which mocked their occupation.¹⁷¹ Footmen as a class had gender-political interests that were usually antithetical to their own, since footmen were often quite sexually uninhibited, and widely considered dangerous to

¹⁶⁶ Judith Milhous, ‘Cornelys [née Imer; married name Pompeati], (Anna Maria) Teresa’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online edition [2004], 2008: www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 06/11/2020); Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp.203, 205-206.

¹⁶⁷ Paula McDowell, ‘“The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making”’: Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse’, *The Eighteenth Century*, 47, 2/3 (2006), 151-178, pp.158-159; Earle, *City Full of People*, pp.146-149; 153-154.

¹⁶⁸ *OBPO* t17360908-37. See also Chapter 5.

¹⁶⁹ Meldrum, p.94.

¹⁷⁰ David Hunter, *The Lives of George Frideric Handel* (London: Boydell, 2015), pp.62-67.

¹⁷¹ Straub, ‘The Making of an English Audience’, pp.132-134, 140.

chastity;¹⁷² while also militating for better pay and conditions in a way which affected mistresses, usually tasked with household management, most.¹⁷³ Nor could elite women rely on solidarity from their husbands. Gentlemen protected their footmen from the legal consequences of theatrical rioting at Drury Lane theatre in 1737 and 1759, while courts presided over by gentlemen also systematically stripped wealthy women who accused footmen of crimes of their dignity and reputation.¹⁷⁴ Thus footmen not only profited from the cultural capital (to use Bourdieu's term) of being able to learn and disseminate theatrical song and knowledge,¹⁷⁵ but could also exercise power over theatre by leveraging their status as visible, male representatives of their masters and protectors of the household's women.

Encouragement for artisans and upper servants to become familiar with elite cultural practices and knowledge was in some settings deliberate in eighteenth-century St. Clement Danes. At the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields closest to Claremarket was John Henley's Oratory, a mixture of church, debating society, cheap print publisher and 'universal school', from 1729.¹⁷⁶ Paula McDowell has been the most important modern scholar of Henley, reminding historians of his importance within the national intellectual sphere and improving knowledge of his biography.¹⁷⁷ As an early advocate of popular education and free debate, as well as a committed supporter of Walpole, Henley received derision from his peers – particularly the poet Pope and the *Grub Street Journal* (political rival to Henley's newspaper *Hyp-Doctor*) – as well as attention from the law. The presence of Claremarket butchers, artisans and servants among his assemblies caused him to be characterised as a rabble-rouser among savages.¹⁷⁸ Henley's character, and the eccentric practices of the

¹⁷² James Macdonald admitted to sexually assaulting a maidservant, while characterising her as wanting it (p.64); and kicking another (p.79); and was considered a danger to married women (p.86). Also see Meldrum, pp.104, 114-116, 118-120.

¹⁷³ Meldrum, pp.202-203.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.140-142; Meldrum, pp.119-120.

¹⁷⁵ See for example Robert Dodsley, a footman with sufficient cultural capital and familiarity with the theatre to gain Alexander Pope's support to become a playwright and publisher (including of works antagonistic to servants such as Swift's *Directions to Servants*). James E Tierney, 'Dodsley, Robert', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition (Oxford: OUP [2004], 2013, www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 31.10.21).

¹⁷⁶ Paula McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral : Print Commerce and Fugitive Voices in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: UC Press, 2017), pp.116-117, 125.

¹⁷⁷ McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral*, pp.115-116.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.117-120.

Oratory (whose lectures, debates and Sunday services were open to all for the cost of half a shilling),¹⁷⁹ are described in greater depth in the Appendix, in the blog post titled 'The Oratory'. The success of his project in encouraging free debate among artisans and other poorer people is demonstrated by the longevity of the Robin Hood Society (of which Henley was an early member), a group of artisan men who met on the decidedly un-genteel Butcher Row between 1740 and 1779.¹⁸⁰ By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, nearby Hollowell Road was becoming a centre of the book trade as well as old clothes dealing, and the Crown and Anchor Tavern across the road was used for political assemblies.¹⁸¹ Whether with Henley's consent or not, the artisans of St. Clement Danes continued to engage with political, theological and moral discussions more usually reserved for elite participants.

Henley lectured on musical matters, both sacred and secular, for a wider audience that included servants: this would have diffused scholarly knowledge about music and facilitated new mixtures of musical practices and schema in St. Clement Danes. In his schedule of the Oratory's initial two years of content (before the move from Newport Market in London to Claremarket), he planned to discuss music specifically at least twice. A Sunday sermon on 20 August 1727 was on the subject of 'David's Harp, or the *Songs of Sion*, displaying the Beauty, Use and Delight of the Psalms and Psalmody'.¹⁸² A midweek secular talk on 25 January 1727 was dedicated to 'The Principles, History, and Force of Musick', which sounds – given Henley's predilection to Classical models and learning – as if it might have been fashioned after the pattern of Boethius, Zarlino or Praetorius.¹⁸³ More modern

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.125, 127.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., pp.160-161.

¹⁸¹ ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.31, 81-82.

¹⁸² John Henley, 'The Theological, or Lord's-Day's Subjects of the Oratory, from July 3, 1726 Being the First Sunday, to August 31, 1728', in *Oratory Transactions Vol. II* (third edition, London: Mrs. Dodds, n.d.), p.7.

¹⁸³ John Henley, 'The Academical, or Week-Day's Subjects of the Oratory, from July 6, in the First Week, 1726, to August 31, 1728', in *Oratory Transactions Vol. II*, p.2.

The Boethian style of academic music treatise, common throughout the medieval era (of which Gioseffo Zarlino's 1558 book *Le Istitutioni Harmonichi* is a late example) follows this pattern of 'Principles, History, and Force', that is, (1) the ratios of different pitches in the mode, and sometimes (in later authors) some discussion of counterpoint and/or rhythm, (2) the legendary origins of music and a list of historically important musicians, and (3) anecdotes from myth and hearsay about the miraculous power of music to affect the passions and disrupt the body. Also see Anicius Manlius

examples of this form continue in English seventeenth-century texts, including historical essays included in Playford's music treatises that were still in print in the 1720s.¹⁸⁴

Other lectures, such as 'The Harmony of the Voice', blur the boundary between singing and oratory;¹⁸⁵ indeed, Pope describes Henley's oratorical performance style as 'neither said, nor sung'.¹⁸⁶ Henley's emphasis on physical disposition and vocal production as paramount skills for a preacher suggest a certain musicality to his talks at the Oratory. Although the 'Orations' would not have been recognised as music, it is notable that Henry Fielding's and, later, Christopher Smart's plays and entertainments satirising Henley placed him in a musical context (in Fielding's play, a puppet show; in Smart's, with an orchestra of burlesque instruments).¹⁸⁷ Selling his pamphlets and sermons would have been an army of street sellers with their own cries and songs. Ballad singers often sold 'godly books', like Abraham Randolph, a witness in a case from the *Old Bailey Proceedings*.¹⁸⁸ The Oratory's move to the edge of Claremarket, then, changed the sonic geography as well as the cultural geography of St. Clement Danes.

Discussions of music continued at the Oratory even after the move to Claremarket. An issue of *Hyp-Doctor* concluded with a note that, 'in Regard to St. Cecilia's Day this Week', the next Sunday's 'Oration' would be on 'Factions in Music', and that 'a Gentleman has proposed a Question in Music for the *Public Disputation*'.¹⁸⁹ Unfortunately there are few of Henley's opinions about music still extant, but there are certain indicators remaining. Firstly, his aforementioned admiration for psalmody, and approving their use sung in the Oratory's liturgy, suggests a certain populist appreciation for the so-called 'Old Way' of intoning

Severinus Boethius, *The Fundamentals of Music*, ed. and trans. Claude V. Palisca (London: Yale UP, 1989); Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Book 1 (Wittenberg: Johannes Richter, 1615).

¹⁸⁴ For instance, see John Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (nineteenth edition, London: Benjamin Sprint, 1730).

¹⁸⁵ Henley, 'The Academical, or Week-Day's Subjects of the Oratory', p.2.

¹⁸⁶ McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral*, p.152.

¹⁸⁷ [Henry Fielding], *The Author's Farce* (London: J. Roberts, 1730); Jeremy Barlow, *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth's Musical Imagery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p.97.

¹⁸⁸ OBPO t17550515-21.

¹⁸⁹ 'To the Hyp-Doctor', *The Hyp-Doctor*, 311 (16 November 1736). British Library (General Reference Collection) HS.74/1245.(46.).

psalms, extensively described by Nicholas Temperley.¹⁹⁰ There is some evidence that the generality of laypeople preferred this style, although it was despised by elite auditors.¹⁹¹ Despite the financial success of the Oratory, which granted Henley a living only slightly less than a City of London parish, he evinced no desire to install an organ; instead, his grand gilded two-level rostrum with large sounding board (the 'tub' associated with contemporary Nonconformism) was notorious.¹⁹² This put him at odds with the musical reformers who sought to improve Anglican church music from the 1720s onwards by setting up musical societies and – where local fundraising capacity permitted – installing organs to regulate the tempo of psalms and hymns.¹⁹³ Henley does not seem to have had much faith in the concept of musical 'improvement'. His *Dissertation on Nonsense*, published with the plan for and defence of the Oratory as the first volume of *Oratory Transactions*, satirises music scholars' descriptive vagueness:

We shall remark a Set of refin'd Judges of the Head of the World transported at the great Improvement of Musick, without knowing, or telling us, how it is improv'd; execrable Works countenanc'd and extoll'd, and the most deserving vilify'd and discourag'd[.]¹⁹⁴

Henley's general disdain for scholarly pretension, obfuscation and technical language would make it surprising if Henley had sympathised with either opera-lovers or the antiquarians of the Madrigal Society and Academy of Ancient Music. It is difficult to know whether his socially mixed audiences shared his impatience with excessively learned musical culture.

¹⁹⁰ Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, Volume 1 (Cambridge: CUP [1979], 1983), pp.91-98.

¹⁹¹ Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, pp.106-107, 143-145.

¹⁹² McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral*, pp.125, 127.

¹⁹³ Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p.97.

¹⁹⁴ John Henley, 'A Dissertation Upon Nonsense', in *Oratory Transactions*, Vol. II, p.16.

See here my Goldfinches, toll—
At the ORATORY,
THE Corner of *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, near
 Clare-market, To-morrow, at seven o' Clock, will be
 exhibited a FINE COLLECTION AND CONCERT OF SING-
 ING BIRDS; and a Touch of the Way how to catch and ma-
 nage them; Birds in France, Spain, Germany, Holland; Songs
 why Airs; whence Corelli's Musick; the Opera-house a Cage;
 an Episode on Countries tumbling, and why People do not walk
 on their Heads; the Opera-Birds, he and she, their War de-
 scrib'd; in the Italian Grammar Eunuch Masculine; how to
 shew a Sea-Fight, and Navy by Birds; what Bird is a Dutch
 Admiral, and why an Owl wears a full bob, and looks like—;
 what Birds for Water, Land, Church, State; a Note on Birds of
 Prey; Night-Birds, Birds of Business, Trade, Wit; what Bird
 is a good Wife, a Nymph, a Swain; with a long Tail of Feathers.
 II. L'Univers Travesti, Chimes of the Times, Hyperphysical.
 See To-morrow.
 N. B. Just publish'd; some Orations; — the first on Action—
 the first of the Oratory—the Defence—that on Nonfense—the
 Butcher's Lecture—the Errors of Painters—that on grave Buf-
 foons; to be had at the Oratory.

Figure 3.10: an advert for John Henley's Oratory from the Daily Post, 17 July 1729. It is certainly not to be read literally.

Henley's apparently sceptical views towards opera reflected a populist (although not necessarily popular) discourse, although perhaps not one shared by those servants who enjoyed operatic music in the theatre or imitating its sounds at home. His advertisement for the 'Fine Collection and Concert of Singing Birds' (Figure 3.10), with its emphasis on national characters, Italians ('in the Italian Grammar Eunuch Masculine'; 'whence Corelli's Musick; the Opera-house a Cage'; 'the Opera-Birds, he and she, their War describ'd') and national and military failure ('an Episode on Countries tumbling'; 'how to shew a Sea-Fight, and Navy by Birds') might indicate Henley aligned himself, to a degree, with the nationalist musical scepticism of writers such as John Dennis or Robert Campbell, author of *The London Tradesman* (1747).¹⁹⁵ Campbell associated the success of Italian music with national decline, effeminacy and moral turpitude. Italy itself 'has degenerated into ... a Nation of Priests, something less than Women; into a Race of mere effeminate Cowards'; as for Britain:

As Italian Music, and the Love of it, has prevailed in these Islands, Luxury, Cowardice, and Venality has advanced upon us in exact Proportion. In the Southern Parts, where this bewitching Demon is best known, we find less of Martial Ardor than in the more remote and Northern Parts, where they have not been squeaked out of their old Musick or Antient Courage[.]¹⁹⁶

Although the content of Henley's talk about 'Factions in Musick' or the 'Fine Collection and Concert of Singing Birds' probably did not follow Campbell's unusual line of rhetoric, a number of the same tropes appear. Common to all of the British critics of opera,

¹⁹⁵ John Dennis, *An Essay on the Operas after the Italian Manner* (London: J. Nutt, 1706).

¹⁹⁶ Robert Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London: T. Gardner, 1747), p. 90.

from Campbell to an anonymous pamphlet entitled 'The English Man's Two Wishes' are a fixation upon Italian *castrati* ('The Italian Grammar Eunuch Masculine') as the symbols of everything British Anglicans despised, effeminate Papists who demanded large sums for their services.¹⁹⁷ Yet Henley's beliefs on a subject are hard to pin down – a loyal Whig arrested for excessive sympathy to Jacobites; a speaker who rejected the authority of the church yet fumed vitriolically against an explicitly secular imitator of the Oratory for their lack of priestly authority.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, in his *Oration on Grave Conundrums and Serious Buffoons*, a defence of using humour in the service of serious intellectual debate, he seems to consider the opera and the playhouse legitimate places for the ecclesiastical intelligentsia to gather:

It is well known that in the Reign of King Charles II, the Stage, which is a Burlesque on all Mankind, was in a vitious State, and Bishop Patrick, in his friendly Debate, then approv'd of it ... A Clergyman observ'd, that, because King William never went to the Play-House, he could not be a true Friend to the Church: ... And at Rome, and all over Italy, the Ecclesiasticks frequent the Operas.¹⁹⁹

Given Henley is unsympathetic to many of the religious and political parties discussed in this oration, however, this does not necessarily signify approval; it is difficult to cut through the layers of irony through which these nominally authoritative figures might be invoked. In any case, he was often content for his rhetoric to be perceived as entertainment by his audiences, as that *Oration* makes clear; this suited well the ways in which non-elite audiences engaged with ideas, since they were used to deriving news from ballads and morals from songs. Writings by servant poets and authors indicate a rich tradition of appropriating elements of learned discourses and radically recontextualising them, to create novel theologies, philosophies and poetics.²⁰⁰ Henley's style facilitated this tactical appropriation, presenting a variety of discursive tropes in a manner that may be ironic or unironic, allowing the contradictory to coexist syncretically in the same manner

¹⁹⁷ 'The next thing that an English Man wishes is, that Foreign Singers had no Encouragement here to amass by their Squeeking and Squalling, such vast Sums of our English Money ... 'Tis well known what a vast Sum a certain Half-Man sent from London to the Bank of Venice' [...] Anonymous, 'The English Man's Two Wishes' (London: H. Parker, 1728), p.2.

¹⁹⁸ McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral*, pp.134, 160-161.

¹⁹⁹ John Henley, *An Oration on Grave Conundrums, and Serious Buffoons* (London: Oratory, 1729), p. 13.

²⁰⁰ Steedman, pp.282-285, 288-291, 297-301. Also see the extensive Unitarian theological writings of footman George Williams, such as *An Attempt to Restore the Supreme Worship of God the Father Almighty* (London: T. Becket and P. A. de Hondt, 1765).

that ballad texts allowed several contradictory morals to be realised simultaneously in performance (such as the ballad ‘Two Trials from Guild-Hall’ described in Chapter 5).

Henley’s presence on the border of St. Clement Danes clearly stimulated a great deal of cultural activity among the artisans and tradesmen of the parish – and, presumably their servants. Yet since the ‘improvement’ of music did not seem to have the same religious urgency for Henley as education in theology, the natural sciences, or the arts of rhetoric, literature and politics, he seems to be more of a mirror of contemporary attitudes to musical life in the parish rather than a transformative influence. Henley’s trenchant defence of plain language and regular topical, satirical entertainments meshed well with the culture of ballad singing. In the parodies of Christopher Smart, indeed, he became the subject of ballads and rough music himself, performed in public houses.²⁰¹ While Henley’s Oratory sought to elevate and educate the people of St. Clement Danes on other subjects, what it contributed to musical life in the parish was in many ways representative of the existing complex patchwork of musical life in the parish, discoursing on opera and putting odd pennies in the hands of ballad singers. It was the spatial proximity which enabled Henley to concoct this mixture: the inevitable interactions between participants in the institutions through which the socio-economic elite engaged with musical practices (and other intellectual or broadly ‘cultural’ practices), and the people who serviced them, traded with them and passed them by in the street.

Conclusion

Studying the parish of St. Clement Danes in a holistic manner – using geographical specificity to focus the research rather than particular people, themes, institutions or sources – has generated new insights into London’s cultural and social history, especially the history of music. Well-known and heavily researched musical institutions such as the Academy of Ancient Music, the opera house in Covent Garden or the playhouses on Drury Lane and Portugal Street shared a locale with a meat and livestock market, narrow courts with a reputation for insalubrious activity, and many public houses and shops. Understanding this,

²⁰¹ McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral*, pp.157-159.

and the movement of people and goods between them, helps to demonstrate the economic and sociological synergy among them, akin to a kind of cultural ecology. Theatres existed in the vicinity of St. Clement Danes because of its strategic geographical and commercial position along the Strand and between Holborn and the City; theatres created conditions in which street musicians, beggars and sex workers could survive; many shops and artisans required cheap labour both within and without their households (from charwomen and piece-workers as well as shop servants and apprentices), but also a moneyed and genteel customer base. Servants had a core role in the construction and maintenance of hierarchy within this ecology: they curated shops and cleaned front steps, distinguished between different types of visitors and escorted ladies to their destinations. Musicians relied upon them and upon the markers of social distinction they created: for instance, through laundry, which allowed musicians to present an appearance suitable for genteel social contact.

This role in creating spatial and social distinction meant that servants were brought into contact with a variety of musical practices, from encountering musicians in the street while on errands (see Chapter 4) to serving drinks to the Academy of Ancient Music. They were able to become mediators, presenting their interpretations of musical practices to others within their households and networks of acquaintances. They also affected musical life through their participation in the drama of the street, through which both performers and audiences had to pass to reach music venues. The street was a site of contest in St. Clement Danes, with devices of genteel control such as the coach, regulation of traffic and street maintenance, and parish law enforcement coexisting uneasily with the interests, opinions and behaviours of ordinary inhabitants. Crowds could form at a moment's notice, to challenge perceived abuses of power (such as the young man pulling a woman into his coach on her way out of the theatre) or other perceived injustices. Consistory court cases demonstrate most forms of social control were enforced on this informal basis, without the intervention of law or state.²⁰² The next chapter will explore how the street musicians whom servants met most often – fiddlers and ballad singers – were able to intervene and shape this street drama.

²⁰² MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor*, pp.21-22.

However, servants' ability to participate in music depended on both their economic status and their relation to gender. The parish settlement examinations, which are very comparable to those which D. A. Kent studied in 1985, nevertheless lead me to different conclusions, with a suggestion that the entire domestic service economy might have been premised on women's precarity and dependence on the households of others. This was particularly true of the older women who are considerably over-represented among those requesting parish poor relief, some of whom had housekeeping expertise which allowed them to attain higher salaries than the 76% of maidservants who earned between £3 and £5, but most of whom were paid very little. The few extant servant wills in the National Archives, meanwhile, demonstrate that there was little room in a servant's discretionary spending for musical objects, particularly for women. Clothing, as a marker of status and respectability, was of considerably more importance than books or even household furniture, in most servant women's wills. Men were not only paid better in service, as the parish settlement examinations establish beyond reasonable doubt, but they also derived greater social advantage from music, as the final chapter of this thesis will discuss.

Chapter 4: The Fiddle and the Ballad: Domestic Servants and Vernacular Musical Technologies

Introduction

Ballad singing and the playing of 'vernacular' tunes on the violin were probably the most prevalent musical practices across the British Isles in the eighteenth century. Over the course of the seventeenth century, violins had come to displace most older or more local stringed instruments, such as the rebec or the crwth,¹ and the ballad industry had grown into a national manufacture with considerable influence – the ballad 'Lillybulero' (to choose one of its many spellings) is credited with winning public sympathy for the Glorious Revolution of 1689.² Neither form involved a particularly high barrier to entry – sheaves of ballads could be obtained from printers or fellow singers for relatively little outlay, and violins could be obtained very affordably.³ The two musical practices had overlapping repertoires of tunes, and similar relationships between aural and literate dissemination, as this chapter will demonstrate. They also frequently directly coincided in performance, with violins being a prevalent accompaniment to a singer or singers. From rural Anglesey, to highland Scotland, to Ireland, and London, fiddling and ballad-singing – traditions pluralistic and flexible in their expression, but with many continuities across regions, nations and decades – dominated most people's musical experience in the eighteenth century. This chapter will examine the ways these musical forms might have operated in the two environments seen in Chapters 2 and 3 – at Erddig and elsewhere in North-East Wales, and also in St. Clement Danes and similar conurbations.

Ballads and fiddling are both distinct fields of study with mature, longstanding bodies of scholarship surrounding them. Claude Simpson's comprehensive 1966 catalogue

¹ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP [2010], 2013), pp. 165-167; ed. Cass Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas: A Fiddler's Tune-Book from Eighteenth-Century Wales* (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 2004), p. iii.

² Marsh, *Music and Society*, p. 225; Paula McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making": Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse', *The Eighteenth Century*, 47, 2/3 (2006), 151-178, p.159.

³ For the poverty and indigence of many ballad singers, and the ease of obtaining ballads, see McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making" ', pp. 159, 171, 173. For fiddle prices, see below.

analyses ballads to find origins and genealogies of texts and tunes, and continues to be a vital reference for ballad scholars in the early twenty-first century.⁴ One particularly rich vein of ballad scholarship analyses ballad texts in literary terms, a field associated with prolific writers such as Vic Gammon, as well as literary historians such as Dianne Dugaw and Natascha Würzbach.⁵ These grew out of antiquarian and folk-music studies of ballads which understood them as either an 'authentic' voice of a region, nation or social class, or as a commercial corruption which swallowed older oral traditions, a dichotomous view of popular culture analysed as far back as Peter Burke in 1978, and more recently historicised by Matthew Gelbart and Paula McDowell.⁶ However, the concerns of literary historians of ballads are diverse: Gammon's work is too multifarious to be summarised concisely, but it often focuses on the relationship between ballads and popular politics, either radical or conservative; Dugaw writes in great depth about cross-dressing heroines in ballads, and presents a sophisticated critical framework for understanding gender in ballads in general.

Patricia Fumerton is by affiliation a literary historian, but her work has come to embrace a more holistic approach to the cultural history of ballads. The English Broadside Ballad Archive, which she founded, is a vital resource for all students in the field, a searchable, digitally transcribed archive based primarily on the Pepys and Roxburghe collections (but going considerably beyond them).⁷ Fumerton has also co-edited an interdisciplinary volume covering different aspects of ballad culture, including the economic and the social structures of balladry, and co-written a book chapter with Megan E. Palmer about the iconography of ballad woodcuts which demonstrates that texts are only one of

⁴ Claude M. Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1966).

⁵ For instance, Vic Gammon, *Desire, Drink and Death in English Folk and Vernacular Song, 1600-1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), and ' "Not Appreciated in Worthing?" Class Expression and Popular Song Texts in Mid-Nineteenth Century Britain', *Popular Music*, 4 (1981), 5-24. Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650-1850* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989). Natascha Würzbach, *The Rise of the English Street Ballad, 1550-1650*, trans. Gayna Walls (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).

⁶ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1978), especially pp. 3-22; Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music": Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007); McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making" '.

⁷ English Broadside Ballad Archive (<https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>, accessed 16/03/2020).

several discursive dimensions of balladry.⁸ Much other recent work on ballad culture has taken a similar trajectory, leading to crossover with work on the ‘cheap’ print trade such as Jeroen Salman’s recent work with Roeland Harms and Joad Raymond on popular print and its distribution in Europe.⁹ These two approaches, covering the textual and material aspects of ballad culture, are wedded in Paula McDowell’s 2006 discussion of eighteenth-century discourses about ballad printing. These texts, she contends, usefully treat ballads as an industry, a ‘manufacture’ – admittedly a controversial and often counter-cultural one, but a substantial economic enterprise producing and distributing commodities.¹⁰

This newer body of scholarship fits well with the social-historical lens of my thesis, but very little of the literature described above seriously considers ballads in terms of their musical performance, partly because there is so little contemporary description of it. Most analysis of ballad singing centres iconography by Hogarth, the Laroons (‘Elder’ and ‘Younger’), or ‘fancy picture’ painters from the end of the century, which very often represents an ideal or a satire rather than a representation, and rarely gives insight into musical sound (since, unlike iconographical depictions of instruments, there are arguably no physical artefacts associated with the human voice).¹¹ David Atkinson’s recent work, which integrates iconographical evidence with sensitive readings from the *Old Bailey Proceedings* and newspapers, considers ballad singers as social agents, including demographics – how female-dominated the occupation was; economics – how precarious and profitable was their livelihood; reputation – how ballad singers were perceived; and authorship – how creatively invested they were in the writing and sounding of ballads.¹² Oskar Cox Jensen’s new book, *The Ballad-Singer in Georgian and Victorian London*, uses a similar blend of sources primarily to

⁸ Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, eds., *Ballads and Broadides in Britain, 1500-1800* (Abingdon: Routledge [2010], 2016); Patricia Fumerton and Megan E. Palmer, ‘Lasting Impressions of the Common Woodcut’, *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster (London: Routledge, 2016), 383-400.

⁹ Jeroen Salman, *Pedlars and the Popular Press: Itinerant Distribution Networks in England and the Netherlands 1600-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Roeland Harms, Joad Raymond and Jeroen Salman, eds., *Not Dead Things: The Dissemination of Popular Print in England and Wales, Italy, and the Low Countries, 1500-1820* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

¹⁰ McDowell, ‘“The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making”’, pp. 155-156.

¹¹ For instance, Salman, *Pedlars and the Popular Press*, pp. 56-68.

¹² David Atkinson, ‘Street Ballad Singers and Sellers, c.1730-1780’, *Folk Music Journal*, 11, 3 (2018), pp.72-106.

examine ballad singers' lives and performance practices at the end of the eighteenth century and during the first half of the nineteenth, combined with the richer contemporary literature about ballad singers which extending his enquiry to the nineteenth century allows.¹³ It is only using nineteenth-century sources – often a century after the servants and ballad singers examined in this thesis – that Jensen is able to examine ballad singers' musical sound in any detail.¹⁴

In contrast, scholarship about eighteenth-century violin playing often focuses on musical sound almost to the exclusion of the social. This is because such studies grew out of and supply the needs of historically informed performance: questions such as where the violin was held, capabilities of fingering and bowing, and characteristic ornamentation dominate much of the academic discourse.¹⁵ Books such as Cyril Ehrlich's economic history of professional musicians do discuss violinists as social agents, but they usually focus on a small number of elite musicians with extraordinarily high incomes.¹⁶ Scholarship on 'vernacular' fiddlers – that substantial majority of violinists who had modest incomes and had little direct contact with the elite musical world of opera or learned musical societies¹⁷ – developed from antiquarian or folklorist traditions. This encouraged a focus on notable local individual musicians, particularly in Wales and Scotland, their biographies, repertoires and legacies.¹⁸ Such work is a valuable corrective to the dichotomy between individualistic

¹³ Oskar Cox Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer in Georgian and Victorian London* (Cambridge: CUP, 2021).

¹⁴ Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer*, pp.146-153.

¹⁵ For instance, David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761 and its Relationship to the Violin and Violin Music* (Oxford: OUP, 1965), or Robin Stowell, *The Early Violin and Viola: a Practical Guide* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001)

¹⁶ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: OUP, 1985); as another more recent example, see Martin Hillman, *Thomas Sanderson's Account of Incidents: The Edinburgh Musical Society 1727-1801 and its Impact on the City* (Edinburgh: Friends of St. Cecilia's Hall, 2017).

¹⁷ These musicians are described by Catherine Harbor thus: 'At the bottom of the heap was the huge majority of musicians who could not earn enough from music to be able to devote themselves to it full time, but who had to combine music-making with some other non-musical occupation in order to make a viable living.' 'The Birth of the Music Business: Public Commercial Concerts in London 1660-1750' (PhD thesis, Royal Holloway University of London, 2012), p. 268.

¹⁸ See in *Play It Like It Is: Fiddle and Dance Studies from around the North Atlantic*, eds. Ian Russell and Mary Anne Alburger (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, 2006); also volume 3 of the journal *Welsh Music History* (1999), entirely dedicated to Robert ap Huw, an early modern harpist who worked in Anglesey.

histories of elite culture and frequently homogenising histories of culture ‘from below’, giving agency and humanity to the vernacular musicians marginalised in mainstream musicology.¹⁹

Cass Meurig’s work on the North Welsh fiddler Alawon John Thomas is foundational to this chapter, integrating careful transcriptions of his extensive manuscript tune-book (a very rare survival) with comprehensive research into different tunes’ possible origins and concordance with other sources.²⁰ Some of these were, Meurig believes, copied from printed sources, while others demonstrate fascinating evidence of aural transmission.²¹ The biographies and repertoires of individuals like John Thomas shed light on systems of musical meaning, memory and economics which need to be integrated with a macroscopic historical perspective. John Thomas is shown to be deeply imbricated in networks of music distribution which cut across regional, national and class lines, with tunes from every nation of the British Isles represented, and several based on compositions by Handel, Arne and even Leclair and Lully (or at least works attributed to the latter).²² Christopher Marsh’s monograph on music and society in the early modern period is a grand project which integrates individual biography seamlessly with larger-level historical and musical trends, but covering two centuries and several musical traditions limits its capacity for detail.²³ However, its emphasis on contemporary perceptions of fiddlers and ballad singers, as much as on the musicians themselves, is important when the object of study is (as it is in this thesis) music as a social technology, a practice that produces social relations.

With such a rich academic background, this chapter cannot hope to be a comprehensive examination of either fiddling or ballad singing as musical practices. Instead, it will focus on the possible musical experiences of eighteenth-century servants relating to these traditions, attempting to imagine to some degree those naturalised, non-propositional elements of fiddling and ballad-singing which are so often only implied by contemporary

¹⁹ Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual History of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale UP [2001], 2002), pp. 2-3, 5-6.

²⁰ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. iv, vi.

²² Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, pp. 31, 47, 138, 147, 156.

²³ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*.

accounts of music-making. This will necessitate some degree of tune analysis, reading notated music for clues about musical subjectivities that can be compared with descriptions of fiddling and ballad singing in legal records, autobiographical writings, fiction and iconography.

Both ballad-singing and fiddling can be understood as social technologies: learned, evolving behaviours which generate social relations, particularly, in an eighteenth-century context, relations of class and gender. Musical sound is fundamentally spatial in character, as well as social, and as this chapter will demonstrate, the ways in which eighteenth-century writers and artists depict musical performance imply a strong association between music and space. The construction – or play-construction – of class and gender through musical performance can be understood as a spatial manipulation. A musician who sings, or plays, imposes a temporal order on auditors; the discursive ‘content’ which they sing or play is (in Lefebvre’s terms) a ‘representation of space’ which implies a schema of class and gender; the manner in which they sing or play constitutes a ‘representational space’ in which gestures and non-discursive elements of performance realise that schema by tactically manipulating the signifying language familiar to that (performed) space’s inhabitants.²⁴ To move from this abstract philosophical framework to a more practical level, the next section will discuss fiddling as a social technology, in terms of accessibility, the contexts in which it was used, and perceptions of fiddlers; this will lead into a discussion of the ways in which fiddling arguably imposed a temporal, and thus a spatial order in performances at Erddig, generating and reproducing social relations. Finally, ballads will be discussed as an instrument of spatial (dis)ordering and a tool to embed social relations within the moral economy of begging.

Fiddling as a Social Technology

That the violin was a compelling investment in eighteenth-century Britain is clear from its predominance among musical instruments. It is mentioned more frequently than any other

²⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell [1974, 1984], 1991), pp. 26-27, 33, 38-39.

musical instrument in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* between 1690 and 1795, with the exception of the drum (table 4.1), whose functions in the urban street were manifold (and not always musical), and which was also relatively common in public house names;²⁵ there is no indication that this trend was solely urban, with rural fiddlers and violinists represented strongly in iconography, country house records and diaries during the period.²⁶ The violin's prominence in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* is probably exaggerated by its portability and relatively high value (compared to other cheap instruments such as shawms, drums and wooden flutes), which made violins more likely to be stolen. Yet that combination of prevalence and value is an indicator of the violin's utility as a social technology.

Instrument	Cases	Of which theft
Violin/Fiddle	82	55
Flute	36	20
Drum	97	49
Harpsichord	16	10

For the most part, the court valued stolen violins at 5 shillings, possibly more as a customary legal value than an actual market price – in unrelated cases involving the theft of cattle and the stealing of a cloak, there are market prices mentioned by witnesses which are considerably higher than the nominal value attached to them by the court.²⁸ Very few violins are valued at less than 5 shillings, although a few are valued at considerably more (up to

²⁵ Christopher Marsh, ' "The pride of noise": drums and their repercussions in early modern England', *Early Music*, 39, 2 (2011), 203-216, p. 203.

²⁶ See Chapter 2.

²⁷ *OBPO*, searched for all text where the transcription matches 'violin violins fiddle fiddles fiddler fidler fiddle' (any word can be present), between 1690 and 1795; searched for all offences where the transcription matches 'violin violins fiddle fiddles fiddler fidler fiddle' (any word can be present) and offence category is theft, between 1690 and 1795; searched for all text where the transcription matches 'flute flutes' (any word can be present), between 1690 and 1795; searched for all offences where the transcription matches 'flute flutes' (any word can be present) and offence category is theft, between 1690 and 1795; searched for all text where the transcription matches 'drum drums drummer' (any word can be present), between 1690 and 1795; searched for all offences where the transcription matches 'drum drums drummer' (any word can be present) and offence category is theft, between 1690 and 1795; searched for all text where the transcription matches '+harpsichord' (all words must be present), between 1690 and 1795; searched for all offences where the transcription matches '+harpsichord' (all words must be present) and offence category is theft, between 1690 and 1795. Advertisements for harpsichord music disregarded.

²⁸ *OBPO* t17360225-9; *OBPO* t17291203-21.

£5).²⁹ One relatively typical case is the theft of two violins, valued at 5 shillings each, from Edward Price, who was servant to a knight and living in stables, and his probable colleague Henry Norris, demonstrating that violins at this nominal price level were accessible to manservants.³⁰ Even assuming that the court's valuation of violins underestimates their value considerably, a violin could certainly be obtained for less than £1 on the open market. The violin stolen in 1752 from a dancing master's house, which the owner valued at an astronomical £5, was in fact sold to a woman – allegedly a pawnbroker – for 4 shillings.³¹ A livery servant who stole his master's violin in 1740 sold it to a dealer in old clothes for 3 shillings.³² Auctions of the possessions of debtors or those who died intestate, or connections with family and friends willing to dispose of a violin, could bring the cost down even further.

Although some cultural historians suggest a price in the vicinity of 5 shillings would make violins more expensive (considered as a leisure item) than most could afford, this was a low price for a tool of trade, comparable to a handsaw.³³ Unlike even relatively exploitative occupations such as weaving, shoemaking and tailoring, there is no evidence that vernacular violin playing required any kind of formal apprenticeship in Britain (outside of institutions such as the town wait or some churches).³⁴ Apprenticeships in lucrative trades might require a premium of between £16 and £80, and could be inflexible legal and customary institutions

²⁹ One violin is valued at 12d in a 1693 burglary case – *OBPO* t16930116-6. A violin is valued at 20s in a 1771 burglary from a pawnbroker's shop, and in a 1780 theft from a public house – *OBPO* t17710515-68); *OBPO* t17800913-87. Also see note 31.

³⁰ *OBPO* t17670909-20.

³¹ *OBPO* t17521206-42.

³² *OBPO* t17401015-38.

³³ Of course, the 'profligate' even among the poor could and sometimes did spend several shillings on fashionable clothes, tea, books and theatre tickets. See Chapter 2 for my discussion of the controversies around leisure spending in eighteenth-century Britain. Compare also with the cost of carpentry tools: 3 handsaws are valued at 10s in a 1721 theft case; 3 mason's chisels are valued at 3s in a 1722 theft; 5 augurs (for shipbuilding) are valued at 5s in a 1730 theft; three saws are 3s, 4s and 5s in a 1768 tool theft; a paviour's twibil was valued at 4s in 1768; and a complete set of joiner's tools, exclusive of 4 saws (16s), was valued at 30s in 1718. *OBPO* t17180910-53; t17210525-29; t17221010-28; t17300228-21; t17680413-7; t17680413-2.

³⁴ For evidence of musical apprenticeships within the distinct context of church music, focusing on harpsichord playing and the learning of the 'Science of Musick', see R. J. S. Stevens's apprenticeship to William Savage. Charles Cudworth, 'An 18th-Century Musical Apprenticeship', *The Musical Times*, 1493 (1967), 602-604.

(constraining an apprentice's freedom of association considerably until both parties agreed its dissolution).³⁵ Playing the violin, on the other hand, did not need require a player to dedicate themselves to that single occupation or a single master for years, and could be a side job for those in other occupations. Further, a violinist could rapidly recoup their initial outlay. 'Jack the Turner', the fiddler who entertained Erddig several times with his son or servant (his 'Boy'), was paid a guinea each time by the Yorkes. A third musician, added for a Children's Ball in February 1785, was paid 7 shillings and sixpence. When Jack played with 'his Music' (probably a small band of musicians, although not as large as the 'Band Musick' given 10 guineas during the same trip to Ruthin) the Yorke family paid them 3 ½ guineas.³⁶ James Macdonald, describing his time as a child serving an itinerant blind fiddler in highland Scotland, suggested the gentry paid similar premiums for fiddlers' services there, his master getting 30 shillings playing at a wedding at Castle Roslin.³⁷ At the other end of the social scale, William Shilcock, who fiddled at a tavern booth in Tottenham Fair in 1740, and 'was so drunk, he did not know (what) one Hand (did) from the other', was paid 2s 6d each day.³⁸ Even if the cost of a violin was considerably higher than 5s, it was an accessible expense when considered as a potential source of income. For those in seasonal trades, playing the violin could help provide a livelihood during lean times of year. Matthew Carroll, an Irishman, played the violin in London for much of the year, but was in Essex at harvest-time (when agricultural wages were at their seasonal peak), probably helping with the harvest.³⁹ Building labourer John Dennis, on trial in 1729 for the murder of his wife, brought in a housekeeper who testified to his character by praising his violin playing – whether he played for money or pleasure is unclear, but in an occupation as seasonal as construction, developing an additional occupational skill was a sound investment.⁴⁰

³⁵ Tim Leunig, Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, 'Networks in the Premodern Economy: The Market for London Apprenticeships, 1600–1749', *The Journal of Economic History*, 71, 2 (2011), 413-443, pp. 417-418.

³⁶ Erddig paper D/E/385, commonplace book, Flintshire County Archive, pp. 165, 167, 181, 203, 217.

³⁷ Macdonald, p. 13.

³⁸ *OBPO* t17400903-55.

³⁹ *OBPO* t17650522-26.

⁴⁰ This defence apparently contributed to Dennis's charge being reduced from murder to manslaughter. *OBPO* t17291203-7.

This diversity of performance contexts – from the grand rooms of Erddig and the country estates of Scottish dukes, to tavern booths and labourers’ homes – demonstrates the important flexibility of the violin’s repertory. This is a point which Christopher Marsh makes, suggesting it may underly the violin’s rapid replacement of indigenous bowed string instruments, such as the rebec or crwth, in the seventeenth century.⁴¹ The ability to perform fashionable genteel novelties as well as ancient ballads, local tunes and comic songs made the violin a powerful instrument for the construction of social status. Gentility could be implied through earnest emulation of genteel musical style, or it could be subverted and mocked through knowing manipulation of that style.⁴² Either way, the violin provided a musician with a versatile toolkit which they – and those around them – could manipulate inside and outside of performance to create an appropriate social status.

For instance, in a 1796 Old Bailey case Edward Hickin introduced himself thus:

I am a musician , I play the violin; I live in the Borough, I am servant to Charles Welwin, an apothecary, in St. George's-Fields[.]⁴³

Placing his identity as a musician foremost, despite his service to an apothecary, might be indicative of the nature of Hickin’s employment. During the early modern period, medicine salesmen – including apothecaries – put on elaborate ‘mountebank’ performances to promote their wares;⁴⁴ indeed, one prosecution witness stated that he ‘heard there was a thing going on as a mountebank, jumping and dancing, and tumbling and jumping in sacks’. Yet Hickin was careful to state he played the ‘violin’, rather than the ‘fiddle’, implying a decidedly more elevated relationship to musical performance: Christopher Marsh suggests that in the seventeenth century, the terms usually referred to the same musical instrument, only differentiated by their social function and position. A ‘violin’ was the way genteel amateurs might describe their instrument, while a ‘fiddler’ had a distinct occupational

⁴¹ Marsh, *Music and Society*, pp. 165-167.

⁴² See Chapter 2 for a discussion of ‘emulation’. The reference to ‘knowingness’ is a reference to Peter Bailey’s analysis of comical impersonations in the nineteenth-century music hall, which he considers to be an outgrowth from ballad singing. Peter Bailey, ‘Conspiracies of Meaning: Music-Hall and the Knowingness of Popular Culture’, *Past & Present*, 144 (1994), 138-170, pp. 143-145.

⁴³ *OBPO* t17960217-36.

⁴⁴ See the discussion of mountebank performances in M. A. Katrizky, ‘Marketing Medicine: the Image of the Early Modern Mountebank’, *Renaissance Studies*, 15, 2 (2001), 121-153, especially the fiddling mountebanks, pp.127, 152.

identity, usually referring to a professional reliant on busking at fairs and in public houses.⁴⁵ Even though this performance context, a mountebank in a village public house on the edge of London, would more befit a 'fiddler', Hickin preferred to associate himself with the more refined term. The play *High Life Below Stairs* satirises servants aligning themselves thus with the gentry (even as it thereby satirises the habits of the gentry) – pretension was a constant preoccupation of eighteenth-century comedy.⁴⁶ As an apothecary's servant (which may have involved preparing medicines, as well as household tasks and entertaining at mountebanks), Hickin was a skilled worker rewarded with a good income, personal trust and opportunities for social advancement.⁴⁷ The same was true of the two hairdressers in the audience who were the primary prosecution witnesses. James Macdonald's time as a hairdresser to a nobleman naturally brought him trust and high status, spending so much time intimately proximate with his employer.⁴⁸ The violin, used in so many different social contexts, allowed Hickin to express his ambiguous position between the classes: able to perform in a circus-like mountebank performance, but also able to clothe his musical activities with the language of gentility.

However, realising that liminal social status within a performance space required a violinist (or fiddler) to assert some degree of control over representational space (to use Lefebvre's terminology). Many fiddlers succeeded at exerting that control. For instance, fiddling was used as a means to gain trust in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*: in 1765, itinerant fiddler and farm worker Matthew Carroll is asked to bring his violin to a public house where his friend wishes to conduct an informal hat sale to a brewer's servant: 'he desired me to be there with my fiddle, saying, it might be something in my way'.⁴⁹ This may simply have been to frame Carroll for the theft of the hat, but Carroll acceding to the request implies

⁴⁵ Marsh, *Music and Society*, pp.165-169, 180, 244.

⁴⁶ Gillian Russell, ' "Keeping Place": Servants, Theater and Sociability in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain', *The Eighteenth Century*, 42, 1 (2001), 21-42, pp.23-25.

⁴⁷ The wealth of apothecaries, and the possibility of entering the profession by assisting at the shop, is described in R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman: Being a Compendious View of All the Trades, Professions, Arts, both Liberal and Mechanic, now Practised in the Cities of London and Westminster* (London: T. Gardner, 1747), pp.64-66.

⁴⁸ Proximity to the employer may well have been one of the primary markers of status within the eighteenth-century household. See Meldrum, pp.84-88; Macdonald, p.52.

⁴⁹ See note 39.

there must have been a plausible ostensible motive, such as manipulating the customer's emotions through musical entertainment. Fiddlers who went from public house to public house with their children or servants, such as Thomas Vincent, accused of murder in 1721, would have been skilled in such techniques, since their livelihoods depended on their ability to manipulate audiences into giving them money.⁵⁰

Maximising volume and resonance was one aspect of a violinist's success in producing a profitable space: they needed to be not only audible, but capable of compelling auditors into a spatial order. Iconography provides some clues as to how this might have been achieved. At the very start of his career, Hogarth twice illustrated Samuel Butler's parodic poem *Hudibras*, at the climax of which the pompous titular character confronts an elderly fiddler who is the leader of the town's beggars and miscreants.⁵¹ Engaged in this leadership role, the fiddler is depicted with the right-hand side of the instrument tucked under his chin, angled so that the sound-box is almost vertical, facing outwards towards the auditors. Most of Hogarth's other depictions of solo fiddlers (see Figure 4.1), as well as many images by Laroon the Younger, likewise show a sound-box facing outwards towards the auditors, although all of these depict the musician holding their instruments against their chests, a practice perhaps deriving from hurdy-gurdy playing.⁵²

⁵⁰ OBPO t17210419-41.

⁵¹ Jeremy Barlow, *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth's Musical Imagery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp.109-114.

⁵² Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp. 70, 86, 91, 111-114. Also see Marcellus Laroon the Younger's pencil drawing, *The Hurdy Gurdy Player*, n.d.



Figure 4.1: William Hogarth, 'An Election Entertainment', engraving (1755), the first in his series *The Humours of an Election*. Note the violinist rear centre, with a vertical sound-box facing outwards towards the audience. This is Hogarth's only illustration of a woman playing a violin (and one of very few such eighteenth-century images seen by this researcher).

In terms of fiddling performance practice at Erddig, Cass Meurig identified two images of fiddlers in rural Wales around the turn of the nineteenth century, both of whom also hold the violin in this style: a drawing of entertainments at Aberystwyth Market in 1797, and a painting of a fiddler entertaining a family by Hugh Hughes dating from 1823.⁵³ Presumably based on similar pictorial evidence as well as later traditions, Paul E.W. Roberts also contends that the violin was commonly held in this manner by English fiddlers in this period.⁵⁴ This might be partially explained by artists choosing to show the full curved profile of the instrument so that there might be no ambiguity as to what is depicted. This is a compelling argument with regards to scenes where the violin is only a very small detail,

⁵³ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, pp.x-xi.

⁵⁴ Paul E. W. Roberts, 'English Fiddling 1650-1850: Reconstructing a Lost Idiom', in *Play It Like It Is*, 22-32, p. 23.

such as in many of Hogarth's visually crowded scenes, or in the 1797 illustration of Aberystwyth Market. Laroon the Younger's drawings and sketches of burlesque bands, where a fiddler often holds their instrument in this fashion, are somewhat harder to explain with this hypothesis. Also, all of Laroon's fiddlers, and most of Hogarth's fiddlers, are depicted with their instruments against their chests, when the option to mount them horizontally, with the sound-box still vertical and in full view – as in Hogarth's first depiction of the fiddler in *Hudibras* – also works from the perspective of design clarity.⁵⁵ This method of holding the violin against the chest, with sound-box vertical and facing outwards – which so many fiddlers (as opposed to violinists) are depicted using – sacrifices dexterity, because of the contortion of the left arm necessary to maintain this position. Shifting up the fingerboard would become very difficult, and large shifts almost impossible. It would also affect bowing, making it harder to sustain long notes or slurs due to the position of the right elbow when the violin is close to vertical. However, pointing the sound box out at auditors would maximise the apparent volume, and emphasise resonances and overtones generated by the box, perhaps creating a more bass-rich tone quality.

That fiddling was considered to dominate a space aurally is clear from the contexts in which it was used. Since brass instruments were almost unknown in civilian bands until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and wind bands were either expensive town waits or made up of only occasional semi-professional players,⁵⁶ the violin was often used in large-scale outdoor events. From election campaigns to executions, fiddles were used to draw in auditors from a busy streetscape. It could cut through the early modern soundscape, which Bruce Smith argues was rarely louder than the 70 dB of loud speech.⁵⁷ On Monday, 17 September 1722, one 'Execution day at night', James Barber was on Princes Street, very near to where the gallows stood at Tyburn, standing 'to hear 4 Boys play on the Violin', when his pocket was picked.⁵⁸ The sound of four violins together, however (which is presumably what is meant by '4 boys play[ing] on the Violin'), was loud enough and unusual enough to

⁵⁵ Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp. 114-116, 127.

⁵⁶ Michael J. Lomas, 'Secular Civilian Amateur Wind Bands in Southern England in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries', *The Galpin Society Journal*, 45 (1992), 78-98, pp.79-80, 84.

⁵⁷ Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.58.

⁵⁸ *OBPO* t17221010-27.

command the attention of even somewhat jaded nocturnal urban auditors, whose attitude to street music was frequently ambivalent.⁵⁹ This command of space is probably why William Shilcock was paid a half-crown per day to fiddle at a tavern booth in a marketplace, a quick way to make a temporary space more inviting to patrons without having to invest in a building's fabric or furnishings.⁶⁰

Unlike many means of spatial production, music creates an impression on the mind that endures long after the auditor has left the performance space. For Eliza Haywood, it was the memory of music which was most dangerous to servants:

[Memories of entertainments] are a kind of delicious Poison to the Mind, which pleasingly intoxicates and destroys all Relish for any thing beside... the Music, the Dances, the gay Clothes, and Scenes make too strong an Impression on the Senses, not to leave such Traces behind as are entirely inconsistent either with good Housewifery, or the Duties of your Place.⁶¹

Musical memory is particularly significant because it allowed the power of a performance to endure beyond the immediate space and time it was performed in. It allowed spatial practices – in this case, musical traditions – to stabilise and reproduce themselves, without the consent of the upper echelons of the social hierarchy (who otherwise tried to dominate every facet of social reproduction).⁶² The story of Edmund Neal, executed in 1722 for mugging an elderly man, is told by the Ordinary of Newgate in a style consistent with the tropes of Haywood's discourse. His (second) apprenticeship fell apart, having 'had several Opportunities of wasting his Master's Substance, and was got acquainted with several Fellows and ill Women in the Town, who sollicitd him to feed them at his Master's Expence, while he was half the Night at a Publick House'. His new acquaintances 'whom he had relieved, would not support him',⁶³ so he was easily persuaded to travel to London, falling into service as a brewer's servant, delivering liquor to public houses. Later, he became 'a Drawer of Ale at Sadler's-Wells; upon which, he thought he was at once leapt into

⁵⁹ Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.70.

⁶⁰ See note 38.

⁶¹ Haywood, pp.40-41.

⁶² Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.200.

⁶³ A cautionary tale about the dangers of expecting customary reciprocity from poor company. See Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor, 1780–1870* (Pickering & Chatto, 2013), pp.29-30.

that Life of Pleasure, which he had so long retain'd in his Fancy: For the Thoughts of Musick and Dancing appear'd so very delightful to him, that in the Country, he always thought himself in some other happier World, when he and several young Men and Maids got together in a Barn, with a Fidler, to dance and be merry'.⁶⁴ This memory of musical entertainment acted as Haywood alleged it did, driving Neal's dissatisfaction with his duties as an apprentice. The memory was primarily spatial: it focused upon Neal and his friends' gathering in a barn; the fiddler was an aid to the transformation of this farm building into 'some other happier World', a place of merry companionship, ordered by dance.

Vernacular performance on the violin was often inseparable from dance, which itself is a spatial practice. 'Country dances' constitute a large part of every manuscript violin tune-book, and very few violin methods were sold without a set of dance tunes at the back.⁶⁵ The spatial aspect of these dances is made clear firstly by iconography, which shows dancers arranged in sociable circles, formalised longways lines, and every arrangement in between; and secondly by the instructions, which rearrange dancers within a spatial ambit, creating different forms and shapes and flows. For instance, the fifth of Thomas Cahusac's 1785 country dance collection, 'Trip to the Lodge' (Figure 4.2a) has one of the more detailed instructions I have come across in any of Cahusac's affordable 'country dance' collections (often priced at 6d. for a group of 12 or 24), reminiscent of the more comprehensive outlines which Playford provided a century earlier. That may be because its design is less familiar than those which could be described in a few words of condensed dance shorthand. It is quite similar to the 'longwayes for six' dances which Playford described, such as 'The Night Peece' (Figure 4.2b), but the different language used is an indication of the ways in which gender and sexuality were performed through dance. In both contexts, ladies and gentlemen, separated or alternated, encountered each other through brief and strictly delimited coupling – in an explicitly spatial fashion. The arrangement of the dance is visually outlined by Playford with three suns – for the three women – coupled with three

⁶⁴ OBPO, *Ordinary of Newgate's Account*, December 1722 (OA17221231).

⁶⁵ Francesco Geminiani's Opus 9, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751), is one of the few exceptions; even his previous pedagogical treatises, Opus 8, *Rules for Playing in a True Taste*, Op.8 (London, n.d.) and *A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* (London, 1749) use arrangements of Scottish 'airs' and dances as examples.

moons, for the three men, arranged in two rows. In contrast, in Cahusac's dance, the ladies have their 'own' side and the gentlemen the 'other' side; perhaps a reflection of the alleged change in the concept of gender (see Chapter 5) from being humoral opposites (since the sun and moon have opposite humoral properties) to being incommensurably different (an 'other').⁶⁶ Yet the Cahusac dance, with the inverted but symmetrical footwork the ladies and gentleman undertake before partnering, shows the degree to which these two frameworks coexisted, even at the end of the eighteenth century.

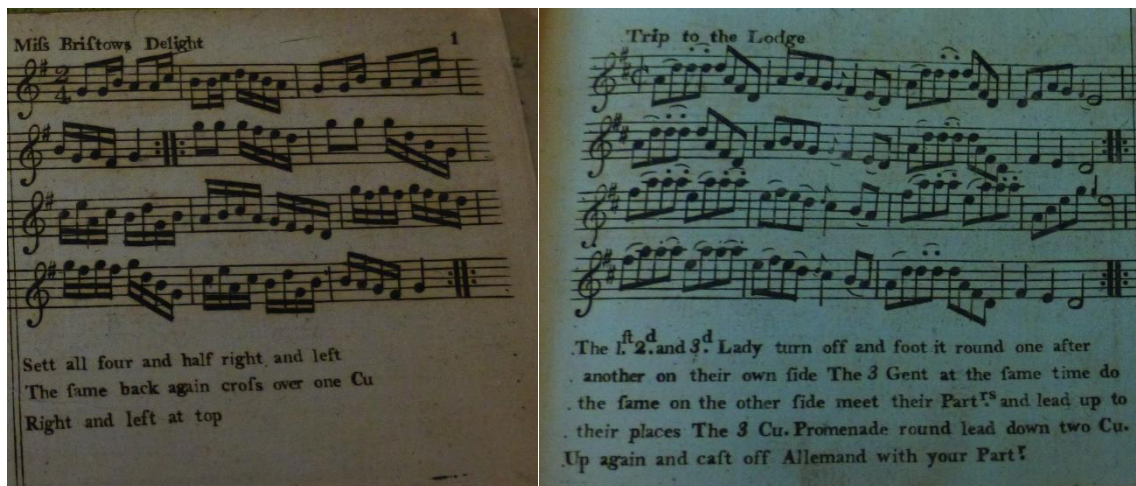




Figure 4.2a: Tunes 2 and 5 from Thomas Cahusac's collection, *Twenty-Four Country Dances for the Year 1785*, probably priced at 6d. like his other collections. Each tune takes up half a page in these collections, with each oblong octavo page a practical and portable size for working musicians. All Cahusac dances are found under British Library shelf mark (Music Collections) a.248.(1-3, 6-9, 11-12).

⁶⁶ Michael McKeon, 'The Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Sexuality Hypothesis', *Signs*, 37/4 (2012), 791-801, pp.792-793. Indeed, later eighteenth-century editions of Playford invert the significance of moon and sun, speaking to a radical shift in gender ideology.

(3)

The Night Peece Longwayes for six 



Leade up a D. forwards and back. • That againe •	The middle Cu. fall back and slip up, while the first and last Cu. change places. That againe. That againe •
Sides all • That againe •	First Cu. crosse over, fall into the 2. place, crosse againe, fall into the last, the next Cu. as much, the next Cu. as much •
Armes all • That againe •	First man change places with the 2. Wo. first Wo. change with the 2. man, while the last changes with his owne : Then change with the last Wo. your Wo. change with the last man, while the other changes with his owne : Set all and turne single. •

B 2

Figure 4.2b: 'The Night Peece', page 3 from Playford's 1651 edition of *The English Dancing Master: or, Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances*, which continued to be reprinted in different forms well into the eighteenth century (London: Playford, 1651, p. 3).

The dance's arrangement also speaks to the intersection of gender and class performance. The focus of the room is directed to three couples, described as the 'first', 'last' and 'middle' by Playford, but hierarchically ranked as 'the' 1st, 2nd and 3rd by Cahusac. The increasing importance of cementing class hierarchy through these dances is also reflected by the change from 'man' and 'woman' to 'ladies' and 'gentlemen'. Leppert alleges that the circulatory movement of partners in dances like this created a kind of egalitarianism, yet nominal equality merely allowed the teleological hierarchies formed by the dance's operation to be naturalised and made agreeable.⁶⁷ Both dances invoke the concept of a couple's or an individual's 'place', which has profound symbolism in contemporary social theory, in which 'place' represented an immutable social position, with attendant duties and rights, dispensed by divine Providence.⁶⁸ The frequent exchanging of places and circulation of the dance is a mere catharsis, a symbolic staging of apparent equality (as with nominal 'equality before the law' in the theatre of the contemporary courthouse), through which the superiority of the better-born and better-bred would inevitably emerge. This discourse is

⁶⁷ Leppert, *Music and Image*, pp.94-97.

⁶⁸ 'To be Rich or Poor, to Rule or Serve, to be Male or Female, to be Layman or Priest, Marriage or a Single Life, Sicknes or Health; to be Parent or Child, Old or Young, are Conditions which God has promiscuously dealt out as his Wisdom sees proper; which have each of 'em, so long as we sustain the Characters that belong to us, a suitable Department, which is comely and ornamental, and the want of it, shocking and indecent.' Thomas Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* (London: Tim Goodwin, 1720), p. 2.

often affectionately satirised by artist Thomas Rowlandson in his depiction of country dances, even as he reifies its fundamental premises.⁶⁹ 'Trip to the Lodge', then, produces a spatial representation and rationalisation of social tensions, entrained and organised by the fiddler and the tune they played, and commanded by the 'caller' of the dance.

The spatial arrangement of how the tunes are presented in printed collections also appears to have been a priority. 'Trip to the Lodge's instructions are unusual for the way the different phases of the dance are not given a line each, perhaps due to space constraints. Normally, as with the dance 'Miss Bristow's Delight' from the same collection (Figure 4.2a), the instructions for each phase are separated by line breaks, a convention dating back to Playford. 'Trip to the Lodge' does, however, show Cahusac's preferred spatial organisation of the musical notation itself, with each 4-bar phrase of the AABB phrase structure given its own system, in a way which makes repetitions and cadence points immediately visible. Those which are not, such as 'Miss Bristow's Delight', either have an unusual phrase structure or, as in this case, a high density of semiquavers which necessitated more expansive engraving. The spatialising of phrase structure on the page is an indication that the temporal organisation of these dance tunes might have been a priority for fiddlers and printers alike.

This section has shown that vernacular fiddling was an accessible and flexible technology for both servants (especially male servants) and musicians whom servants might encounter. In addition, dancing was clearly very strongly associated with fiddling, both in terms of its repertory (where dance tunes predominated) and even how it was arranged on the page. In the following section dance tunes will be analysed closely for evidence of how they might have been performed in venues like Erddig, where 'Jack the Turner' played in the 1780s (see Chapter 2).

⁶⁹ See note 67.

Fiddle Tunes and Temporal Organisation at Erddig

As described in Chapter 2, three distinct forms of musical activity were recorded at Erddig in the eighteenth century: the dances described by H. Grove in 1749, the itinerant harpists who received payments during the 1770s, and the performances by 'Jack the Turner' during the 1780s. The earlier dances probably took place in what is now the Entrance Hall, and was simply the 'Hall' until Philip Yorke's reorganisation of the house. The harpist is not relevant to the subject of this chapter, except as evidence of alternatives to the fiddle as accompaniments to Welsh vernacular music well into the late eighteenth century. The later dances, those about which we have the most evidence, could have taken place either in the entrance hall, the saloon, or the dining room, depending on the desired level of intimacy implied with the Yorke family and the scale of the event. Regardless, it seems likely that servants would have been present in some capacity, as they were at the children's performance of *Henry V* at Erddig in January 1786.⁷⁰

This section will explore some of the musical features likely to have been present during Jack the Turner's performances, and explain how the ways these fiddle tunes organised time might have related to the spatial practices of both dance and song. Insights into this will come from 35 tunes from Cass Meurig's complete transcription of the Alawon John Thomas tune-book, dated 1752.⁷¹ As with all of the tunes analysed in this section, the initial samples were selected from the tune-books using a random number generator, to ensure that no one particular musical form dominated my attention. Cass Meurig believes that John Thomas was probably 'a retainer or regular employee of the local great house' (like Jack the Turner at Erddig), since he clearly had temporary access to several printed music books such as Walsh's *Caledonian Country Dances* Volume 2 (1737). This is certainly a good explanation for John Thomas's high musical literacy and broad repertory, which juxtaposes orally-transmitted songs and dances with those probably derived from print sources.⁷² However, informal networks of book borrowing among musicians is also a possibility, since

⁷⁰ Eric Griffiths, *Philip Yorke I, Squire of Erthig* (Wrexham: Bridge Books, 1995), p.171.

⁷¹ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*.

⁷² Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.v.

such borrowing of other kinds of book is well-attested, especially in Scotland.⁷³ Meurig has been able to locate John Thomas within north-east Wales due to the specific dialect of Welsh in which two prose sections of the tune-book were written. This places John Thomas in the same region as Erddig, meaning he shared in similar networks of cultural transmission as the servants discussed in Chapter 2. John Thomas's tunebook also has the advantage of being very extensive, and unusually, having the same tune notated multiple times, often in radically different ways.

John Thomas's access to music published in London suggests that an examination of printed 'country dances' would also be a useful supplement to understanding fiddling practice in north-east Wales, reflecting the kinds of collection from which fiddlers might have drawn repertory or inspiration. 17 tunes from 120 country dances, published between 1785 and 1794 by Cahusac, a St. Clement Danes music publisher, will be examined, not only for their interest in their own right as evidence of the rich musical soundscape of St Clement Danes, but also as models of the kinds of dance that might have enriched north-east Welsh fiddlers' repertories by the time of Jack the Turner. Indeed, the title pages of the Cahusac dance collections indicate some degree of regional distribution. The first 1785 collection was jointly published by Cahusac and a Manchester publisher, and the British Library's exemplar of the 1792 collection of dances with bass has a pasted-on retailer's label (with an early nineteenth-century typography) indicating it was being sold by 'Mudge & Sons TRURO'.⁷⁴ They are also almost indistinguishable from innumerable other short, cheap collections of 'country dances' published from the second quarter of the eighteenth century onwards until well into the nineteenth century. Those Cahusac collections which bear printed prices cost 6d for a book of 24 tunes or 12 tunes with bass, half the cost of the cheapest theatre tickets, and collections like these could be shared with other musicians, or resold, meaning that these small-format books were both practical and likely to be accessible for those vernacular fiddlers who could read music.

⁷³ Ibid., p.iv; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale UP), pp.16-17, 21, 59.

⁷⁴ All of the tunes examined in this sample come from a single collected volume, British Library (Music Collections) a.248.(1-3, 6-9, 11-12).

Finally, representing a kind of midpoint between urban printed collections of Cahusac, and John Thomas the rural fiddler's working tune-book, lies the 'Kitty Bridges' tune-book, 16 of whose 21 tunes are here analysed, a manuscript volume dated 1745 residing in (and digitised by) the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.⁷⁵ The 'Kitty Bridges' tune-book is so named because of the acrostic poem – in consistent handwriting with the contents of the volume – which graces its inside cover:

Kind Cupid now a Swain inspire
In softest Numbers tell my Care
Teach me to paint my Souls desire
To sigh the Absence of the Fair
Ye Birds that wanton in the Air

Bear me to Windsor's happy Shade
Retir'd from Noise Oh let me there
In Raptures view my lovely Maid
Dispell'd shall be each gloomy thought
Gay in her Presence I shall prove
Each purling Stream each mossy Grot
Shall Echo out how fond I love.⁷⁶

It would not be absurd to assume this collection's scribe therefore has a geographical connection to Windsor. If the 'Kitty Bridges' tune-book does indeed come from the Windsor area, it comes from a region saturated with cultural and economic influence from London: whether the scribe copied it for their own music-making or someone else's practice, at least 1 in 4 of that musician's audience would likely have lived in London at some stage of their lives.⁷⁷ As such, the 'Kitty Bridges' tune-book may provide a rare insight into the repertory of urban vernacular fiddlers like the fictional 'Fiddling Footman' who lends his name to my thesis, but also an additional insight into the processes of circulation and copying which allowed John Thomas to produce a tune-book rich in music that originated in London.

⁷⁵ From *Historic Dance and Tune Books* (<https://www.vwml.org/topics/historic-dance-and-tune-books>, accessed 13.05.2020); Vaughan Williams Memorial Library shelfmark QS 35.4.

⁷⁶ This verse was composed by an individual – poetic convention would suggest that the 'Swain' inspired to write this verse is a man – to celebrate a love interest, Kitty (Katherine) Bridges. It is clearly inspired by classical poetry and imagery, but this certainly does not rule out authorship by someone of modest social status, as the maidservant poets (some of whom wrote stylish heroic blank verse on learned themes) demonstrate (Steedman, pp. 287, 290-293).

⁷⁷ Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp.2-4.

The rest of the tune-book is probably a manuscript copy of a print collection – the inner title reads ‘A Select Collection of Country Dances 1745’, which sounds very much more like the title of a pre-existing printed collection than an expansive *aide memoire* for a fiddler’s amassed repertory. This impression is reinforced by the neatly presented index page, in which the first 20 tune names appear to have been written out continuously. A twenty-first tune, ‘Alister’, appears after an ornamental curlicue, in the same hand but a noticeably different pen. Since eighteenth-century musical collections were commonly organised into multiples of four or six pieces (this convention being so strong that John Walsh concocted at least two flute sonatas to bring G. F. Handel’s collection of violin sonatas up to 12),⁷⁸ the likelihood is that the twenty-first tune is either original or originated in a different source from the first 20. The neatness of the notation and the consistency of ornamentation in tunes such as ‘Drops of Brandy’ and ‘Paw Paw’ also, although less conclusively, suggest that the remaining tunes were probably copied from a printed source. As such, it represents once again an intermediate step between Cahusac’s printed tunes and the rich manuscript collection of John Thomas.

One prose treatise in John Thomas’s tune-book, intriguingly, appears to be a word-for-word Welsh translation of the music-theoretical elements of a printed violin method, probably a close derivation of a 1722 violin method published in London.⁷⁹ Cahusac had also published violoncello, oboe and flute methods, and perhaps a violin method too, with formulaic content that had barely altered from similar methods published 50 years earlier. In these instrumental methods there is often an emphasis on reading music, interpreting ornamentation, a cursory (and often misleading) instruction on how to ‘grip’ the violin and bow, a fingering chart, and in most cases, instructions on how to beat time correctly with one’s foot (Figure 4.3). The priority placed on this demonstrates the extent to which musical time was understood as an inherently embodied, even gestural means of ‘dividing Time’.

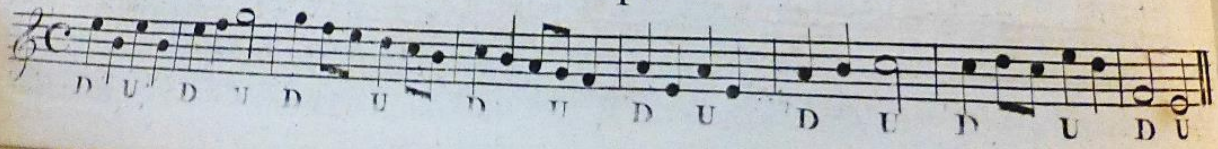
⁷⁸ Terence Best, ‘Preface’, from *Händel: Sämtliche Werke für Violine und Basso Continuo* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2002), pp.x-xii.

⁷⁹ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.iv.

Of beating Time. -

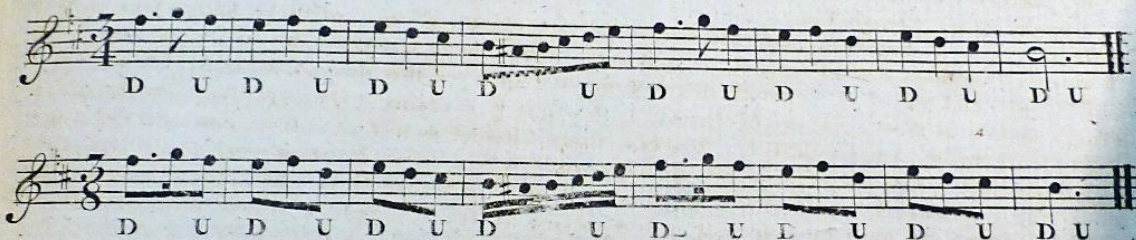
In Common Time where any of these marks are set C , C , C , D or $\frac{2}{4}$ Foot must go down at the beginning of every Bar and rise at the half or middle of the Bar; as in the following Example where the letter D shews where it must go down; and the letter U where it must rise.

Example.



In Tripple Time, where any of these marks are set $\frac{3}{4}$, the Foot must go down with the first, and rise with the third.

Examples.



The same rule serves for $\frac{9}{8}$ which sometimes occurs for there the Foot must keep down at the first six, and rise at the three last where you see these marks $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{12}{8}$ your Foot must go down at the beginning, and rise in the middle, it being as Common Time half up and half down.

In beating Time, the heel of your Foot should be kept down, to avoid making a disagreeable noise, the Toe being sufficient and genteel for dividing Time.

Figure 4.3: Instructions on how to correctly beat time, taken from Cahusac's *Compleat Tutor for the German Flute*, (London: T. Cahusac, [1766]). British Library, shelf mark (Music Collections) b.170.b.(1.). Almost identical instructions appear in many eighteenth-century violin methods, such as fellow St. Clement Danes publisher John Preston's *Entire New and Compleat Tutor for the Violin* (London: J. Preston, n.d. [1781-1789]), or Robert Crome's considerably earlier *The Fiddle New Model'd* (London: J. Tyther, n.d.[c. 1746]).

This emphasis on temporal organisation is also implicit in how John Thomas recalls and adapts tunes. Many of John Thomas's tunes also derive from London publications, some directly copied (according to Meurig) from sources printed in London between 1718 and 1756, and others notated in a way which suggests John Thomas learned them aurally.⁸⁰ One example of the latter is the 'Black Joak', an oft-reprinted ballad with extremely obscene lyrics which Paul Dennant traces back to a 1720 London print, although some undated prints he concedes may well be earlier.⁸¹ All of the print copies of the 'Black Joak' tune which Dennant

⁸⁰ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.v.

⁸¹ Paul Dennant, 'The "Barbarous Old English Jig": The 'Black Joke' in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Folk Music Journal*, 10, 3 (2013), 298-318, pp.299, 305-307.

found – as well as most of the derivative ‘Joak’ tunes attached to different colours (such as the ‘White Joak’ and ‘Yellow Joak’) – maintained the distinctive 6 bar opening and closing phrases.⁸² John Thomas’s rendition of the tune also maintains the phrase structure, as well as much of the melodic contour.



Figure 4.4a: From Daniel Wright’s *Compleat Collection of Celebrated Country Dances*, which was probably printed around 1715 and thus the earliest-dated extant version of the ‘Black Joak’ tune. All versions except the John Thomas tune have been notated and transcribed by Paul Dennant, in ‘The “Barbarous Old English Jig”’, pp. 299-300, 306.



Figure 4.4b: The ‘Black Joak’ tune as rendered in ‘*The Original Black Joke, Sent from Dublin*’, 1720.



Figure 4.4c: As printed in ‘*The Original Coal-Black Joak*’, c. 1730.

⁸² Dennant, ‘The “Barbarous Old English Jig”’, pp.307-309. Note that Dennant is unaware of any Welsh exemplars of the Black Joak.



Figure 4.4d: As reprinted in Walsh's *Third Book of Celebrated Jigs*, perhaps the most similar version to John Thomas's.

400. Black Joak fols. 37r, 73r

Figure 4.4e: John Thomas's rendition of the tune, transcribed by Cass Meurig, (*Alawon John Thomas*, p. 119).

These different versions of the tune, although not connected to any specific dance or dance form, maintain the phrase structure perfectly: a distinctive 6-bar opening phrase, comprising an initial bar, then three bars of a loosely sequential pattern, then ending with two-bar refrain which outlines a cadence on the first scale degree; a less unusual 4-bar phrase comprised of two repetitions of a 2-bar block, ending on the fifth scale degree; then a 6-bar phrase which echoes the first, apart from the initial bar, which is replaced with a descending sequence based around the interval of a sixth. John Thomas removes – or at least does not notate – the dotted rhythms, but most of his alterations involve strengthening the sequential elements of the initial phrase. The anacrusis to bar 2 is uniquely modified to resemble that of the next three bars; the only other source to make bar 2 an exact transposition of bars 3 and 4 is from Daniel Wright's collection of dances. Along with bar 1, bar 11 is the greatest point of divergence between the different sources, which is unsurprising because these two bars are the only material which is not repeated. 'The Original Coal-Black Joak' even discards the sequential descending sixths. John Thomas's

version reorders the notes in bar 11, and modifies the beginning of bar 12, in a way which suggests he understands the descending sequence, and indeed extends it: it can still be read as two parallel voices, harmonised in sixths, with the top line descending a'' to g'' , and the bottom line descending c'' to b' . Thomas's unique modification of bar 12 in fact extends this sequence, descending down to $f\#''$ and a' , helping to recreate the exciting string-crossing feel of other versions of bar 11 without requiring so much dexterity. In Thomas's rendition, the bow would play on the E string for the first beat of bar 11, the A string for the second beat, then the E string for the first beat of bar 12 and the A and D strings for the second beat, with only that final string change requiring string crossing within a beat. In contrast, the printed versions require the final quaver of each beat to be played on the E string while the first two quavers of each beat are played on the A string. If John Thomas, or perhaps the fiddler(s) he heard the tune from, were holding his violin against his chest, angled vertically downwards, the dexterity of his right elbow would be severely compromised, meaning that string crossing of this rapidity would be more difficult to execute consistently. Cass Meurig agrees with this interpretation of John Thomas's adaptation of tunes, suggesting that those tunes which show signs of aural transmission (as opposed to direct copy from a printed collection) are generally 'more easily playable on the fiddle ... [they] use passing notes and linear sequences to avoid arpeggios, reduce large intervals and simplify difficult rhythmic passages'.⁸³ The adaptation of the tune memorialised in John Thomas's tune-book does take some liberties, then, to reflect his capabilities and needs as a vernacular fiddler; yet nevertheless the repetitive sequences and patterns of cadences and phrases remains, a reflection of the importance of these elements.

Across the three sources of tunes, although the importance of temporal markers such as cadence points and repetitive sequences always appears high, there appear to be different temporal schema, distinct ways of organising rhythm, melody and phrase, co-existing. For instance, some of John Thomas's older tunes conform to Christopher Marsh's characterisation that ballad tunes of the seventeenth century had very little repetition, and were often very varied in terms of phrase structure.⁸⁴ Among my sample of 35 tunes, 'Cow

⁸³ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.vi.

⁸⁴ Marsh, *Music and Society*, pp.236-238.

Heel' stands out as answering best to Marsh's description. It is a tune attested to in North Welsh gentleman Richard Morris's 1717 list of tunes he knew how to play on the fiddle, a 1742 publication by J. Parry called *Antient British Music*, as well as an antiquarian London publication from the end of the century, Edward Jones's *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (1794).⁸⁵ This contemporary antiquarian interest may indicate the tune's age.

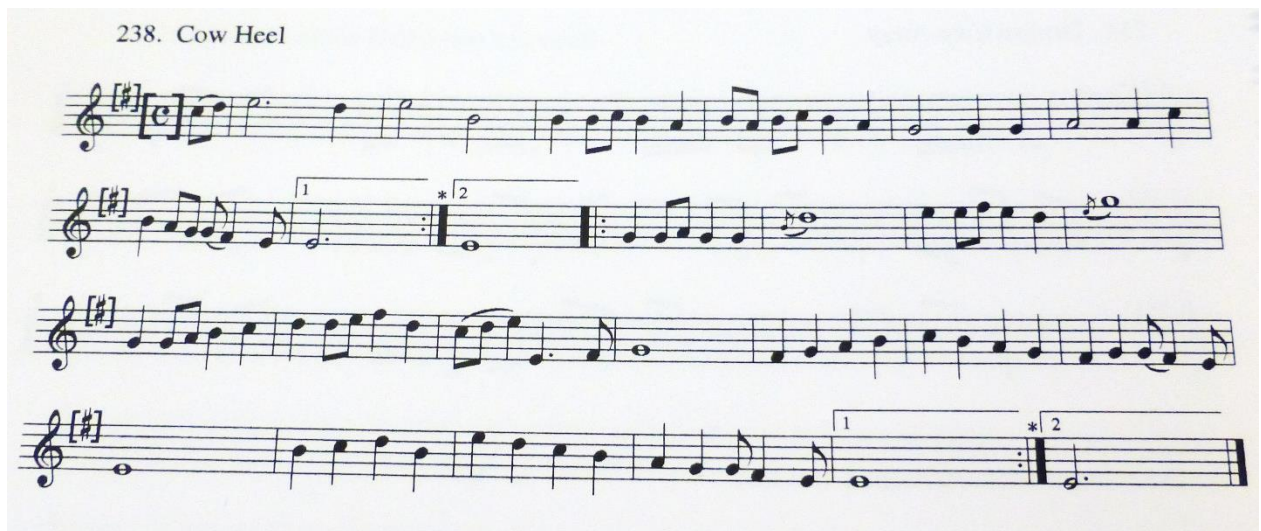


Figure 4.5: 'Cow Heel', as notated in John Thomas's tune-book and transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, p.74).

Unlike later tunes, 'Cow Heel' (Figure 4.5) has a temporal structure loosely defined in terms of repeated melodic patterns, cadence points and phrase length. 'Cow Heel' has some rhythmic motifs which recur, most notably: the pattern of the third bar, which is echoed in bars 4, 9, 11, 13 and 14; and the mildly syncopated rhythm of bar 7, which occurs again in bars 19 and 23. Such repetition of short motives is an extremely important mnemonic device, and has been used in melodies since the earliest days of musical notation; indeed, such patterns may have been added dynamically as a fiddler's improvised ornaments.⁸⁶ Certainly, as structural devices, they undermine other aspects of phrase structure: the first of these two recurring patterns is used in several different contexts in the

⁸⁵ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.138.

⁸⁶ For example, see Susan Rankin's study of songs – *conductus* – in 13th-century Parisian manuscript F. Susan Rankin, 'Some Medieval Songs', *Early Music*, 31, 3 (2003), 326-344, p.332. Also see William Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance 1651-1728' (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1984), p.66.

phrases it appears within, and no consistent pattern of pitches is attached to it. The second recurring rhythmic pattern, in contrast, does have a broadly consistent pitch pattern attached to it, and performs the same cadential function in the three different phrases it appears within. In terms of the pitches, there is a notable lack of repetitive or regular sequences, even when, as in bars 9-12, there is an expectation set up by rhythmic cells which mirror each other. The same occurs in bars 17-24, when the melodic contours and interval sets of these two rhythmically identical 4-bar phrases are entirely inconsistent. This sets this tune apart from many others in the John Thomas tune-book as one whose musical logic is probably more strongly tied to the voice than the violin.⁸⁷ There are in fact four recorded *carolau* (vernacular Welsh vocal forms similar to ballads) sung to this tune in a 1738 list.⁸⁸ The syllabic demands of a text explain, and probably helped musicians to memorise, the complex and irregular rhythms of the tune; precise pitch intervals are not intuitively understood when singing as they are on a violin, so the rhythmic echoes would have been mnemonically useful, even if they did not represent logical pitch sequences.

Early nineteenth-century dance tutors described the difficulty of arranging such older tunes, more proximate to song, for country dances.⁸⁹ Already, by the eighteenth century, they required tunes which could be arranged into 8-bar 'strains' (for example, by repeating a four bar phrase, or treating each bar as a two-bar unit, or conversely each bar as only a half-bar).⁹⁰ In most eighteenth-century dances, for instance, the 'leading' figure (e.g. 'Lead up to the top and cast off one couple' in Figure 4.6, or 'Lead down the middle up again and cast off' in Figure 4.8), which is the primary means by which couples exchanged places, required 8 bars of music. This was a highly dynamic, spatial motion in which the leading couple moved all the way up, down, or up *and* down the dancing couples (the 'set'). In the last decade of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, this was

⁸⁷ As Macpherson describes, 'originat[ing] outside the dance repertoire' is one of the two principal causes of 'phrasal asymmetry'. Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance', p.255.

⁸⁸ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.138.

⁸⁹ Thomas Wilson, *The Complete System of English Country Dancing* (London: Sherwood, Neeley and Jones, n.d.), pp.280-281. Quoted in Paul Cooper, 'Regency Era Country Dances - Music', *RegencyDances.org* (www.regencydances.org/paper017.php, accessed 03/08/2020).

⁹⁰ John Cherry, *A Treatise on the Art of Dancing in the Ball Room* (London: John Cherry, n.d. [c. 1810]), p.vi. Quoted by Paul Cooper as above. Also see Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance', p.84.

simplified such that the figure only required 4 bars, but in either case, strong, regular phrasing would be needed to synchronise and regulate this dance movement.⁹¹

This specific requirement of dance music may have encouraged the development of the second temporal mode in evidence across these dances, a common phrase structure that appears to have been widely prevalent throughout the eighteenth century, from Playford onwards, and present in all three sources examined here (especially the Cahusac dances, almost all of which conform to it).⁹² This form (represented by Figs. 4.6-4.8) is generally composed of four clear phrases of 2, 4 or 8 bars, often divided into a binary structure either by a double barline or a strong cadence in the first scale degree. This is similar to Macpherson's 1984 characterisation of the earlier country dance repertory (1651-1728) of tunes being structured into 8-bar 'strains' divided into 2, 4 or, occasionally, 3 bar phrases.⁹³ The first half, or 'strain', is often comprised of two *verbatim* repetitions of a melodic phrase, the first with a cadence on the fifth scale degree, and the second with a cadence on the first degree. The second half uses either one phrase of new material and a further repetition (or reminiscence) of the first half, or two phrases which mirror or echo each other, divided by a weak cadence on the fifth or second scale degree – an AABA structure described as 'return form' by Macpherson.⁹⁴ The new material added in the second half usually has a descending or ascending intervallic sequence, with a repeated intervallic pattern either a bar or a beat long. This intervallic sequence often appears at the same time as the 'leading' figure is called, as is made clear by the highly intentional typesetting of Figure 4.8, where 'Lead down ...' is set in the middle of the line, despite ample room for putting such instructions on their own line, to mirror the position of the double barline after which the intervallic pattern begins.

⁹¹ Paul Cooper, 'Regency Era Country Dances – Figures', *RegencyDances.org* (www.regencydances.org/paper016.php, accessed 19/01/2021).

⁹² See also Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance', p.263, for an alternative description of this common structure.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.252-253.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.67, 75.

(5)

The Kentish Crickets.

The Kentish Crickets.

Hands across quite round with the
 2^d. Coupl^e. then back again, cross over two
 Coupl^e. Lead up to the top and cast off
 one couple, set at corners and lead
 out at the sides

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Figure 4.6: 'The Kentish Crickets', the fifth tune in the 'Kitty Bridges' manuscript (full title: A Select Collection of Country Dances, 1745), digitally available through the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library website: see www.vwml.org/topics/historic-dance-and-tune-books, link valid 03/08/2020.



Figure 4.7: 'Anything, or Sunday Morning', from the John Thomas tune-book, transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, p.85).

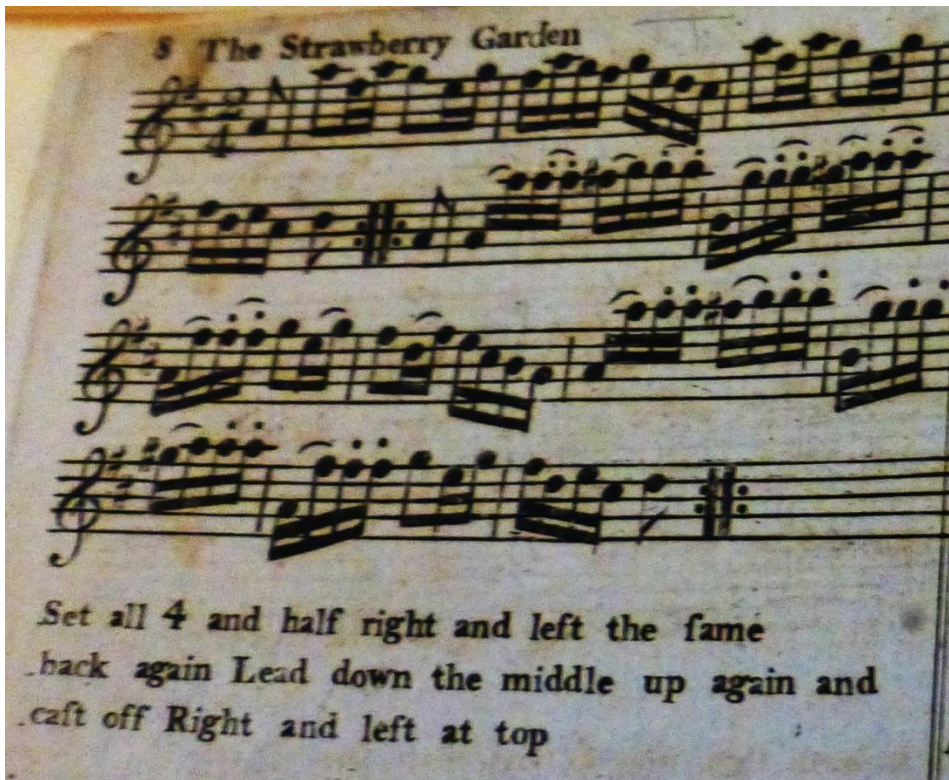


Figure 4.8: 'The Strawberry Garden', the fifteenth tune from the 1785 Cahusac collection. Also note that the example quoted earlier, 'Trip to the Lodge', also conforms to this plan.

In tunes which conform to this phrase structure, and in several others with variant structures, there is a clear sense of phrases being constructed from two-bar or two-beat blocks. Indeed, in some tunes, there is little sense of an over-arching phrase beyond these two-bar blocks, such as in 'O'er the Hill and Away', a jig printed several times in the first half of the eighteenth century (including by Walsh in 1737), and copied by John Thomas

(Figure 4.8).⁹⁵ This tune also demonstrates how the weak cadences on the fifth scale degree could be disguised (in this case, through arpeggiation and implicit anacrusis) to the point of barely being recognisable, allowing a fiddler to inflect a more continuous and unpredictable flow than the regular cadence points of this phrase structure would indicate. This might be useful to accompany dance figures which took fully 8 bars, in order to avoid confusing dancers with stronger intermediate cadences after 2 or 4 bars.



Figure 4.9: 'O'er the Hill and Away', from the John Thomas tune-book, transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, p.84).

Likewise, from the 'Kitty Bridges' tune-book, in 'Quite Prodigious', below, an atypical B-section is likely related to the apparent absence of the 'leading' dance figure. Instead, this dance uses several smaller iterative movements to rotate couples, such as 'set[ting] to', a front-to-back or side-to-side motion that usually takes two bars; as well as instructions to 'fall down', 'slip up' and 'slip down', seemingly a reference to repositioning oneself with reference to other couples. These smaller motions might be reflected in the construction of this dance from small repeated units. A two-beat rhythmic cell is repeated three times to generate the second phrase of the A section, while the entire B section is generated from two two-beat rhythmic cells. The first of these is four scalic semiquavers followed by two quavers (which I will designate 'x'), and the second, a crotchet followed by two quavers (which I will designate 'y'). Other than four quavers which set up the final cadence ('N'), these two rhythmic cells are repeated to create the entire B section:

| x y | y x | x N | x (final) |

⁹⁵ John Walsh, *Caledonian Country Dances*, Vol. 2 (London: J. Walsh, 1737); Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.160.

Although the four semiquavers in 'x' are always the same relative pitch pattern, the four iterations of 'x' have a very loose relationship to each other in terms of pitch – there is no suggestion of a pitch sequence, and the different pitches attached to 'x' have different structural functions within the phrase. The introduction of 'y' interrupts these repetitions and also creates a continuity across a bar-line sufficiently strong to weaken the sense of the measure. Unlike 'Cow Heel', this is a dance rather than a song, with the two-beat cells inherently easy to arrange into 8-bar 'strains', and with arpeggiated intervals and semiquaver turns that would be difficult to sing (and break every contemporary rule of vocal writing).⁹⁶ Instead, the irregular intra-phrase structure of 'Quite Prodigious', although challenging to the musical memory of a fiddler – it would be very easy to play too many or too few iterations of 'y', or play the second and third iterations of 'x' at the wrong pitch – might have been a deliberate choice, to accompany a particularly distinctive dance.

⁹⁶ Contemporary rules for melodic intervals in vocal parts are given in Johann Joseph Fux, ed. and trans. Alfred Mann, *The Study of Counterpoint: from Johann Joseph Fux's Gradus ad Parnassum* (New York: W. W. Norton [1943, 1965], 1971), p. 27 (footnote).

(9)

Quite Prodigious

Quite Prodigious.

Set to your Part: and turn, then to the
 2^d. Womⁿ. your Part: to the 2^d. Man and
 turn, Fall down two Coupl^s. you on the Wom.
 side your Part: on the Man's Slip up into
 your Places then slip down one Coupl^s.



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Figure 4.10: 'Quite Prodigious', the 9th tune from the 'Kitty Bridges' manuscript.

John Thomas's tune-book shows considerable evidence of tunes being reshaped to fit the temporal modality of dance, and in particular, the common phrase structure plan outlined earlier. It corroborates Macpherson's analysis of printed country dance tune-books of the early eighteenth century which also display a shift in dances' structure around the period when Thomas was collecting his tunes.⁹⁷ The sixteenth-century tune 'Greensleeves', for instance, was adapted (by Thomas among other eighteenth-century witnesses) into a form perfectly in keeping with the common phrase structure, and its modality adapted to fit

⁹⁷ Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance', p.75.

a minor scale (see Figure 4.11).⁹⁸ Likewise, when John Thomas altered ‘Foot’s Vagaries’ into ‘Green Grow’ (see Figure 4.12), he ensured it fitted more closely into the paradigm of the common phrase structure, introducing an ascending sequence into the third phrase, and ensuring it ended on an imperfect, rather than perfect, cadence.⁹⁹ With the tunes which Thomas notates multiple times, even the most drastic transformations rarely affect phrase length, cadences, sequences, and repetitions. These are the very same elements which become structural when viewed in the paradigm of the common tune plan detailed earlier. The two different versions of ‘Consêt Arglywyddes Owen’ (Figure 4.13) employ entirely different 8-bar third phrases, entirely different in terms of pitch, with no similarities of contour or scale degree. Yet both are composed of a repeated four-bar segment which cadences on the fifth scale degree, and Thomas adapts the beginning of the fourth phrase to ensure it echoes the beginning of the third phrase accurately. The structural difference between the two – the much more strongly demarcated cadences every four bars in the second version of the third phrase – would imply that perhaps the tune was adapted for a dance where four-bar figures were being used instead of an eight-bar figure, and thus stronger temporal signals were required to regulate the dance.

116. Greensleeves



⁹⁸ Tunes which are clearly notated within a different modal scale, such as ‘Obsidon’ and ‘Bread and Cheese’, are present within the John Thomas tune-book but rare, and restricted to older tunes. Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, pp.21, 89. For more on the tonality/modality of early tunes, see McPherson, ‘The Music of the English Country Dance’, p.69.

⁹⁹ Thomas has also modified the harmonic implications of the tune, with the initial appoggiatura implying the chord of G major rather than E minor; the imperfect cadence in the third phrase ends on *d'*, which would be the fifth degree of the scale of G major, and Thomas also ends the tune on *a'*, which makes more sense as the second degree of G major than as the fourth degree of E minor.

Figure 4.11: 'Greensleeves', as notated by John Thomas and transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, p.36).

1. Foot's Vagaries (see 176) fol. 10r

The musical score for 'Foot's Vagaries' is presented on two staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in a single treble clef. The first staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, and C5. The second staff continues with eighth notes D5, E5, and F#5, followed by a trill (tr) on G5. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign, marked with an asterisk (*).

176. Green Grow 20 (see 1) fol. 57v

The musical score for 'Green Grow 20' is presented on three staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in a single treble clef. The first staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The second staff continues with quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5, followed by a double bar line and a repeat sign, marked with an asterisk (*). The third staff continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, followed by quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5, and concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign, marked with an asterisk (*).

Figure 4.12: 'Foot's Vagaries' and 'Green Grow', as notated by John Thomas and transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, pp.1, 54).

102. Consêt Arglwyddes Owens (see 286)

The musical score for 'Consêt Arglwyddes Owens' is presented on three staves. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written in a single treble clef. The first staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The second staff continues with quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5, followed by a double bar line and a repeat sign, marked with an asterisk (*). The third staff continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, followed by quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5, and concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign, marked with an asterisk (*).

286. Consêt Arglwyddes Owens (see 102)

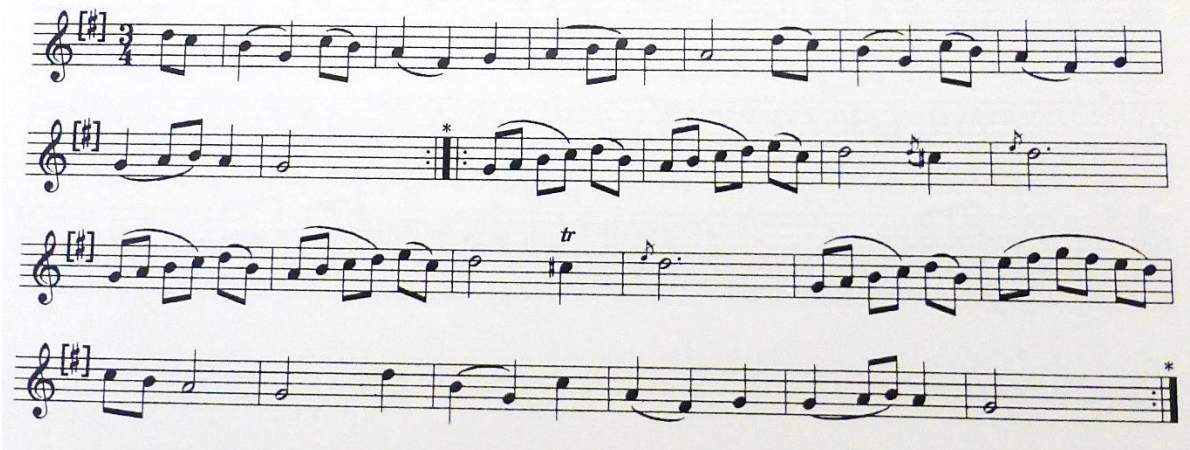


Figure 4.13: The two renditions of 'Consêt Arglwyddes Owen' as notated by John Thomas and transcribed by Cass Meurig (Alawon John Thomas, pp.32, 86).

That which is maintained between these different variants of a tune can be described as a tune's 'gist', a concept invented by John Ward and later elaborated by Peter Holman and Rebecca Herrissone.¹⁰⁰ In the seventeenth-century keyboard music which Herrissone studies, the gist consisted of 'common identifying features, including general melodic shape, intervallic patterns, and often an underlying harmonic structure ... but not necessarily rhythmic figures, metre or overall length'.¹⁰¹ Likewise, in Peter Holman's work on pavans, the 'gist' refers to the consistency of the contrapuntal outline among variant renditions.¹⁰² The qualities contained within a 'gist', however, depend on form, style, instrument and cultural background, since it represents what a copyist or musician considered the important features of a melody. On a keyboard instrument, contrapuntal relations are visually mapped in an intuitive and embodied manner, making them perhaps more fundamental to keyboard players than to a fiddler like John Thomas. On string instruments, by contrast, rhythmic aspects of music such as metre and phrase length are haptically encoded in the bowing patterns of string playing, and therefore more likely to appear part of the 'gist'. Although the melodies are likewise haptically encoded – although perhaps less strongly – through the left-hand fingering, akin to a keyboard, the additional emphasis placed on rhythm and phrase length by the physical nature of bowing likely influenced how fiddlers remembered tunes. As the variant readings of 'The Black Joak' demonstrate, in

¹⁰⁰ Rebecca Herissone, *Musical Creativity in Restoration England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), pp.362-363, 367.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.363.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp.367-368.

vernacular tunes without a keyboard context, melodic shape and intervallic patterns are often more flexible than metre and phrase length. Yet whether these latter structural elements constitute the 'gist' of a fiddle tune, or simply a memorable formula into which the 'gist' of a tune could be inserted or through which it could be reshaped, requires more insight into a fiddler's creative intentions than is knowable from the available evidence.

The differences between the first mode of temporal organisation present in this repertory – song-like tunes like *Cow Heel* – and the second mode of temporal organisation – danceable tunes like 'The Strawberry Garden' – are most apparent by examining phrase structure and repeated elements in the melody. These two different modes relate to two distinct spatial arrangements in performance, perhaps more appropriate in different rooms at Erddig. The older, song-like tunes often derived from ballads or *carolau* would be well suited to performance in Erddig's cosy wood-panelled saloon, with static auditors; the dances which were recorded as taking place at Erddig in the 1740s and 1780s would have required a larger space like the hall or the dining room, and tunes in the second mode of temporal organisation, with clearly defined regular phrases in regular patterns. A 'caller' who spoke the dance instructions and arranged the dancers may also have been necessary. Both are, however, entirely likely to have been similar in style to what servants at Erddig might have heard during 'Jack the Turner's 1780s performances. As Chapter 2 describes, this spatial ordering through dance would have been a part of how the Yorkes defined Erddig as a place within a space: the personnel and their ritual orderings and reorderings through dance would have spoken to the country house's nature as a node within regional and national networks.

However, 'Jack the Turner' also performed at Erddig with his 'Boy', and the accounts elsewhere describe them as '2 Fiddles'. It is likely that this fiddler played accompanied by a bass. Iconographical evidence shows that vernacular fiddling was accompanied, sometimes with bass viols or violoncelli, or with bladders-and-strings, crude bowed instruments consisting of inflated pigs' bladders held against a pole by a string under tension, which could be pressed with a finger to affect pitch.¹⁰³ Bladders-and-strings were often associated

¹⁰³ Marsh, *Music and Society*, p.167; Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.86-89, 91, 93.

with parodic music and parodic scenes, but they were also common among street musicians, as simple and affordable instruments.¹⁰⁴ It is unlikely they were capable of great dexterity or the production of varied, consistent pitches (Jeremy Barlow suggests the musical role they provided was chiefly rhythmical),¹⁰⁵ but they could possibly provide a rhythmically active drone accompaniment and possibly a few pitched notes, perhaps octaves or fifths above the string's fundamental. Being described as a 'fiddle', however, makes it more likely that 'Jack the Turner' was accompanied by a bass viol or violoncello, one of which was likewise called a 'fiddle' by James Macdonald.¹⁰⁶

Whatever instrument it was performed on, bass accompaniment of tunes was likely to be simple and formulaic, possibly even improvised. Playing the bass certainly appears to have been easily learned, and characterised more as a single skill than an introduction to a repertory. Before he became a footman, as a young boy living rough on the streets of Edinburgh in 1750s Scotland, James Macdonald spent four months living with a peripatetic blind fiddler, who 'taught me to play on the bass. He carried the one instrument, and I the other on my back'.¹⁰⁷ He later describes the bass and his master's fiddle together as 'fiddles', suggesting that it was at least in the same instrument family, perhaps a violoncello. However, James Macdonald cannot have learned a notated accompaniment practice from his blind master. Further, this was the first and last time Macdonald ever showed any interest whatsoever in music, suggesting he was not a keen learner; that he was nevertheless able to learn the bass so quickly, as a child, indicates that he did not have to memorise bespoke basslines for every tune his master knew. It may be that to 'play on the bass' meant, in the context of vernacular fiddling, only providing a tuned drone to accompany the fiddle tune, but it is also possible that bass players employed simple accompaniment formulae which helped to demarcate temporal divisions more effectively than a drone.

Macpherson's analysis of accompaniments for dance tunes lacked extant sources of such accompaniments, which are more abundant in the second half of the century. With his

¹⁰⁴ Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.84-85, 88-89.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.100,231.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹⁰⁷ Macdonald, p.13.

limited sample size, he appears principally concerned with their implications for the modality of tunes.¹⁰⁸ David McGuinness's recent examination of dance basslines in printed Scottish sources found that, from the 1750s, there emerged in print a 'distinctive style of bassline', 'no-nonsense basses [that] may well represent a simple performance practice that was already well established'.¹⁰⁹ Such basslines disregarded the harmonic 'correctness' of Italianate counterpoint, instead appearing to use 'stock pattern[s]' of simple cadential formulae (sometimes exceptionally simple) and tonic pedals.¹¹⁰ These might reflect the kinds of bass accompaniment practice James Macdonald learned, and perhaps also that which 'Jack the Turner's boy used to accompany dances at Erddig. Undertaking a similar enquiry with Cahusac's accompanied dances as McGuinness has can provide some insight into vernacular accompaniment practices in England and Wales, with the caveat that if vernacular bass players used simple accompaniment formulae, those players would not have needed to purchase scored basslines. In addition, some accompaniments employ a texture more suitable for (genteel) keyboardists than vernacular bass players, such as the Alberti bass pattern in 'The Ladies Joy', below.¹¹¹

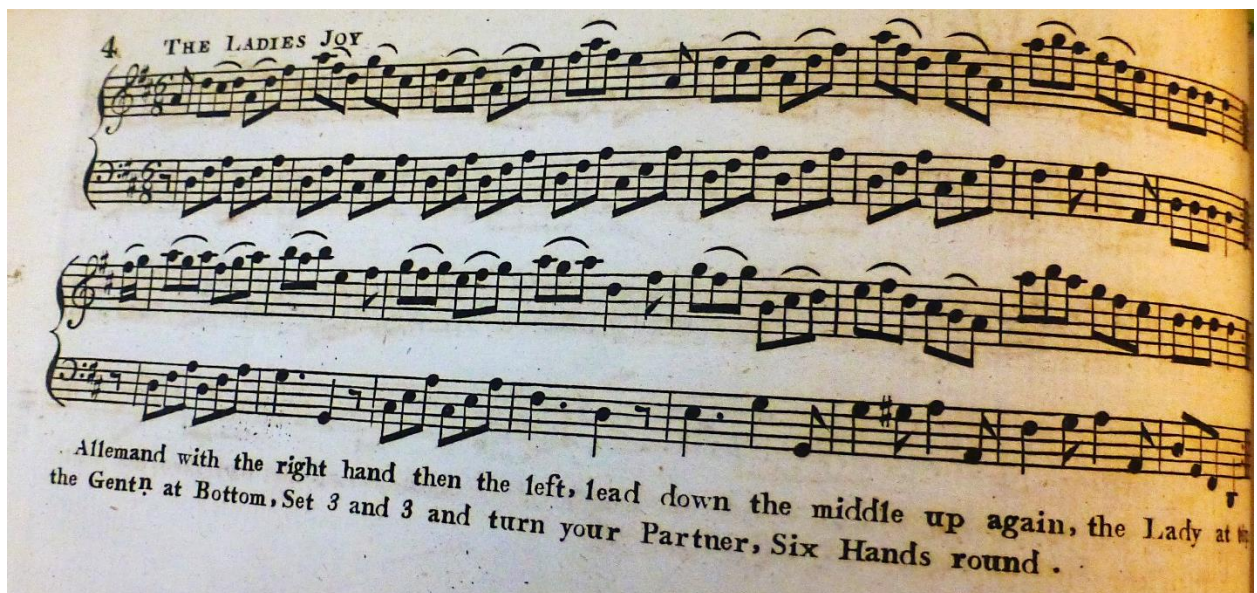


Figure 4.14: 'The Ladies Joy', the fourth tune from the 1788 volume, *Twelve Country Dances with their Bases for the Year 1788*.

¹⁰⁸ Macpherson, 'The Music of the English Country Dance', pp.124-133.

¹⁰⁹ David McGuinness, 'Bass Culture in Printed Scottish Fiddle Music Sources, 1750-1850: Harmonisation, Urbanisation and Romanticisation', *Scottish Music Review*, 5 (2019), 115-138, p.120.

¹¹⁰ McGuinness, 'Bass Culture', pp.121-122.

¹¹¹ See also *Ibid.*, p.123.

However, other Cahusac dances, like their Scottish counterparts, appear to be constructed from simple stock patterns of tonic pedals with cadential formulae, although they perhaps make more concessions to harmonic ‘correctness’ than the accompaniments McGuinness examines.¹¹² Some dances in particular, such as ‘The White Cockade’ and ‘Lady Keinard’s Reel’ (Figs. 4.15-4.16), have basslines which are formulaic in construction and simple to execute: two or three bars of tonic pedal followed by a simple cadence, either perfect or imperfect. In particular, ‘Lady Keinard’s Reel’ has a bassline so limited it could perhaps be performed on a bladder and string, aside from the slightly elaborated final cadence. ‘The White Cockade’ takes the same formula and adds a few passing notes and arpeggios. Such an accompaniment formula is only a little more complex to learn and execute than a drone, and would work for a wide variety of dance tunes (so long as they broadly followed the common dance phrase structure) once learned. It would be possible for a child like James Macdonald, or ‘Jack the Turner’s boy’, to use these simple formulae – with improvised inflections – without needing to formally learn an entire repertory of unique basslines. However, unlike a drone, these cadential formulae provide the temporal demarcation which dancers would have needed to time the lengths of strains and dance figures.

The White Cockade

1

The 1st Cu. fet and hands three round with the 2^d Lady do the fame with the 2^d Gentleman lead down the middle up again cast off and hands fix once round.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for 'The White Cockade'. It consists of four staves. The top two staves are for the first and second parts of the dance, and the bottom two staves are for the first and second parts of the bass accompaniment. The music is in common time (C) and G major. The bassline is simple, consisting of a tonic pedal followed by a cadence. The dance instructions are written below the staves.

Figure 4.15: ‘The White Cockade’, the first tune from the 1790 volume of *Twelve Country Dances with Their Bases*.

¹¹² See McGuinness’s examples 4, 8, 11-13 for bass accompaniments similar in their construction to Cahusac’s accompanied dances, which share a chronological period (1780s and 1790s). *Ibid.*, pp.122, 125, 128-130.

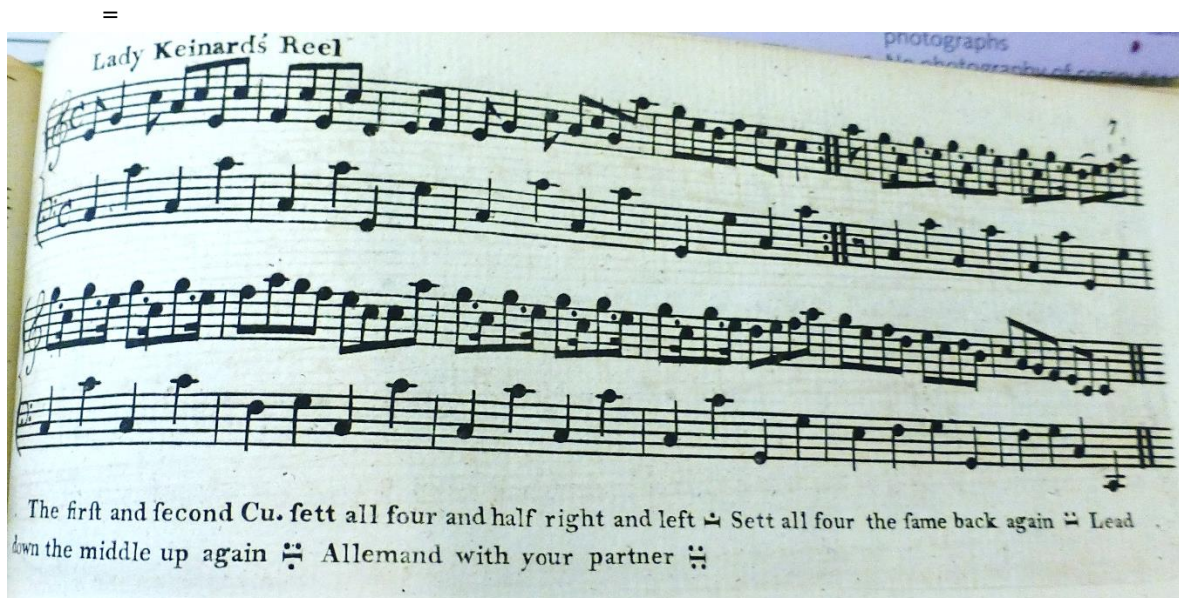


Figure 4.16: 'Lady Keinard's Reel', the seventh dance from the 1794 volume of the same name.

This simple accompaniment formula in some dances coexists with a more elaborate contrapuntal style, in the process revealing the distance between the looser harmonicity of country dances and goal-directed tonality associated with keyboard sonatas of the period. This is the final distinction in temporal organisation among this repertory: between propulsive, teleological counterpoint on the one hand, and a kind of harmonic 'extended present' punctuated by cadences.¹¹³ The desire to stay in the 'present' of the tonic without goal-directed contrapuntal movement is implicit in tunes like 'The Kentish Cricketters' (Figure 4.6) and 'O'er the Hill and Away' (Figure 4.9), where the melodic material does not imply any clear harmonic progression except at cadence points. Outside cadence points, scales and arpeggios are employed, but no chords except the tonic are consistently outlined, with arpeggiated figures more liable to be read as neighbour notes to the primary triad than chords in their own right. However, the accompaniments in some Cahusac dances clarify this: in 'Lady Keinard's Reel', for instance, none of the melodic notes in the opening phrase – the *g'*, *a'*, *e'*, *f'*, *e'* in the lower voice of the top part – are harmonised by the bassline, which stays on a tonic pedal. Only the final *d'* is given harmonic significance. The more contrapuntal writing of the tune's final cadence, which implies the hierarchical teleology of

¹¹³ See McGuinness, 'Bass Culture', p.120.

‘the classical style’, exposes the earlier lack of propulsive harmony.¹¹⁴ Instead, the melodic rhythm is perhaps the main propulsive force.¹¹⁵

‘La Norah’ (Figure 4.17) is perhaps an even clearer example of the two temporal schema coexisting in the same bassline. The A section follows the same accompaniment formula as the other two accompanied dances, with a tonic pedal and then a simple cadence. The tonic pedal accompanies the entire first phrase, although forward movement still comes from the regular rhythms. In the B section, although a similar accompaniment scheme would have fitted the melody as well as it does in the A section, the accompaniment employs a different strategy more firmly rooted in literate musical culture. The bassline in the B section is scalic and contrapuntal, using mostly intervals of thirds and sixths below the melody, and passing notes into the cadences. The faster harmonic rhythm and clarity of movement, in both voices, gives the harmony a different temporal role, more akin to constant propulsion than marking cadence points.

That two distinct temporal systems exist in the accompaniment of this dance is probably more a reflection of the eclectic cultural range of dance tunes, and the fiddlers who played them, than any kind of historical progression away from one mode and towards another. McGuinness’s chronologically broader survey proves insightful, with pre-1750 printed tune collections using ‘Italianate continuo-style basses’ and post-1800 printed tune collections using more functional, flowing basslines ideal for piano accompaniment.¹¹⁶ Within this context, it becomes possible that the simple accompaniment formulae were simply a fashionably crude accompaniment style during the 1770s to the 1790s, rather than necessarily representing existing vernacular practice (subtextual readings of James Macdonald’s description of bass accompaniment notwithstanding). As such, while it appears very likely that this style – where harmony was not propulsive throughout, but rather remained static aside from strongly demarcated cadences after four or eight bars – would have been heard at Erddig during the 1780s performances of ‘Jack the Turner’ and his

¹¹⁴ For an archetypal explanation of this model for understanding harmony, see Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart* (London: Faber and Faber [1971], 1976), pp.23-24, 33-34.

¹¹⁵ Macpherson, ‘The Music of the English Country Dance’, p.262.

¹¹⁶ McGuinness, ‘Bass Culture’, pp.128-131.

fellow musicians, the dances Erddig servants might have heard during the 1740s might have been quite different. It is hard to know how the contrasting accompaniment style, the more harmonically propulsive basslines associated with genteel continuo practice, might have affected the spatial implications of dance and the temporal regulation of it, but it should also be considered as something with which eighteenth-century servants and the vernacular fiddlers they heard might have been familiar.

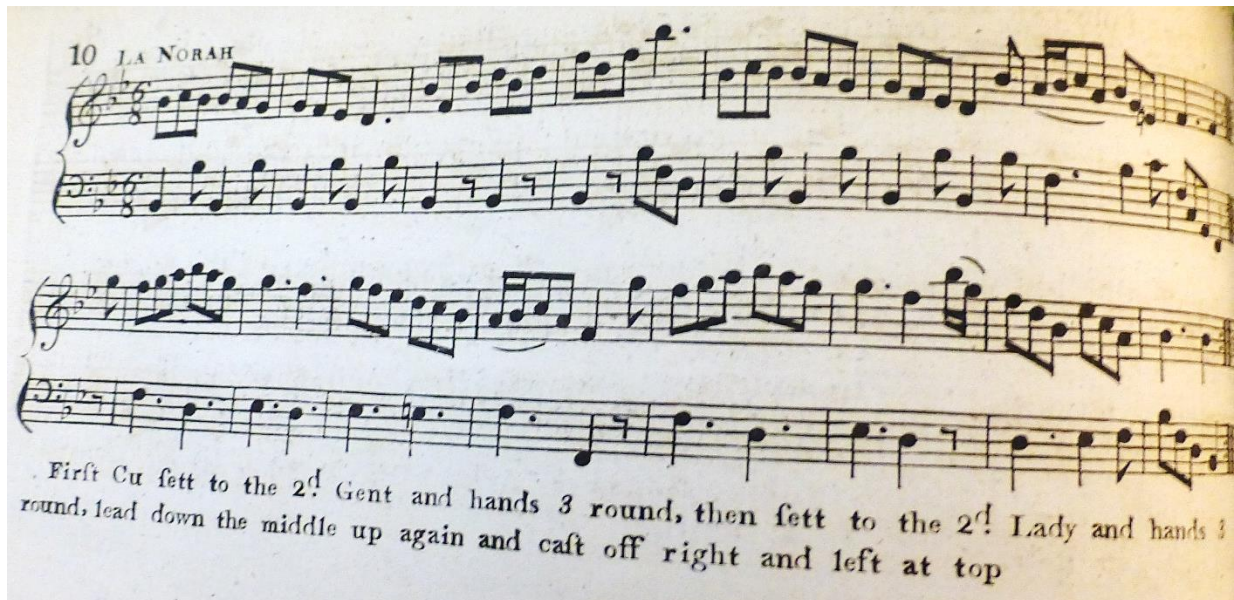


Figure 4.17: The tenth Cahusac dance from the 1788 collection of tunes with basses, 'La Norah'.

It is perhaps intuitive that temporal organisation should be so important in dance tunes, since having clear, regular markers of the passage of time is vital to organise the disposition of bodies within space. However, it is interesting to note the different coexisting temporal systems within fiddlers' repertoires, from elite minuets and bourrées, glees and overtures, to the loose (primarily textual rather than melodic) structures of ballads, to the common binary dance form with its 8-bar 'strains'. This emphasis on different temporal systems coexisting in a broad vernacular repertory is reminiscent of the 1786 satire, 'The Fiddling Footman' (Figure 0, frontispiece). The protagonist's repertory, like John Thomas's, stretches from Handel and foreign composers to 'Bumper Squire Jones'.¹¹⁷ Musical time, and its effects on the body, are the principal subject of 'Anthony Scratch's satire. When he was an apprentice to a pewterer, he discusses how he 'performed always more or less than my daily

¹¹⁷ Meurig, *Alawon John Thomas*, p.92.

task, according to the quick or slow movements of the notes I hummed over', with the extremes of his productivity being 'an *adagio* or *piano* (as the fiddlers call it)]', and 'a jig or a hornpipe'. Once in domestic service, this continues, with a broadened repertory: when needing to catch an escaped pet from the roof, he 'ascended the ladder to the tune of the Dead March in Saul [by Handel]'. He 'gained the roof to this slow time, without making a single slip', but jubilant in victory, 'he passed at once into a concerto of Corelli's', where 'the rapidity of the measure' caused him to fall.¹¹⁸ This is, of course, a satire for and by London's social elite, keen to portray servants as fools ruled by their bodies rather than their minds. It nonetheless demonstrates the way musical time was considered to be an entrainment of the body, a means of shaping how space is moved through as well as how actions are performed. Erddig servants would have experienced that entrainment during 'Jack the Turner's performances, to a lesser or greater extent, no matter what temporal mode the fiddler might have been performing in.

Ballads as a Social Technology in the London Street

This section will discuss the kinds of performances which might have taken place on the streets of St Clement Danes, such as the man arrested for 'singing a seditious ballad, grosly reflecting on the greatest characters' on Wych Street in 1771.¹¹⁹ I will establish that not only the choice of tune and ballad, but the location, target audience and presentation were all used to help ballad singers produce a unique temporary space in the urban street. In the zones of control they produced through performance, they had a degree of power which could threaten established hierarchies and contributed to their reputation as dangerous malcontents. The discourses about ballad singers will also be considered and analysed, with the indications they might contain for the demographics, economics, musical proficiency and manner of performance of ballad singers.

¹¹⁸ Anthony Scratch, 'Humourous Life of a Fiddling Footman', *The New London Magazine*, 2, 10 (March 1786), pp.126-127.

¹¹⁹ See Chapter 3.

The discussion of fiddle tunes above has some relevance to the nature of ballad singers' musical performances, since they often shared a repertory of 'common' tunes, but ballad prints rarely contained musical notation. Those which were, both as single sheets and in collected volumes (particularly those with an antiquarian intent), these are unlikely to represent ballad singers' practices. Ballad singers included some of the most economically precarious people in eighteenth-century Britain, many using it more as a temporary source of income than an occupation in its own right, as some of the ballad singers' stories from the *Old Bailey Proceedings* will show. This, as well as the embodiedness of singing, made it relatively unimportant for ballad singers, or their customers, to engage with music notation, as evidenced by the late seventeenth-century ballads which use obviously fake and meaningless music notation as a signifier of high status.¹²⁰ Ballads such as the 'London Lottery' (Figure 4.18) below demonstrate that the ability to read musical notation was not necessarily essential for ballad printers either.

Nonetheless, the selection of a tune could be of considerable import. Many ballad tunes were well known 'common tunes', denoted by a memorable title and capable of implying rich associations. Harold Love's examination of satirical ballads during the Restoration (with clear continuities into eighteenth-century practice)¹²¹ suggests that a minority of lampoon tunes were selected to form a musical pun, and some tunes gained a reputation from their association with other satirical songs.¹²² In general, the reuse of tunes could lead to the development of rich associative meanings. For instance, the tune of 'If Love's a Sweet Passion' used in Figure 4.18 was also used in several other ballads, including: 'An Answer to the Cook-Maid's Tragedy: or, the Lamentation of Thomas the Coach-man'.¹²³ This, at least, has a serious, lamenting tone, mourning the loss of a loved one; indeed, in 1694, a year after 'The London Lottery', the ballad was used once again to mourn the death of Queen Mary.¹²⁴ These associations of loss, mourning and passion may have been used to

¹²⁰ Donald Krummel, *English Music Printing 1553–1700* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1975), p.164.

¹²¹ Harold Love, 'That Satirical Tune of "Amarillis"', *Early Music*, 35, 1 (2007), 39-47, p.44.

¹²² Love, 'That Satirical Tune', p.41.

¹²³ 'An Answer to the Cook-Maid's Tragedy: or, the Lamentation of Thomas the Coach-man' (London: J. Deacon [1692 – c. 1702], EBBA ID 37397 and 37442).

¹²⁴ 'The Court and Kingdom in Tears: or, the Sorrowful Subjects Lamentation for the Death of Her Royal Majesty Queen Mary' (London: P. Brooksby and C. Bates, 1694, EBBA ID 31263).

draw a humorous contrast with 'Simple Susan' the maidservant losing her clothes and prospects of success while playing the lottery. Meanwhile, from the same printing house, 'The Languishing Young Man: or, the Love-sick Sail-mans sorrowful Lamentation for the Loss of his Beautiful Maria' leverages these tragic associations for crude sexual humour. Rhetorical figures of tragic love are abundant in its first half, an apparently grave lamentation fearing the loss of the eponymous young man's beloved to another courter, but the ballad also provides a response from 'Maria', the beloved, which is so rich in *double entendre* that its intention must be humorous:

No sooner had Willy thus utter'd his Grief,
But Maria she came with a speedy Relief;¹²⁵

Another humorous ballad, 'The Bucksome Lass of Westminster', exploits the suggestive language of 'The Languishing Young Man' with even less disguised sexual subtext, especially in the refrain's constant repetition of 'open her hole':

He fain would have finger'd her Money, we find;
But to love her, alas! he was no ways inclind,
Though she often had kiss'd him, and call'd him her Dear,
Yet the innocent Damsel was never the near;
*He refused, it seems, for to open her hole,
Though he might have her Money, and all her Sea-Cole.*¹²⁶

This plurality of texts set to the same tune in the same decade provided singers and auditors alike ample opportunities to read subtextual meanings into ballads. Perhaps the cook-maids among a ballad singer's audience might reasonably draw a parallel between the poisoned cook-maid of 'An Answer to the Cook-Maid's Tragedy' and the death of Queen Mary, and thus come to relate the royal family to their own friends and neighbours. Perhaps, also, a cruder mind might be encouraged to juxtapose the 'grief' of poor 'Willy' with King William III's grief for the loss of his wife.

¹²⁵ 'The Languishing Young Man: or, The Love-sick Sail-mans sorrowful Lamentation for the Loss of his Beautiful Maria' (London: J. Deacon [1692 – c. 1702], EBBA ID 35723).

¹²⁶ 'The Bucksome Lass of Westminster, or, her kind proffer of two hundred pound, together with a Cargo of Coals from New-Castle, to any young-man, that would in kindness help her out at a dead lift' (London: P. Brooksby, J. Deacon, J. Blare and J. Back [1692-1696], EBBA ID 33935).

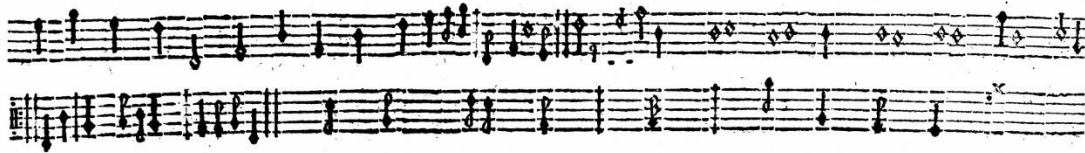
+ The London Lottery :

O R,

Simple SUSAN, the Ambitious Damsel of Bishopsgate-street,

Who pawn'd her Night-rail and Smock, with other Apparel, for raising Money, in hopes to gain the Lot of three thousand Pound, or two thousand five hunder'd at least; with an Account of her Glory that ended in a Blank.

To the Tune of, If Love's a sweet Passion.



Attend to this Ditty, which fairly does treat
Of a Damsel now living, near Bishopsgate-street,
Who did lay her best Gown and her Smicket in pawn,
With her Nigh-rail, and likewise her Ruffels of Lawn,
For to raise Half-a piece, to put in for a Lot,
Since she heard there was three thousand Pounds to be got.

This said, to her Mistrefs she presently high'd,
Where she bid her with speed a new Servant provide,
For she would be no longer a Drudge and a Slave,
Being fully perswaded that now she should have
Here a vast Sum of Money, both Silver and Gold,
Many hundred Pounds more than her Apron could hold.

Figure 4.18: Excerpt from 'The London Lottery: or, Simple Susan the Ambitious Damsel of Bishopsgate-Street', printed in the City of London. The English Broadside Ballad Archive dates it to 1693 (EBBA ID: 22343). Note the nonsensical musical notation, which does not remotely resemble the tune (from Henry Purcell's 1692 masque *Fairy Queen*) specified.

The extent to which such scandalous subtext was understood by auditors and reproduced in performance is difficult to ascertain, especially when considering servants, an occupational group who have left behind few ego-documents.¹²⁷ However, there is considerably more evidence in *Old Bailey Proceedings* trial reports and other sources showing how servants perceived ballad singing in terms of spatial practice. In 1754 Elizabeth Blackman was tasked by her master with fetching back her fellow servant Mary Taylor, whom their master believed had robbed him. Blackman told Taylor that she needed to get home to help Blackman with the laundry; Taylor was apparently insistent on either leisure or escape, leading the pair through a maze of public houses, yards and mews near Covent Garden, before coming out onto 'Russel-street, there we staid to hear women sing; there she

¹²⁷ However, see compelling readings of the subtext present in ballad operas in Berta Joncus and Vanessa L. Rogers, 'Ballad Opera and British double entendre: Henry Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*', in *Pratiques du timbre et de la parodie d'opéra en Europe (XVIIe - XIXe siècles)*, eds. Judith Le Blanc and Herbert Schneider (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2014), pp.101-140.

staid, I could not get her along'.¹²⁸ Taylor became enthralled by women singing – almost certainly a group of ballad singers – and a frustrated Blackman left her there to get help coercing Taylor into custody. Testimony from the *Old Bailey Proceedings* tends to focus on time and space, because these are important to establishing and verifying the sequence of events detailed in the case. Elizabeth Blackman's testimony therefore seeks to evoke a mental map of the setting for her auditors in the courtroom, relying on common landmarks (such as watchmen's booths and public house signs) and understandings of different spaces' uses and interrelations. Within this mental map, most of the landmarks and identifying features were created by institutional actors such as the parish, the speculative builder and the state. Public houses, originally individual initiatives to make ends meet, were themselves becoming institutionalised over the course of the eighteenth century.¹²⁹ The only individuals to assert a significant spatial presence over Mary Taylor and Elizabeth Blackman – significant enough to modify Mary Taylor's behaviour – were the ballad singers on Russell Street.

These ballad singers are mentioned in the text solely because of their abilities as creators of space. Jensen describes some of the ways in which singers had to produce a 'liminal spacetime', where 'the singer must use music to convince [listeners] they are therefore outside measurable time, free of temporal imperatives and thus at leisure to stop and participate in the performance'.¹³⁰ Some of the factors involved in this spatial engineering, Jensen suggests, included finding the right 'pitch' that would provide access to paying audiences, light, good acoustics (or even an acoustic contrast with a noisy environment), and hopefully even shield the singer and audience from the weather. Others were ensuring that their performances were seen as a public display of cultural capital, rather than as beggars; vocal quality (which will be discussed later on in the chapter); gesture and slapstick, and inviting the participation of auditors.¹³¹ Ballad singers needed to be highly skilled to make effective use of their physical and human environments to create the spaces where audiences might gather, listen, and ideally pay for their service.

¹²⁸ *OBPO* t17541204-18.

¹²⁹ Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830* (London: Longman, 1983), pp.195-197.

¹³⁰ Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer*, p.138.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.138-140, 142, 146-147, 153-156.

Yet the emphasis on temporal organisation in Jensen's analysis of the spatial tools of ballad singers suggests that some of the reflections on phrase structure and tonal harmonicity in the previous section may apply also to ballad-singing. The 'extended present' of non-directional harmony, and the masking of time through the irregular melodic phrases seen in older ballads, might prove especially useful in producing 'liminal spacetime'. While in Blackman's account as given in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, the singers' musical and literary discourse is not considered remarkable to the court, even to the level of being specified as singing ballads (which, however, they almost certainly were, from the context), the choice of tune and ballad, and the ways performers embodied it, were the tools ballad singers employed to create spaces within the streetscape. Within ballad texts are traces of how command over space was won. For instance, the lampoons which Harold Love examines used the 'Amarillis' tune partly because the fourfold repetition of its opening line encouraged audience participation, its familiarity allowing raucous chanting by those who heard it.¹³² In 'The Languishing Young Man' described above, although Jensen suggests that singers might pitch their voices regardless as high as possible in order to cut through noise, there would be rich opportunities for a singer to take on a cruel imitation of a feminine persona while performing Maria's response to Willy's lament.¹³³ Regardless, the singers' performance is a spatial feature that Blackman recognised as important, even though, unlike the other features she describes in her testimony, it has no pretence of permanence and would therefore be an unstable element within the mental map she was attempting to convey to the court. This testimony, then, confirms the fear (discussed below), which London's cultural elite evinced, of ballad singers threatening their monopoly over spatial production. Even if her narration of events is unreliable, Blackman was clearly aware of the potent spatial manipulation that 'women sing[ing]' could produce, equipped with the right musical tools.

The testimony of William Jacomb from a 1784 burglary case provides a little more detail about how servants experienced the ways ballad singers produced space. Jacomb was

¹³² Love, 'That Satyrical Tune', p.44.

¹³³ Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer*, p.152.

described in court as a 'boy', most likely a footboy or kitchen boy, or perhaps an apprentice; he 'was sent out to change a guinea for my mistress in Angel-street'. On his return journey, he 'heard some people singing a song in St. Martin's Le Grand about Pitt, so [he] went and heard it'. There was an audience gathered of 'about ten or twelve', and he 'attended to the singing'. Unfortunately, his listening experience was disturbed by the sound of breaking glass, as two young boys stole a German flute and two fifes from a shop window.¹³⁴ Like Mary Taylor, William Jacomb was captured by the space created by the ballad singers, interested in their discourse about Pitt. The two different descriptions of very similar musical events, thirty years apart, demonstrates both the continuities and the pluralities of ballad culture. Both incidents occurred in convergent contexts: busy, wide streets, where singers are attracting modest crowds of listeners, among whom are servants. Yet Blackman, Jacomb and (allegedly) Taylor had markedly different reactions to this street singing. For Blackman, it was an annoyance and a hindrance to fetching Taylor; to Taylor (if Blackman's reportage is to be believed), it was a welcome distraction, regardless of the content of the ballads. Jacomb, on the other hand, was engaged in another task, and required the promise of a salacious political text (or subtext) to turn his attention. Even the most effective of musical technologies is reliant on, and thus must cater to, the different interpretative frameworks and motivations of its listeners.

Like any spatial practice, ballad singing had different impacts on different auditors, a means for singers to curate participation in their spatial zone of control. The audiences to which ballad singers catered might have been disproportionately young, composed of a mixture of young adults and children like William Jacomb. A 1735 letter to the *Grub Street Journal*, John Henley's nemesis, also implied ballad audiences were young:

[Ballad singing is] a continual nursery for idlers, whores, and pick-pockets; a school for scandal, smut, and debauchery; where our youth of either sex (of the lower class especially) receive the first taint, which by degrees so contaminates the mind, that, with every slight temptation, they become abandoned, lewd, and strangers to all shame.¹³⁵

The late seventeenth-century satirist Ned Ward likewise described music booths in Bartholomew Fair as 'Diabolical Academies, where we supposed all sorts of Wickedness

¹³⁴ OBPO t17840421-23.

¹³⁵ Quoted in McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making" ', p. 152.

were practic'd, for the good Instruction of unwary Youth'.¹³⁶ Although this emphasis on youth might have served the purpose of making ballad singing appear a more trivial, childish endeavour, or reflect the hierarchical relationship between masters and their most easily distracted subordinates, there is some reason to believe this stereotype had a basis in reality.

There is anecdotal evidence for a youthful audience from the *Old Bailey Proceedings*: as well as William Jacomb, there was Samuel Morris, a sixteen-year-old apprentice to a watchmaker, who had his master's goods stolen from his pocket while on an errand in 1774; he 'stood to hear a girl sing', and this distraction allowed him to be robbed.¹³⁷ These in themselves do not speak to the constitution of the overall audience, but these two were young people, out of the four witnesses described as standing to hear a ballad singer, in all of the *Old Bailey Proceedings* cases from 1690 to 1795 (as far as I can ascertain). In terms of adult listeners, Mary Taylor was a widow, and therefore likely to be at least above 20 years of age when she stopped to listen to ballad singing. So too was Elizabeth Turner a widow, when she had her apron strings cut by 'Mary Cut-and-Come-Again' (a ballad singer depicted as hypersexualised and animalistic) in 1745.¹³⁸ More research is needed to confirm these intimations, but Dagmar Kift's book on early music halls (of the first half of the nineteenth century), which used newspaper reports of casualties of fires and stampedes to estimate demographics, concluded that a substantial proportion of early music hall audiences were teenagers, particularly teenage boys (like Jacomb and Morris).¹³⁹ In both periods, teenagers were often holding money for the first time – either their own, acquired from service (that is, paid employment); or their master's, were they apprentices. They did not yet have responsibilities of family, and in the case of boys, had relatively light duties which often took them outside the household.¹⁴⁰ This comparative freedom and irresponsibility made them ideal consumers for affordable entertainments such as ballads,

¹³⁶ Edward Ward, *The London Spy*, Part 11 (London: J. How, 1699), p. 7.

¹³⁷ *OBPO* t17740216-88.

¹³⁸ *OBPO* t17450424-31.

¹³⁹ Dagmar Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, trans. Roy Kift (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp.65, 85.

¹⁴⁰ Steedman, *Labours Lost*, pp.69-71.

cheap drinks and card games, as young workers continued to be well into the twentieth century.¹⁴¹

A spatial practice with as many strong continuities as London ballad singing required social reproduction, the induction of new members to the tactics and strategies of singing ballads. Since ballad singing was such an accessible occupation, many ballad singers also began very young. In 1782, Judith Bacon was a twelve-year-old girl who lived with her mother in a Spitalfields boarding house owned by a Jewish family. She sometimes went ballad singing with an older woman, Elizabeth Wood, who was married to a blind man and lived in the same building. One of these two – they passed the blame to each other – took brass candlesticks from the lodging house and pawned them, to make ends meet, but the subsequent trial for burglary fell apart because they both had legitimate reason to be in the lodging house, as tenants.¹⁴² The young age of some ballad singers, and the messy, precarious lives of older ballad singers, often needing to supplement their incomes with sex work or criminal activity, led to fears of corruption exemplified by the memoirs of Mary Saxby.

Mary Saxby's memoirs illuminate some of the discourses within which ballad singers operated, the limits placed upon any power they might receive in the moment of performance. Although sometimes used as a source of information about ballad singers' lives, the tone of *Memoirs of a Female Vagrant* (1806) is so unrelentingly sensationalist and moral that it is impossible to ascertain whether it is fact, embellishment or fabrication. Saxby was allegedly born in 1738.¹⁴³ As a young girl, probably in her early teens, she ran away from her artisan family, frightened to return home after dropping a plate while on an errand.¹⁴⁴ Her aunt had, years earlier, confined her in a dark room and then ordered a man to threaten her with a knife; when her father returned 'from abroad' with her step-mother,

¹⁴¹ For instance, the consumer power of teenage girls working in electronic factories in postwar Japan, as described in Simon Partner, *Assembled in Japan: Electrical Goods and the Making of the Japanese Consumer* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1999), pp. 210-213.

¹⁴² OBPO t17821204-41.

¹⁴³ [Mary Saxby], *Memoirs of a Female Vagrant, Written by Herself* (London: J. Burditt, 1806), p.1.

¹⁴⁴ [Saxby], *Memoirs*, pp.6-7.

he confined her and beat her heavily on several occasions.¹⁴⁵ Even in the memoirs written allegedly at the end of her life, Saxby blamed herself for most of these beatings, however, for being disobedient or having ‘a wicked and impetuous temper’.¹⁴⁶ After running away from home, she found a ‘motherly’ woman with whose youngest daughter she got into ballad singing, but this put her in constant moral and sexual danger, nearly being raped by a group of sailors, and whipped at Bridewell after being accused of being a sex worker while singing at Epping Market.¹⁴⁷ Given the murders (and deaths from cold, starvation and neglect) of ballad singers – male and female – to which David Atkinson has drawn attention,¹⁴⁸ the level of danger to which Saxby was exposed is not improbable: rather, it is the constant self-deprecation and repetition of how wicked her life was which suggests this book is, at least, weaponised for a particular rhetorical purpose. No matter how factual Mary Saxby’s memoirs were, by the time of their publication, they were drawn into a discourse that promoted a particular ideology of proper female behaviour. The memoirs’ exposure of the protagonist to extreme sexual danger makes it both a commentary on and a reification of the association between singing and sex. As Chapter 5 explores, this association made women vulnerable – whether they were singing or not, but especially if they sang publicly. Female ballad singers did risk a cheapening of their bodily autonomy and an undermining of their characters.

Yet there were indeed women whose real lives echoed that of Mary Saxby, operating within the terms of moralist discourse. If Edward Hickin, the apothecary’s musical assistant, fulfils the *High Life Below Stairs* (or indeed the ‘Fiddling Footman’) stereotype of the musical servant with pretensions above their status, so does Rebecca Carter, witness in a 1794 Old Bailey trial, embody the Hogarthian image of ballad singing being adjacent to sex work. The young daughter of a coal-heaver (that is, someone involved in the transportation of coal from docks and wharves to coal cellars around London), when her father ‘turned her out of doors’ she turned to the women she had met when she ‘used to go out, and sing ballads’.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p.2-3, 5-6.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.2.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp.8-9, 11-13,

¹⁴⁸ David Atkinson, ‘Eighteenth-Century Street Ballads and Sellers’ (conference paper, given 15.05.2019 at the UEA Street Music conference, The Forum, Norwich).

She was aware they were sex workers, 'all girls of the town'; but they accepted her in as a maidservant at their lodgings, which may or may not have been a brothel (the landlady's testimony deliberately obfuscating her relationship to the property and the women renting it). This role did not seem to involve direct sex work; the allegedly robbed client who prosecuted Rebecca Carter's room-mate recognised her as 'the servant girl', and asked her to change some money for him. More ambiguously, however, when asked 'Did you see company there?', she replied: 'I used to see people there, I was the servant of the house' – the question being whether 'seeing people there' meant inviting over clients for sex, or more innocently, literally seeing visitors as they came and went.¹⁴⁹ In any case, Rebecca Carter's testimony shows that singing ballads brought her into contact with the murky world of survival sex work, precisely as moralists feared. Yet for Carter, it was a necessary step from homelessness towards a semblance of stable living as a kind of live-in servant. In many cases, it is hard to separate reality from rhetoric when it comes to allegedly non-fictional sources about ballad singing. However, historians should be wary of distancing the three intersecting worlds of domestic service, survival sex work and ballad singing, since it does a disservice to the real women whose 'economy of makeshifts' included all three.

While all contemporary accounts of ballad singers afford them some degree of control over space, this was not necessarily considered to be a result of skill in musical performance (according to the writer's own aesthetic judgement). Some representations of ballad singers derided ballad singers as musically unskilled; a letter to the *St. James Chronicle* in 1764 described them as dominating space by 'Roaring', 'Squalling' and 'Bawl[ing]':

There is another vile Nuisance, Ballad Singers; which are of late increased to so insufferable a Degree, that we have Roaring and Squalling in every Ear; and in all Courts and Lanes where Carriages do not pass, I have been told the Families are disturbed in their Houses by a constant Rotation of these offensive Bawlers. But how frequent is it to see some of the best of that notorious impudent Set with a large Audience about them, to the Interruption of Passengers! and of whom shall we find their audience composed, but Servants sent on Errands, and Pickpockets who are endeavouring to rob or cheat them?¹⁵⁰

Ned Ward wondered whether the group of seven ballad singers in the Bartholomew Fair music booth were singing the 'Cat-Catch', an allusion to a cat's shrill caterwauling. Since

¹⁴⁹ OBPO t17940115-24.

¹⁵⁰ 'To the Printer', *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 576 (November 10, 1764 - November 13, 1764), p. 2.

they were not, he decided, 'they deserve to be whip'd at the Cart's-Arse for attempting to sing it'.¹⁵¹ However, the violence in Ward's satire is more common than the particular derision of ballad singers' musical qualities. To Laurence Braddon, who published a proposal for the reformation of the Poor Law in 1720, 'All Bear-wards, common Players of Interludes and Minstrels, or common Ballad Singers, wandering about' was only one among several categories of itinerant to criminalise and sentence to hard labour in prison.¹⁵²

Meanwhile, to William Riley, an Anglican church musician who attacked the Methodist practice of adapting secular ballads to sacred use (and the Anglican imitators of this musical style), the problem was not that ballad tunes were substandard, but rather that they were 'lascivious', 'light' and 'airy', inducing passions unfit for divine service.¹⁵³ Perhaps this was due to how amenable popular ballad tunes were to the production of new lewd and libellous songs, as discussed earlier. As frequent as concern over ballads' musicality in eighteenth-century moralist publications was concern over the corrupting influence of the ballads' texts.¹⁵⁴ Even descriptions emphasising ballads' noisy qualities have less to do with musical criticism than the alleged intellectual emptiness of the practice. A satirical poem discussing the various forms of wit in London compared legal oratory to ballad singing, in that both emphasised fulness of voice and dramatic expression over substantive meaning:

Yet there's no *Ballad-Singer*, that louder can baul,
Than they at the *Sizes*, or *Westminster-Hall*:
A *Customer* seldom of their *Dulness* complains;
No matter for the *Text*, so they baul, and *take pains*,
Hold out *Brow* and *Lungs*, there's no need of any *Brains*.¹⁵⁵

Allegations of low musical quality in performance, then, were only one of several discourses which could be weaponised against itinerant ballad singers, and not a universally held belief by any means.

¹⁵¹ Ward, *The London Spy*, Part 11, p.8.

¹⁵² [Laurence Braddon], *An Humble Proposal for Relieving, Reforming and Employing the Poor* (London: Thomas Warner, 1720), p.43.

¹⁵³ William Riley, *Parochial Music Corrected* (London: for the Author, 1762), pp.3-4.

¹⁵⁴ For instance, for Restoration Nonconformist Ambrose Rigge, ballad singing's tunes were irrelevant: more cogent were that it made 'such a Noise ... that People can hardly do their Business, or hear one another Speak', and that it 'stirr[ed] up Strife amongst People, Mis-naming, and Lying, and Slandering of them'. *Constancy in the Truth Commended: being a True Account of the Life, Sufferings and Collected Testimonies of ... Ambrose Rigge* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), p.56.

¹⁵⁵ Anonymous, *A Search after Wit: or, a Visitation of the Authors* (London: E. Hawkins, 1691), p.14.

Indeed, given ballad singers' role in altering ballad titles to highlight their topicality, as well as providing feedback to printers and selling ballads in creative ways – not merely holding the attention of the street with the strength of their lungs alone – the charge of brainlessness was not very fair.¹⁵⁶ Paula McDowell discusses some interesting eighteenth-century texts which defend ballad printers in terms of patriotic pride in 'national manufactures', which includes cheap print, and praises their inventiveness.¹⁵⁷ A droll defence of ballad singers themselves was published in a 1755 edition of *The World*, which relied firstly on Classical precedent, namely, the familiar trope that Homer was not unlike a ballad singer himself. However, it also engages with the contemporary reality of ballad singing, describing them as:

... my fair countrywomen, whose melodious voices give every syllable (not of a lean and flashy, but of a fat and plump song) it's [sic.] just emphasis, to the delight, and instruction of the attentive audience. ...

Were it not for this musical society, the country people would never know how the world of letters goes on. Party songs might come out, and the parson never see them; jovial songs, and the squire never hear them; or love songs, and his daughter never sigh over them. I would have a ballad-singer well furnished with all these, before she sets out on her travels: then bloody murders for school-boys and apprentices, conundrums and conjuring books for footmen and maid-servants, histories and story-books for young masters and misses, will turn to an excellent account.¹⁵⁸

It is hard to assess the level of irony in this description – on the one hand, an 'attentive audience' and singers having 'melodious voices' are hard to reconcile with contemporary discourses about ballad singing; on the other, it recognises the roles of ballad singers in distributing print to isolated rural communities. Like the texts McDowell highlights, it considers ballad singers to be part of the print industry, whose existence is ambivalent but necessary and inevitable. Other moralist writings make the point that squires' daughters should not sigh over love songs, nor should domestic servants waste their time with conundrums or conjuring books.¹⁵⁹ Yet this was part of the fabric of British society, vital economic and cultural infrastructure. Jeremy Barlow draws attention to a cartoon from the end of the eighteenth century in which unruly British humour was lionised during wartime

¹⁵⁶ Natascha Wurzbach, *The Rise of the English Street Ballad, 1550-1650* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), pp.15-16, 26-27; McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making" ', pp.158-159.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.155-156, 159.

¹⁵⁸ T. D., 'To Mr. Fitz-Adam', *World*, 159 (6 November 1755), p.894-895.

¹⁵⁹ For instance, Hanway, pp.281, 420.

as an antidote to French deference.¹⁶⁰ Ballads often carried patriotic messages, and appealed to competing visions of patriotism when making factional political or religious arguments.¹⁶¹ Likewise, they had a relationship to hierarchies of social class and gender which was often far from antagonistic: they problematised abuses of power, but also naturalised inequalities by mocking the poor and those who stretched the limits of social fluidity, by, for example, bringing their rapist to court.¹⁶² As such, ballads could act as an instrument of Gramscian hegemony, producing consent among its audiences for the exercise of power by the ruling elite.¹⁶³ Perhaps knowledge of this underlies the discourses which McDowell identifies, perceiving ballads as necessary even if their singers were considered unsavoury.

However, the central animus of the antipathy towards ballad singers is harder to identify in any one discursive strand. A *Spectator* piece from the early 1720s perhaps illustrates the structural material conditions underlying the often violent hostility to ballad singers, regardless of the diverse apparent rationalisations for it. The protagonist describes in vivid detail his journeys through London using various modes of transport, including being driven by a female ‘excellent Coach Woman’. He claims that travelling by foot was a false economy compared to the expense of a coach, since ‘some odd Adventure among Beggars, Ballad-Singers, or the like, detains and throws me into Expence’, an admission that these marginalised people were able to exert some power over him. As the protagonist is drawn to the ‘new’ ballad being sung on the corner of Warwick Street, near genteel Piccadilly but also uncomfortably close to the deprivation of Holborn, he enters a radically different social space from that of a coach or a house. The ballad singers, by gathering an audience around them, had brought into close juxtaposition a ‘Mob’ of people of various socio-economic categories, who were all able to see and interact with each other. Ballad singing had therefore created an intangible theatre, in which one could see and be seen: the proximity of the ‘Mob’ allows a beggar to confront the genteel protagonist, ‘to turn the Eyes of the good Company upon me’, and thus enforce upon him the moral economy of charity

¹⁶⁰ Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.139, 150-151.

¹⁶¹ For instance, Fumerton and Palmer, ‘Lasting Impressions of the Common Woodcut’, pp.390-394.

¹⁶² See Figure 5.1.

¹⁶³ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers [1971], 1992), pp.12-13.

(left implicit, but clearly present, in this account). The watchful eyes of the ballad singers' audience have instantly become an informal jury, judging the conduct of the beggar and the genteel man according to what Tim Hitchcock describes as the 'complex and changing culture of obligation and right' surrounding urban begging.¹⁶⁴ In this case, the beggar – using a line the author undoubtedly stole from a joke book – elicited laughs rather than pity from the audience by accidentally revealing his subtextual desire for alcohol, thus allowing the genteel protagonist respite from his obligation to support the poor, and an opportunity to escape from scrutiny.¹⁶⁵ Yet this was a spatial order, generated by ballad singers, which did not merely inconvenience but undermined the power of genteel auditors. In the moral economy of begging – within which ballad singing sometimes resided – the powerful had fewer rights and far more obligations than they did in the physical, legal and cultural infrastructure of everyday life.

Singing ballads was a practice seemingly feared for its ability to disrupt spatial order, but as Jensen's discussion of their performance (discussed earlier) evokes, ballad singers had very few resources with which to produce an impact upon a space. Unlike fiddlers, their voices competed on an even footing with the noises of a rural fair, execution, or town street, most of which were constituted of other human voices; hence the importance of finding a good 'pitch'.¹⁶⁶ The emphasis on strength of lungs in textual descriptions, 'Roaring', 'Squalling' and 'Bawl[ing]', suggest that they learned ways of projecting their voices efficiently, while also being expressive – the words used to demean their performance all have different sonic and emotional implications. Indeed, the satirical poem stating that ballad singers work their '*Brow and Lungs*' equally hard perhaps suggests that there was a visual component to this performance, depicting characters and emotions from the texts in an attention-grabbing manner (perhaps with exaggerated facial expressions). The extreme emotions of broadside ballads, and their performance in contexts such as executions and fairs where passions ran high, allowed singers to perform a wide variety of extreme affects. Ballad texts often have a lamenting, moralising or bawdy tone, while discussing events such

¹⁶⁴ Tim Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 3 (2005), 478-498, pp.478-479.

¹⁶⁵ *The Spectator, The Sixth Edition* (London: J. Tonson, 1723), 6, 454 (11 August 1712), 219-224, p.222.

¹⁶⁶ See notes 57 and 130.

as vicious crimes, the tragic deaths of lovers, or playfully-depicted sexual antics (including, distressingly, assault and rape).¹⁶⁷ In iconography, too, ballad singers are often seen with mouths wide, perhaps to maximise volume, but also to maximise facial expressiveness, at the expense of feminine delicacy.¹⁶⁸ Crafting a moralising – or conversely an avuncular ‘worldly’ persona – was also a manipulation of status, one which could appeal to different audiences or different occasions. At times, ballad singers could also fall back upon the economy of charitable obligation which beggars relied upon; Natascha Wurzbach’s analysis of ballad texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries confirmed that one frequent demand in ballad texts was to pay for a sheet if the song had moved them, an appeal to a sense of natural justice and obligation.¹⁶⁹

Although the gentry hated and feared ballad singers seemingly because of their ability to disrupt the continuity between socio-economic power and control over space, the populace at large perhaps mistrusted ballad singers because they manipulated emotions for money. Wurzbach suggests that many ballads have prefatory passages implying a broader manipulation of auditors’ sense of relationship, from asking them to ‘lend an ear’, to demanding to be trusted by them.¹⁷⁰ The emphasis in ballad titles on events being ‘true’, even in stories where such ‘truth’ is seemingly irrelevant – several laments for former lovers who have died by suicide are needlessly specific about the names and locations of the men and women involved – suggest that a performance of trustworthiness was important for a ballad singer.¹⁷¹ Yet the artifice of this performance compromised ballad singers’ ability to gain trust in other contexts. In 1755 Abraham Randolph testified as a witness for the prosecution in a robbery trial, characterising his occupation as ‘sell[ing] a few books about the streets’, but the accused rounded on him, suggesting the prosecution was ‘nothing but

¹⁶⁷ For instance, compare the drastically different tones between the rape of a maidservant characterised as a joke in ‘Two Trials from Guild-hall’ (Figure 5.1), and the moralising, tragic tone of ‘Virtue in Danger’ (London: No publisher, n.d., EBBA ID 32531), a story about an attempted rape on a young lady by her footman.

¹⁶⁸ Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.135-137, 140-141; Salman, *Peddlers and the Popular Press*, pp.58-59, 62, and note also exceptions to the rule where feminine grace is emphasised over cruder qualities, pp.65-66.

¹⁶⁹ Wurzbach, *The Rise of the English Street Ballad*, pp.61-62.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 51, 59-60.

¹⁷¹ For instance, ‘The Despairing Lover’ (London: J. Shooter, n.d. [c. 1700?], EBBA ID 22116), or ‘An Answer to the Cook-Maid’s Tragedy’ (London: J. Deacon, n.d., EBBA ID 22155).

spite and malice ... This evidence of [the prosecutor's] is a ballad-singer'. Randolph was forced to admit that 'I do [sing ballads] sometimes, and I also sell pamphlets and godly books'.¹⁷² The jury did not find Randolph, or the other prosecution witnesses credible, and found the accused innocent. Even though Randolph's professed occupation – selling cheap print on the street – was already adjacent to ballad singing in terms of social status, the accused emphasised Randolph's singing of ballads: presumably because he expected the jury to consider that evidence of inherent dishonesty. In 1744 Joseph Haughton was an ineffectual character witness for the defendant in a fraud trial, but ballad singing again proved a stain on his reputation. Upon introducing himself as a 'Fanstick Maker', a 'person in the Court said, that this Witness is a Ballad Singer'. Haughton's description of his occupation may have been accurate – making fan sticks may indeed have been his primary source of income – but could not deny that he had sung ballads: 'I cannot say I never did sing', he retorted. He claimed, upon further questioning from the judge, that he had last sung half a year ago.¹⁷³ Clearly, the judge in this trial was concerned that Haughton was being dishonest about his occupation (although ballad singing could work alongside other occupations as part of the 'economy of makeshifts'), but the reason for Haughton's recalcitrance, as well as the court's interest, was that ballad singing was not an 'honest' occupation, its performers not to be treated with much credence in court. The tactical manipulations which ballad singers used to gain trust and demand attention in the street, for money, devalued their truthfulness in other contexts.

It is notoriously difficult to separate the reality of ballad singing from polemical discourses about it. Fear and mistrust of ballad singers permeates many contemporary texts, from newspaper reports to novels to advice books and memoirs. Although this discourse perhaps over-states the degree to which ballad singers were young, female, and engaged in other economies of makeshift such as begging, survival sex work and crime, it is important to note that these qualities are not mutually exclusive with skill in performance or musical ability. The violence and prevalence of the ill-feeling towards ballad singers – often premised on their ability to transform a streetscape or manipulate an audience – is a

¹⁷² *OBPO* t17550515-21.

¹⁷³ *OBPO* t17440510-29.

testament to their skill. By the eighteenth century, ballad singing was a centuries-old tradition: it is easy to find the material continuities through its evolution (woodcuts and type-faces reused for decades or centuries, a repertory of texts and tunes that constantly added novelties to old classics), but there were also undoubtedly continuities and traditions in oral performance. When twelve-year-old Judith Bacon, or the teenage Rebecca Carter, shadowed older women as they sang ballads around the London streets, they were learning the tactics necessary to earn money from singing ballads: not only techniques of singing and acting, but of adapting to place and time, and gauging the desires of their clientele. That knowledge would allow them to better reshape the urban street around them during performance, manipulating interpersonal dynamics to their advantage and creating a space fertile with new imaginative possibilities.

Conclusion

Ballad singing and fiddling, the two musical performance traditions which are most frequently present in eighteenth-century sources about servant life, were both practices which allowed performers to manipulate space and time to their advantage. They shared tunes with each other extensively, and sometimes accompanied each other in the same performances. This is unsurprising, because they often shared performance contexts: fairgrounds, public houses and street corners. Nevertheless, this chapter has focused on some of the most radically divergent contexts in which they would have both found themselves: fiddling at Erddig, and singing in London streets in urban contexts like St Clement Danes. These spaces had different dynamics, and the musicians had different roles within them. 'Jack the Turner', the fiddler at Erddig, empowered by the legitimacy of his position as someone employed by the house's owner, was in a radically different position to a ballad singer, who had to carve out a status for themselves through force of personality in a conflicted and contested streetscape. It is astonishing that several of the same tunes were performed in both contexts, a testament to the degree to which music as a spatial practice was a matter of performance rather than text.

Likewise, as musical forms fiddle dance tunes and sung ballads had competing demands, and there is some evidence of formal divergence between the two in John Thomas's tune-book (in which traditional ballad tunes are juxtaposed with genteel minuets and new country dances). Fiddling, since it often accompanied dance, required a strong sense of phrase structure from its tunes, with repetitive elements used in a formulaic manner and clearly delineated cadences. Where older ballad tunes (perhaps crafted with less of a dual purpose in mind) are notated in manuscript tune-books, on the other hand, it is clear they needed to be sufficiently free in rhythm to accommodate the expression of strong emotion and crafting of different characters. Cadences and regularity of phrase structure were less structurally important when a verse had its own rhyme and meter.

The role ballad singers had in producing unique social spaces to ply their wares within the urban street is made clear by trial reports, contemporary reactions to ballad singing. Insights into how a fiddler might have linked space and time into their readings of tunes, for instance, during dances at Erddig in the 1780s, have been created by an analysis of fiddle tunes primed to encounter devices for spatial and temporal organisation. This emphasis on vernacular musicians as manipulators of human geography – using a variety of techniques of physical performance, sound and psychology to create spaces which entrained their audiences' bodies and engaged their emotions – requires a rich and holistic study. Neither the literary approach to ballad texts which has dominated scholarship on ballads, nor granular scholarship on vernacular fiddle-playing techniques, can alone describe how these musical forms functioned as social technologies or spatial practices. Yet, for eighteenth-century observers, particularly the servants whose memories of fiddling and ballad-singing are described above, these aspects of music-making were paramount: the human interactions the music encouraged, or the dynamics of the room or street transformed by the performance.

Some servants will have had histories of singing ballads, perhaps as young girls, shadowing older women in their neighbourhoods. Other servants, mostly male, will have followed the example of the 'Fiddling Footman' and played an instrument in their leisure time. In 1751, David Mills was accused of murder after an altercation with a woman in the

porter's hall of a baronet's house (suggesting he was probably a manservant): witnesses including a footman state it was 11 pm, and he had been playing a German flute, with a 'Musick book' facing him.¹⁷⁴ This was the kind of performance context 'fiddling footmen' – whose violins sometimes appear, stolen, in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* – probably performed in.¹⁷⁵ Yet all servants will have experienced both ballad singing and fiddling over the course of their lives, particularly given how important fairgrounds and markets were to both musicians and servants soliciting work. For these servants, the spatial experience of music lingered as powerfully evocative memories, populating their mental geographies with sounds and feelings.

¹⁷⁴ *OBPO* t17510417-38.

¹⁷⁵ For instance, *OBPO* t17670909-20.

Chapter 5: Servants, Music, and the Production of Gender

Introduction

This chapter will outline a critical framework for understanding eighteenth-century gender, utilising the different concepts of gender that are invoked in eighteenth-century accounts of domestic service and music-making. In doing so, it will explore the different gendering processes experienced by eighteenth-century servants, how they might exercise agency over their genders, and what roles music might play in these processes. Its name a nod to Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, this chapter argues that gender can be read as a commodity, in a Marxist sense: something that is produced and reproduced, consumed or enjoyed, and whose value and nature is established through transaction. Susan Willis has already read gender in such a manner in *A Primer for Daily Life*, in the context of the late twentieth century's gendered toys, and the commodification of essentialised sexual characteristics as gender.¹ In the eighteenth-century also, gender was traded within both a material political economy – the economy of goods and services, labour and commerce – and a psychosocial libidinal economy, that is, the economy of desires, (self-)identification and subjectivity.² So too was music such a commodity; and in the eighteenth-century sources which this chapter examines, neither the performance of gender nor the performance of music can be understood without considering their value within these two intertwined economies.

To suggest that gender is analogous to a commodity risks criticism for being reductionist and excessively materialist. To a certain extent, this criticism is fair: gender systems purport to schematize a very real diversity of human neurologies and physiologies,

¹ Susan Willis, *A Primer for Daily Life* (London: Routledge, 1991), 23-40.

² For a succinct definition of the libidinal economy, see Frank B. Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Duke UP, 2010), p.7. The term appears to have been coined in the psycho-analytical, 'anti-academic' prose of Jean-François Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (Bloomington: Indiana UP [1974], 1993), which defies summary or analysis.

whose differences cannot be reduced to, or explained solely in terms of social factors.³ However, for a historian, the changing social schemas within which neurological and physiological difference is understood must be the primary focus of study. Neurological and physiological distinctions can be effectively modelled by demonstrating the roles individual agency and diversity play in producing gender. Judith Butler's theory of gender as an individual (although compelled and habitual) performance, in which my theory of gender is rooted, has faced similar criticism, largely because readers have misunderstood it as representing gender as solely a matter of individual choice and/or arbitrary social construction, minimising embodied and psychological relations to gender.⁴ Butler's *Gender Trouble*, however, was not intended to be a comprehensive account of gender but rather to address particular shortcomings within feminist theory. Likewise, the model of gender I present here is intended to generate insights within a specific historical context, rather than provide a universal explication of gender. As this chapter shall show, there are unique features of eighteenth-century British social relations which make commodity and transaction a particularly useful framework to understand contemporary gender discourse.

Henri Lefebvre's *Production of Space* considers the idea that 'space', a nebulous abstraction often understood in terms of separate realms of the physical, mental and social, is a product.⁵ To theorise space itself, as a totalised 'finished product', breaks it down into linguistic discourses about space, readings of a space rather than an account of it.⁶ Lefebvre instead examined the processes by which space is produced, reproduced, imagined and lived in. Gender, likewise, is often abstracted into the physical, mental and social, and is impossible to describe in words without reducing its complex codes, its sheer emotional weight and visceral presence, to one-dimensional semiotic formulae. As in analyses of space,

³ For more on the complex relationships between neurology and gender, see Natalie Reed, 'Born This Way (Reprise): The New Essentialism', *Free Thought Blogs*, 2013 (freethoughtblogs.com/nataliereed, accessed 02.10.2019); neuroscience is starting to consider these questions more reflexively, as in Ann Fausto-Sterling, 'Gender/Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Identity Are in the Body: How Did They Get There?' *The Journal of Sex Research*, 54, 4-5 (2019), 529-555.

⁴ Cristan Williams, 'Gender Performance: The TransAdvocate interviews Judith Butler', *TransAdvocate*, 2014 (www.transadvocate.com, accessed 02.10.2019).

⁵ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell [1974, 1984], 1991), p.26.

⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p.7.

or music, written texts primarily access the propositional elements of gender, underplaying the importance of the non-propositional. In contrast, examining the processes by which gender is produced, reproduced and imagined helps to demystify gender without detracting from its power and force. This chapter will consider domestic service and music, both social practices which played a key role in gender formation, from this perspective – as active producers of gender rather than reflections of an essentialised, static ideology of gender. In turn, the commodified performance of gender will be shown to be an important element of the production of space in eighteenth-century Britain.

If gender is to be understood as a form of capital, it is necessary to conceptualise what might be meant, in eighteenth-century Britain, by an economy of gender. In characterising the ideas of Luce Irigaray, Butler invokes the notion of a ‘signifying economy’ of gender, referring to the language and concepts (representations) which people can use to conceive, practice and express their genders. This structure within the libidinal economy, Irigaray considered, was entirely centred upon the masculine, ‘phallogocentric’, so that women were not merely marked out as ‘Other’ to define the unmarked masculine, but both ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ are part of a closed loop of signification which excludes those to whom this discourse does not belong. Women, then, become unrepresentable, and femininity is merely a distorted mirror image of the concepts of masculinity.⁷ This argument has a particular relevance to the early modern period, because of Thomas Laqueur’s contention that it saw a transition from a ‘one-sex’ to a ‘two-sex’ model of human biology.⁸ In the former, the female is expressly an inverted, sometimes even defective reflection of the male, a body othered by excesses of cold, damp humours and deficiencies of choleric ones.⁹ The difference between them is one of degree, rather than of fundamental otherness. In contrast, the two-sex model posits an irreconcilable, metaphysical difference between male and female bodies, where the

⁷ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge [1990], 1999), p.14.

⁸ Laqueur’s ideas are considered important by historians of sexuality, although the timeline for this transition, and whether it was a ‘bottom-up’ or a ‘top-down’ change, are matters of dispute. See Karen Harvey, ‘The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century’, *The Historical Journal*, 45, 4 (2002), 899-916, pp.900-901, 903.

⁹ Harvey, ‘The Century of Sex?’, p.901; Michael McKeon, ‘The Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Sexuality Hypothesis’, *Signs*, 37, 4 (2012), 791-801, pp.792-793.

female is in some sense the 'opposite' of male. Female bodies are no longer merely compromised perversions of male bodies, but are separate phenomena altogether, defined by any arbitrary opposition to masculine form.¹⁰ These models both confirm Irigaray's argument, since they are closed systems of gendered signification which only truly represent bodies with reference to masculinity – femininity, in both of these systems, is not its own concept but merely an adjunct to that of masculinity. Thus, the woman's ability to be a subject is critically compromised, in both the 'old' and 'new' supposed frameworks of gender operating in eighteenth-century Britain.¹¹

However, this line of argument – that the female is inherently unrepresentable because all discourse about gender ultimately circles back to a masculine frame of reference – is a universalising tendency. It relies on the assumption that the discursive subject (he who thinks, and therefore is, in Descartes's terms) is entirely, and always conflated with the masculine, creating the closed loop of signification which precludes the possibility of full female personhood.¹² That the subject and the male are often conflated, in European literature and thought during the early modern and modern eras (as well as in other times and places), is certainly an important insight. Yet the subject of most eighteenth-century written discourse was also implicitly white, and wealthy (or even genteel), a master rather than a servant. The identification of the 'subject' with the powerful was less an intrinsic discursive asymmetry between 'men' and 'women' and more the enforcement of a specific social hierarchy through the libidinal economy, with differing degrees of subjectivity produced for men (and women) of different ranks.¹³

¹⁰ McKeon, 'The Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Sexuality Hypothesis', p.793; Tim Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex in Eighteenth-Century England', *History Workshop Journal*, 41 (1996), 72-90, pp.74, 77-78.

¹¹ Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p.25.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp.15-16, 18-19. Compare with Wilderson, who contends that the fundamental antagonism in the construction of subjectivity is not between [masculine] 'Self' and [pseudo-feminine] 'Other' but between 'Human' and 'Black'. 'Self' and 'Other' are both relationally defined; the 'socially dead' Black is defined by an absence of Human relation. Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*, pp.67-73.

¹³ Wilderson would contend that this subjectivity was produced through the social death of Black people. See note 12, and also Chapter 2.

Women also wrote, wrote about themselves as subjects in countless memoirs and diaries, considered issues of gender and class in the texts they produced as maidservant poets, polite novelists or ballad writers, and addressed female subjects.¹⁴ Eliza Haywood, novelist, essayist and (alleged) author of *Present for a Servant Maid* (which has been cited frequently previously), is in that text a woman addressing women as subjects, not as 'Others', marked or fictional, but with precisely the same (patronising) tone as Thomas Seaton addresses manservants in his book *On the Conduct of Servants in Great Families*. It might be argued that women such as Haywood are in some sense fictionalising or alienating or depersonalising themselves by employing discursive tools crafted by men. It is indeed compelling to accept that even female authors, when writing about gender, borrow from masculinist constructs, and thus enforce on others the traumas, large and small, which have shaped their own relationship to gender. Yet so too do men fictionalise themselves, sometimes in traumatic ways, to perform (and write) within a schema of gender. Michèle Cohen and Tim Hitchcock's volume *English Masculinities, 1660-1800* demonstrates that the (evolving) eighteenth-century gender system did violence to those assigned male at birth as well as those assigned female.¹⁵ It would be absurd to say that men, in this period, were as oppressed by the gender system as women and people of other genders – there was a profound inequality in freedom and comfort in almost every sphere of human life. Yet hegemony is not the same as total monopoly, and this chapter will also consider the ways in which women and others marginalised by the gender system exercised agency through subtle appropriations and manipulations, including in written discourse. The discursive loop between subject and Other is not closed, nor is it invulnerable to manipulation by women; this is what allows the gender system to be read as an economy rather than a simple expression of male power.

Historically, gender theory such as that by Irigaray and Butler has been dominated by the analysis of texts. Yet gender is relationally constructed not only through written representation but through performance in space, with non-propositional meaning

¹⁴ See the discussion of female servant poets and diarists, for instance, in Steedman, pp.280-285.

¹⁵ Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, 'Introduction', in *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), pp.5, 8, 11, 21-22.

generated through interplays of body, clothing, voice, and whatever other factors are associated (however loosely) with gender in a certain society. Any of these elements can be discursive, even if those discourses are lost in translation to textual analysis; they can be representational, even if they cannot be represented in writing. Two especially salient examples for this chapter are acting and singing. Acting is explicitly a representation of character, depicting gender through clothing, gesture, and voice, contextualised within a space.¹⁶ Singing, similarly, represents character and gender through gesture and voice, contextualised within a space.¹⁷ Both are practices which can reinforce or subvert different elements of the texts being performed, intentionally or otherwise, and auditors/viewers have agency to appropriate or manipulate the meaning they derive from the performance in a variety of ways.

Many of these non-propositional elements of gender representation and construction were, in the eighteenth century, as often performed by women as by men. Actresses and female singers were perhaps less prominent and well-paid than their male counterparts, but nonetheless numerous.¹⁸ Likewise, women had a great deal of responsibility for the generation of taste in clothing and interior design, as well as a considerable hand in the production, curation, maintenance and staging of clothes and homewares.¹⁹ Recent quantitative analysis has even shown that (wealthy) women constituted a high proportion of subscribers to prestigious publications in intellectual and cultural fields (and a higher proportion still of women subscribing to musical publications).²⁰ Further, although there is little to no meaningful quantitative evidence, it is likely that a high proportion of ballad singers were women. Women also submitted new ballads to printers, and a few printing

¹⁶ Séverine Lancia, 'The Actress and Eighteenth-Century Ideals of Femininity', in *The Invisible Woman: Aspects of Women's Work in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Ashgate, 2005), 131-138, pp.134-137.

¹⁷ Suzanne Aspden, *The Rival Sirens: Performance and Identity on Handel's Operatic Stage* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), pp.22-26, 30-32, 50; although note the limitations on singers' agency, pp.48-49.

¹⁸ Lancia, 'The Actress and Eighteenth-Century Ideals of Femininity', p.132.

¹⁹ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, pp.230, 232, 235-240; but also see the role of men in consumerism, pp.243-246.

²⁰ Simon D. I. Fleming, 'The Rise of the Female Musical Patron: A Study of Women Subscribers in British Eighteenth-Century Music Subscription Lists', Conference paper, 34th Annual Conference on Music in Eighteenth-Century Britain (30th November 2018, Foundling Museum, London).

presses were even owned and run by women (albeit usually temporarily).²¹ Since ballad singers had such a major role in the dissemination of popular print, and indeed information and vernacular culture in general, it might have seemed absurd to eighteenth-century teenagers (the demographic which might have favoured ballads most, as Chapter 4 explored) to suggest that gender discourses were entirely constructed by men. Most of the gendered discourses they would have encountered in their everyday lives were as likely to have been constructed and performed by a woman as a man. This included everything from the clothing they, and those around them wore (and the meanings they had learned to associate with it),²² to the gendering of the internal and external spaces they passed through,²³ to the songs, poems and information they gleaned from ballad singers, mercury women (who distributed newspapers) and chapmen. Even the public houses a Londoner could have frequented might well have been owned by a woman, or managed by one.²⁴ Grounding gendered discourses in the material world demonstrates that the conflation of the universal subject with the masculine in eighteenth-century discourses is a symptom of hegemony, rather than a cause of monopoly.

Given that women played such a large part in constructing and enforcing gendered discourses, it seems paradoxical that the gender system should circumscribe women's agency, diminish their rights and personhood, and degrade them materially. However, the idea of the 'libidinal economy' provides a helpful conceptual framework for understanding why women acted as they did. Gender was an economy, closely interrelated with financial, political and socio-cultural capital. Every person's gender capital, that is, their ability to perform their (preferred) gender with safety and security, was relationally dependent on the

²¹ Paula McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making": Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse', *The Eighteenth Century*, 47, 2/3 (2006), 151-178, pp.158-159.

²² Deborah Simonton, 'Claiming their Place in the Corporate Community: Women's Identity in Eighteenth-Century Towns', in *The Invisible Woman: Aspects of Women's Work in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Ashgate, 2005), 101-116, pp.112-113.

²³ For instance, the kitchen, the centre of any household's productive activities (and often of its leisure activities too): Sara Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen, 1600-1850* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), pp.12, 88-89, 94.

²⁴ Simonton, 'Claiming their Place', pp.101-102; Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History* (London: Longman, 1983), p.205.

acceptance of others, a commodity implicitly evaluated and transacted in a libidinal marketplace. Eighteenth-century people encountered a wide variety of currencies only exchangeable with each other through problematic, situational interpersonal negotiation – shillings, pounds, guineas, colonial currencies, foreign currencies and counterfeit. So too was the value of a person's gender capital, and all of the constructs of respectability, honesty and reputation that rested on it, reliant on negotiation with other actors, who also needed to obtain good value from the transaction. Certain malpractice, such as the clipping of coin or violence against sexual partners, brought the attention of the law and more fixed, stable institutions. Yet even contact with the grand institutions of eighteenth-century governance became a matter of interpersonal negotiation. Gender capital, like cultural, social and economic capital, could be leveraged for material benefit in all areas of life, even the courtroom, one of the places where libidinal economy touches the political.²⁵

These gender-economic relations, as this chapter will show, were far from equal: some had far greater control over the means of gender production than others, generally accompanying other forms of economic and cultural power. These power relations, manipulating the value and supply of gender capital, aimed to ensure that it was always in the individual economic interests of the subordinate and the subaltern to act in ways which maintained the status of those above them. Thus, women acted apparently against their class interests in the sphere of gender – by accepting and enforcing patriarchal standards of respectability, for instance – for the same reasons that solidarities of economic class in eighteenth-century Britain were brief, fragmented and local.²⁶ A wealthy mistress like advice book author Eliza Haywood, for instance, was expected to maintain an economic and social position which militated against meaningful solidarity with her maidservants; they were, to some extent, on opposite sides of a zero-sum transaction. Tim Meldrum discusses divorce cases in which maidservants even tactically attacked their mistress's respectability, especially when faults such as 'extravagance' or adultery were suspected. Sometimes maids

²⁵ Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor, 1780–1870* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), pp.29-30, 33.

²⁶ Movements of radical solidarity were longer-lasting within occupational groups, but the heterogeneity of the London poor, for instance, made solidarity harder. See, for instance, E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books [1968], n.d.), p.21; Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor*, pp.155-156.

and mistresses protected each other from violence, but such solidarity was fragile and temporary.²⁷ Likewise, respectable maidservants were encouraged by many employers not to provide food for their friends or beggars, or work for charwomen.²⁸ Solidarity was not entirely precluded – when the Society for the Reformation of Manners stepped up its persecution of sex workers, respectable local residents often came to their defence (sometimes riotously).²⁹

Yet, as the next section will show, there were strategies the powerful used to ensure that their hegemonic schema of gender would be accepted, enforced and internalised by their targets. Following this, this chapter will describe a series of instances of musical performance situations – first in a townhouse kitchen, and then in a variety of contexts in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. Through analysing these, the theoretical implications of the idea of gender as a produced commodity will unfold.

Strategic and Tactical Production of Gender

There are two principal hypotheses I would propose in establishing a theory of gender as a commodity. The first hypothesis is that gender is produced, not only in habitual, personal performance, but through a variety of structural, strategic and tactical processes, all of which are economic as well as socio-cultural. For instance, wearing a dress is a performance of gender that requires such economic processes as manufacture and marketing, washing and maintenance, as well as the learned abilities to don and appear respectable in the dress. The second hypothesis, as I will discuss in the next section, is that gender can be transacted and exchanged for other forms of capital, such as cultural capital or money.

²⁷ Meldrum, pp.94-97.

²⁸ Ibid., pp.49-50; Anne Barker, *The Complete Servant Maid* (London: J. Cooke, n.d.), pp.11-12; Haywood, pp.27-28.

²⁹ Francis Boorman, illustrated talk, 'St. Clement Danes 1660-1900: The Victoria County History Returns to Westminster' (7th March 2019 at the Westminster Archives, 10 St. Ann's Street, London).

From well before the eighteenth century, too, promoting, modifying, and reiterating the gendered coding of clothing has also been a commercialised, economic endeavour.³⁰ Even when a gendered performance is not embodied in a material object, it is still contextualised by an economic and social infrastructure that regulates (does not entirely define, but nonetheless regulates) the meanings it can hold. A comparison can be made with music. Musicologists and ethnomusicologists are accustomed to considering, unpacking and historicising the schema which imbue musical performances and compositions with (potential) meanings. For instance, William Weber explores how political and cultural structures within the English upper classes imbued the 1784 Handel Commemoration with particularly rich and heterogeneous value and meaning.³¹ Musical performance, like clothing, is one of the means by which gender is produced, making this not merely an analogy but an exemplar.

Thinking about gender as a produced commodity suggests that there are both producers and ‘consumers’ of gender. The idea of a ‘consumer’ of gender makes more sense when considered in light of Michel de Certeau’s theoretical axiom in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, that ‘consumption’ is in fact a form of production. Indeed, the forms of appropriation, manipulation and juxtaposition de Certeau finds to be involved in ‘consumption’ are familiar language for describing the performance of gender: reading (a very pure form of ‘consumption’) is a production of meaning that the reader ‘is not capable of stockpiling’ without resort to other productive processes; it is a ‘mutation [that] makes the text habitable, like a rented apartment’.³² The eighteenth-century maidservant, as much as she needed to make her mistress’s wash-house a habitable space to sleep, needed also to make the gender she carried habitable, meaningful. Both involved what de Certeau called tactics: ‘operations – multiform and fragmentary, relative to situations and details, insinuated into and concealed within devices whose mode of usage they constitute’.³³ Women used misogynist

³⁰ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), pp.264-265, 272, 278.

³¹ William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp.223-227, 242.

³² Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press [1984], 1988), p.xxi.

³³ M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p.xv.

insults like 'whore' and 'bitch' to stake out their own respectability and maintain their position;³⁴ they used assumptions of female innocence and naivety to clear their reputations; even the deeply dangerous belief that men were unable to control their sexual impulses could be manipulated to obtain help in difficult situations.³⁵ From a material standpoint, the gendering art of dressing oneself and curating an outfit is the epitome of the production involved in consumption – the creation of meaning through the bricolage of existing elements.³⁶

Men and people of other genders, of course, used similar tactics to make the gender schema they inhabited fit their needs and desires. As Tim Hitchcock describes in his analysis of Richard Cannon's diary, Cannon's relationships with women changed tactically throughout the different stages of his career. Cannon had been a farm servant who nursed a certain resentment against women, but was rooted in his community and therefore was compelled to respect the women he worked alongside, courted and bedded.³⁷ Yet when he became an excise inspector, necessarily rootless and separated from any of the local communities in whose inns he stayed, embedded only in a toxic masculine hierarchy, he participated in his colleagues' humiliation of women and assaulted several himself.³⁸ He also engaged in more consistently penetrative sex, less responsive to the desires of his partner, and more in keeping with the demands of the 18th-century gender system (in which active penetration of a sexual partner was increasingly essential to manhood).³⁹ Later in his career, he used his position as a teacher to sexually assault his students.⁴⁰ These increasingly cruel acts of misogyny were tactical responses to an idealised structure of sexual relation which he could manipulate to fulfil his personal desire to dominate and abuse women. Many men, as well as most women, were 'marginal' in terms of cultural production (defined in de

³⁴ Lynn MacKay, *Respectability and the London Poor*, pp.22-23.

³⁵ See the example in Chapter 3 of the woman saved from abduction by a crowd of Claremarket butchers.

³⁶ Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p.266-268.

³⁷ Tim Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny in the Life of John Cannon, 1684-1743', *English Masculinities*, 25-43, pp.27, 30, 34-35.

³⁸ Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny', pp.37-39.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.41-42; Randolph Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity in Modern Culture: Male Sodomy and Female Prostitution in Enlightenment London', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 2, 2 (1991), 186-203, pp.191, 195-196.

⁴⁰ Hitchcock, 'Sociability and Misogyny', p.25.

Certeau's terms), and relied on ephemeral tactics of appropriation and manipulation to achieve their ends (most of them, hopefully, less violent than Richard Cannon's). Yet the universality of this tactical relation to gender did not flatten, but rather exacerbated social hierarchies. The resources poor women had with which to manipulate gender were vastly smaller than those wealthy women had, and men also had different levels of empowerment to deflect gender to their own ends.

Thus far I have only discussed what de Certeau would describe as tactics (of gender production). However, these tactics can be defined against strategies. In this context, that would mean the calculated actions of those who control the means of production of gender structures or schema; representations, prescriptions (both explicit and implicit), the systems around and through which tactics had to be employed. The definition of a strategy, in de Certeau's formulation, is that it involves 'a subject of will and power', either a person or an institution, invested with a 'proper' place, in some way isolated from its 'environment'. That legitimated position 'generat[es] relations' with the outside, creating a totalised division between the subject and the Other. Unlike a tactic, for which 'whatever it wins, it does not keep', strategies accumulate power and/or advantage.⁴¹

The spatial dimensions of strategy de Certeau insists upon – 'the "proper" is the victory of space over time' – suggests that it can be understood in terms of Lefebvre's tripartite division between spatial practice, representations of space, and representational space.⁴² The control of space necessary to produce the totalising division between subject and Other (which de Certeau requires of strategists) certainly requires mastery of spatial representation and hegemony over spatial practice. Yet in terms of gender, particularly in eighteenth-century Britain where spatial practice was often fluid and situational, rather than encoded in buildings and visible symbols, the distinction between strategist and tactician was very often more one of social role than of space or place.

⁴¹ M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p.xix.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.xix, Lefebvre p.33.

For instance, Eliza Haywood used several tactics to succeed as a female novelist, ingratiating herself with tastemaker Aaron Hill, and crafting an aesthetic of elegance and bourgeois sophistication that ensured popularity despite the extreme prejudice (and ‘gallant leniency’) of literary reviewers towards female writers.⁴³ Yet as the author of advice book *Present for a Servant Maid*, she was acting as a strategist, producing a prescriptive text which explicitly aims to induct maidservants into patterns of proper gendered behaviour and disposition. For instance, she warned against ‘Apeing the Fashion’ of one’s social betters, since it had no utility value for marriage: ‘it was not by laying out their Wages in these Fopperies [your mothers and grandmothers] got good Husbands’.⁴⁴ By her appeal to future prospects of marriage, Haywood implicitly outlined a schema of gender in which a good marriage was the best outcome for a maidservant’s career, and the most important consideration in every economic calculation. Imitating fashions could also irritate a maidservant’s mistress:

Besides, can you believe any Mistress can be pleased to find, that she no sooner puts on a new thing, than her Maid immediately jumps into something as like it as she can? Do you think it is possible for her to approve, that the Time she pays and feeds her for, and expects should be employ’d in her Business, shall be trifled away in curling her own Hair, pinching her Caps, tying up her Knots, and setting her self forth, as tho’ she had no other thing to do, but to prepare for being look’d at?⁴⁵

This passage relied upon the idea that a servant’s time is purchased to produce gender for their employer, both through housewifery – cleaning and cooking – and through the washing of clothes and preparation of her mistress’s toilet. Any appropriation of those capacities for herself (for instance, by ‘curling her own Hair’) was therefore theft, just as the cook who took quality food (which she herself had cooked) as a perquisite was considered to be stealing.⁴⁶ The passage also naturalised the inequality between mistress and maid, implicit as a pre-discursive truth that should resonate with the reader’s sense of internal

⁴³ Kathryn R. King, ‘New Contexts for Early Novels by Women: The Case of Eliza Haywood, Aaron Hill, and the Hillarians, 1719–1725’, 261–275, p.263–264; Laura Runge, ‘Momentary Fame: Female Novelists in Eighteenth-Century Book Reviews’, 276–298, pp.284–285, both in *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, eds. Paula R. Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

⁴⁴ Haywood, p.22.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.22–23.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.29; Steedman, p.46.

justice. Haywood used the legitimating position of an advice book, and the formalised (parasocial) relationships with readers which it generated, to produce strategies of gender.

The section of Haywood's manual which advises maidservants how to preserve their chastity illustrates how a tactic of survival can be transformed into a strategy of domination by a change in structural position (de Certeau's 'proper place'). Men are always a danger, whether adult manservants (who 'are for the most Part very pert and saucy where they dare, and apt to take Liberties on the least Encouragement') or young apprentices, who should be treated kindly until 'they grow up towards Manhood, lest the Vanity of Youth should make them imagine you have other Motives for it'. Even if an apprentice offers an honourable marriage, the best possible outcome, Haywood instils in the reader a fear of impoverishment:

... and should he marry you before [his apprenticeship is completed], his Parents are disobliged, will do nothing for him, and you both run a very great Risque of being miserable for life.⁴⁷

Since the behaviour of these men cannot be modified, the emphasis is instead on the behaviour of the maidservant: she has 'a Duty ... owing to yourself', an obligation and responsibility, to fight off any impropriety, no matter how forceful; and Haywood is quite sanguine about her ability to do so.⁴⁸ With her fellow servants, the maidservant must avoid the twin perils of seeming either 'proud or prudish' or 'suffer[ing] them to toy or romp with you', by 'behav[ing] with an extreme Civility mixt with Seriousness, but never be too free'.⁴⁹ Haywood is aware that the power of a master over a servant 'will lay you under Difficulties to avoid his Importunities, which it must be confess'd are not easy to surmount', but a 'steady Resolution will enable you' to put up 'a vigorous Resistance [which] is less to be expected in your Station'. This unexpected 'persevering may, perhaps, in Time, oblige him to desist, and acknowledge you have more Reason than himself'. This is a tactic of desperation and survival (since not maintaining chastity would, Haywood maintained, lead to destitution and sex work).⁵⁰ Yet from the pages of an advice book, the recommendations

⁴⁷ Haywood, p.35-36.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.44.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.35.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.44.

to self-police one's own 'Looks and Gestures', allowing no 'wanton Smile, or light coquet Air', and ensuring one spoke 'with the greatest Sedateness',⁵¹ take on the authority of a strategy to form servant women's behaviour. Indeed, it is convergent with other strategies of control over women's bodies, such as in rape trials in the courthouse, where the woman's fulfilment of her 'Duty' to physically resist advances could be endlessly questioned, while the rapist's sexual aggression was considered an indelible part of manhood, and was only stigmatised or criminalised if certain very specific conditions were met.⁵²

In these passages, then, *Present for a Servant Maid* not only reveals how it is producing and enforcing a gender schema, but how tactics of safety and survival can become recontextualised as strategies of control. Of course, the maidservant reading Haywood's manual, in their own tactical appropriation of the text, might recover the original tactical intent to maintain their own safety. Yet positioning safety from sexual assault as a responsibility and a duty, rather than an expectation, allowed masters and mistresses to demand certain 'chaste' behaviours from their maidservant. When this same schema of gender relations was translated by the power of the criminal courts, its effects were even more strategic and controlling, giving men almost unlimited licence for sexual aggression towards women.⁵³ A tactic for women's personal safety becomes aligned with a strategy protecting men's freedom to assault them.

Gender as Transactional and Exchangeable

Understanding eighteenth-century sexual behaviour requires the second principal hypothesis underpinning the model of gender as a commodity. This is that gender is saleable, fungible for cash or other forms of capital (such as social capital); that it is exhaustible, transferable, replaceable; that it can be separated from its owner, packaged. This may not be universally true of gender in every society, but as this section shall explore, eighteenth-century discourses about gender are most easily understood and critically

⁵¹ Ibid., p.45.

⁵² Laurie Edelstein, 'An Accusation Easily to be Made? Rape and Malicious Prosecution in Eighteenth-Century England', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 42, 4 (1998), 351-390, pp.368, 371-372, 377.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 361-362, 364-365.

analysed through this framework. The transactional, exchangeable nature of gender in eighteenth-century Britain is, almost self-evidently, clear in relation to sex work, but also in discourses about and practices of domestic service.

As Trumbach, Tim Hitchcock and other historians of eighteenth-century gender have suggested, after 1700 in London manhood increasingly came to be defined by active, dominant participation in penetrative sex with women. Passivity and/or receptivity, on the other hand, was stigmatised, the province of either women or sodomites.⁵⁴ The transactional element implied by this dichotomy was clear in London's sex industry, in which men could exchange money for a sex act with a woman (while women had far fewer opportunities to hire a male sex worker, and any suggestion of such an inverted dynamic was heavily stigmatised, as in the cases of mistresses who slept with their footmen).⁵⁵ The question that such a transaction raises is what is being exchanged for the money men are providing; what commodity is being sold.

For the anonymous 'Old Trader' who wrote *The Female Glossary*, a cheap, lewd book, it was a woman's sexual organs, specifically, which were being sold (or rented). Vulvas are always, tongue-in-cheek, referred to as 'Commodities'; married women's sexes are 'monopoliz'd Wares'.⁵⁶ Yet this does not mean that it is necessarily the woman's body itself that is being sold. Sometimes the author does play on the ambiguity of whether the woman, or the sexual organ, is being described, personifying the vulva and dehumanising the woman. For instance, the

*Miraculous Pitcher, that holds Water with the Mouth downwards ... frequently attracts great pieces of raw Meat into it's [sic.] Belly ... It may seem odd to talk of a Pitcher's getting Provisions, but our Pitcher's an Animal, and such a voracious One, that it frequently eats itself into a Tympany, which it seldom gets rid of under ... nine Months[.]*⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Hitchcock and Cohen, 'Introduction', pp.6-8; Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender and Sexual Identity', pp.191-193.

⁵⁵ Meldrum, pp.118-120.

⁵⁶ 'An Old Trader', *The Female Glossary: Being a Particular Description of the Principal Commodities of this Island* (London: W. Shaw, n.d. [?1730]), p.12.

⁵⁷ *The Female Glossary*, p.10.

Here the vulva is ascribed intention and motivation, and in so doing, the woman is reduced to the passive adjunct of 'an Animal, and such a voracious One'. More commonly, however, vulvas are described in terms of property and ownership:

The *Nib*, is an inferior sort of Commodity, almost upon a level with the *Twat*, only as that belongs to your purse, burley Dames, this is peculiar to spare, well-shaped Misses, the Difference of the Price is seldom more than a Shilling, and in a dead Time of Trade none at all.⁵⁸

Mouzells, are the Properties of Chambermaids &c. They are a mercenary sort of Creatures, and tho' perhaps they do not often let themselves out at a particular Price, yet they always expect a very handsome Gratuity for their Service.⁵⁹

The equation is here reversed; it is the sexual organ which is a property belonging to the woman, and this, not the woman herself, is the 'Commodity' which the author expects to be sold or rented. Of course, this book is simplifying the complex social transactions involved in sex work in order to produce elaborate and mildly shocking *double entendre*. Yet the disjuncture between the woman and her sexual organs suggests a certain disconnect between person and gender. The 'Old Trader' presents a woman's sex, that is, the locus of her gender, as a commodity separable to some extent from her person.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.13.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.12.

Great News from Guild-Hall: 201

Being an ACCOUNT of

Two Trials on Tuesday

The One of an Eminent *Shoe-Maker* in the City, Who, for Lewd and
Violence offered to his *Maid*, was Fin'd Six Pounds.

The Other of a *Gentleman*, who gave *Love-Powder* to his *Man* and *Maid*-
Servant; for which he was also Fin'd One Hundred and Fifty Pounds.

To the Tune of, *The Guinea Wine* her.

I.
Draw near to hear this Ditty,
that I shall lay before You,
Committed in the City,
and it's true I do assure You.
Come all ye *Coblers* great and small,
And *Shoemakers* that use the *Peggin-Aul*;
Come all, and hear me Prate,
just now I shall relate
one of your *Brother Trade*,
Did serve his *Serving Maid*,
near *Birching Lane*. it's said,
Hedwelt, that did his *Serving-maid* assault.

II.
He took her by her Hand Sir,
and furiously did Kiss Her;
But the *Jade* she would not stand Sir,
alcho' he did embrace her:
Then up her Coats his Hand he thrust,
Like a *Dog at Bear*, he held it fast:
I need not tell you what,
for you may guess at that,
but as some *People* say,
Six Hairs he haw'd away,
for which he's forc'd to pay (found
Six Pound, the dearest Hairs that ere was

III.
Her Master she did Summon,
at *Guild-hall* to appear Sir,
Where the *Trial* it was Common,
for any one to hear Sir,
Her Master, being guilty found,
Eor the *Fact* alas! was fin'd Six Pound:
for he could not deny't,
but that he took her by it,
which cost him very dear,
a pound for evry Hair,
could she but vend her Ware
So well, she might buy the *Devil* out of Hell

IV.
Now the *Trial* it is ended,
and the *Pulling* Jobb is over,
The *Shoemaker* was befriended
we plainly may discover;
For to his *Shame* it may rebound,
That he for evry Hair should pay a Pound
for yet they are not so dainty,
one shilling will buy Twenty:
you Gallants give good Ear,
and do not steal a Hair,
lest that you pay severe,
For one, may unto twenty Shillings come.

The Second Part

Being an Account of a *Gentleman*,
who gave *Love-Powder* to his
Man and *Maid*-*Servant*, &c.

I.
THE Eleventh Day of *June*, Sir
there happened such an other,
But of a different tune Sir,
more unhappy than the other:
Which likewise was at *Guild-Hall* try'd,
And heavy fell upon the *Masters* side,
for to his *Man* and *Maid*,
to make 'em *Love* it's said,
Cantry he did give,
a *Powder* to breed *Love*:
and this he did contrive,
That he might a reputed *Artificer*.

II.
He gave 'em both *Cantry*,
to create a mighty *Vigour*:
But he found it quite contrary,
it did operate with *Rigour*. (mov'd.
That which should made 'em both have
A dire *Bane* to them had well nigh prov'd.
so sick they were indeed,
so sick they kept their *Bed*,
their *Veins* it did infect,
that few did *Life* expect:
and for this impious *Fact*,
Mis *Fine*, is reckon'd *Sevenscore Pounds* and

III.
Now I give it as a *Caution*
to you, for the future,
You make use of no such *Potion*,
lest your *Cafe* should be no better,
For many *Tricks* I know are done,
With this same *Philtre* or *Love's* *Potion*,
but let me tell you this,
it is a lawcy *Priest*,
which makes him sadly *moore*,
to part with so much *Coyne*
for one poor *Potion*.
Alas! His is a very wretched *Case*.

London, Printed in the Year, 1695.

Figure 5.1: Anonymous, 'Great News from Guild-Hall: Being an Account of Two Trials on Tuesday' (London, 1695, historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk, accessed 15/10/2019).

The definition of 'Mouzells' quoted in the previous paragraph, with its appropriation of the legal language of domestic service, echoes a ballad sheet of 1695 which juxtaposes two cases of sexual violence upon servants by masters (Figure 5.1). In turn, both the ballad and the *Female Glossary* echo the crude misogynist humour which Simon Dickie examines in a wide variety of eighteenth-century sources (which will be discussed later), showing the continuities throughout the period. 'Great News from Guild-Hall: Being an Account of Two Trials on Tuesday' (Figure 5.1) covers the rape of a shoemaker's maidservant, and a different case where a gentleman had made a male and female servant seriously ill by giving them aphrodisiacs. Immediately, the tune would have primed listeners to interpret this ballad in a crudely sexual manner: 'The Guinea Wins Her' is a tune borrowed from 'An Excellent New Song, call'd, the Intreagues of Love: or, One worth a Thousand' (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 is not only highly lewd, as are other songs which share this tune,⁶⁰ but also speaks itself to a discourse about the commodification of sexuality. Recognising the transactional nature of sex work, it depicts sex work as the abstraction of something inherent to the woman, who is thus 'won': 'But when the Guinea wins her/ she's at your Devotion'. However, the ballad suggests that this was a perversion, a failure to 'yield to Nature', a failure on the woman's part to 'let you do [i]t, / Unless you court her to [i]t, / And give her Gold to boot'. This apparently cruel and shallow transactional relationship is contrasted with a natural and good relationship which is, however, no less transactional: a relationship between the implicitly male subject and 'a Beauty / That is charming and free / and knows more than her Duty: / Women they were made for Men, / The Gods above allow the same ... For she'll be just and true, / And lye with none but you'. The imagined ideal of womanhood is 'free', that is, open to the affections of men, but will also, in exchange for being loved by a man, allow herself to be 'won', to become 'monopoliz'd Wares' (to use the language of the *Female Glossary*). Already, the associations which this tune brings to the trial reports from Guildhall strongly imply that this ballad comes from a comparable perspective on womanhood, sex and sex work as the *Female Glossary*.

⁶⁰ For instance, 'An Answer to the Poor Whore's Complaint, in a Letter, from a Bully Spark of the Town, to Mistress Nell, the Common Crack of Fleet-Street' (London: J. Bissel [1684-c.1700], EBBA ID 22329).

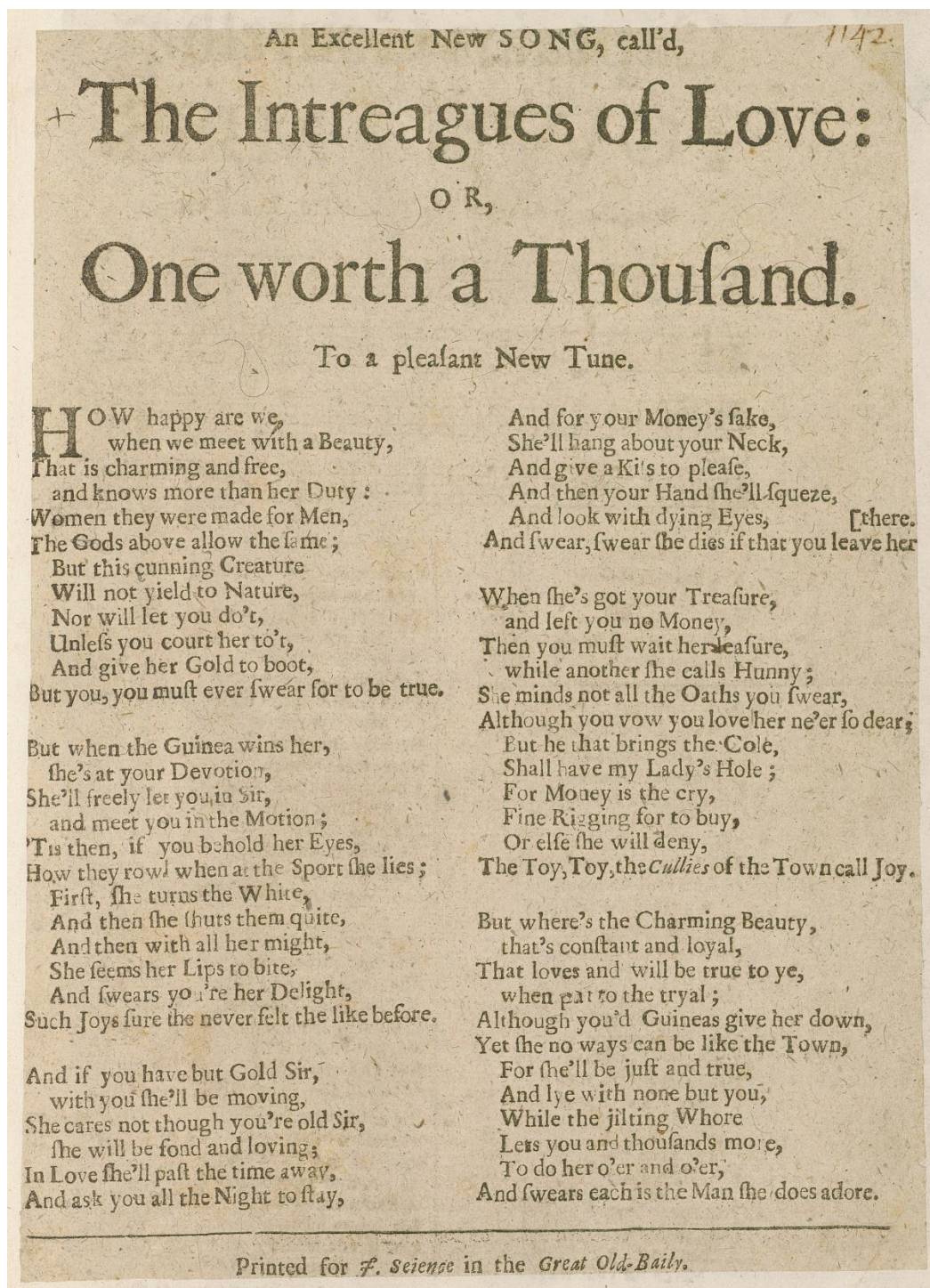


Figure 5.2: Anonymous, 'An Excellent New Song, call'd, the Intreagues of Love: or, One worth a Thousand' (London: J. Science [1684-1695], EBBA ID 22050).

The tones in which the two cases from Guildhall were presented in Figure 5.1, however, could not be a sharper contrast. The forceful sexual assault of a maidservant by a shoemaker is considered comical: she is mocked as a 'jade' for refusing his advances and

shameless for holding him to account publicly, 'common for anyone to hear'. His rape is described as 'serv[ing] his Serving Maid'; inevitable comparisons with commodity are again drawn, between the six pubic hairs the rapist violently pulled out, and the six pounds he was fined. As the third stanza concludes, 'could she but vend her Ware/ So well, she might buy the Devil out of Hell'. The second case, in which a gentleman wished to matchmake between his manservant and maidservant, but ended up poisoning them almost fatally with the aphrodisiac he gave them, explicitly marks itself as 'more unhappy than the other', partly because the fine imposed was much more severe (£150 instead of £8). Yet there is also seemingly a categorical difference here between the violation of a woman's sexual autonomy and the threatening of her life. This again suggests a degree of separation between a woman's gender and her body or self. The servant maid's chastity might have been fatally injured, and with it, any chance to redeem her innocence for social and cultural capital (such as through marriage, or domestic service); yet to the author of this ballad, that (potential) loss of livelihood is not worth six pounds (just over a year's salary for most maidservants).

Both of the sources discussed so far trade in a level of explicit misogyny that was somewhat distinct from most gendered discourses among other strategic producers of gender, such as the courts, the arts, or the gentry (if these broad categories can be constituted as a collective body). Yet these discourses are all inevitably connected, and even sources which attempt to obscure the essentially transactional nature of gender reaffirm it on a structural level. As the behaviour of the Quarter Sessions in the above cases reiterates, the attitude of the courts and legal philosophy – as Carolyn Steedman summarises (with reference to contemporary labour law) – was thus:

None of them (neither maidservant nor master) actually own their body; rather, it is held in a kind of trust from God. They may not do away with that body; they may not kill it, or sell it into slavery. ... But they may (many of them must) sell, or hire out, its capacities, attributes and energies (though that is an arrangement of civil society, not a godly arrangement).⁶¹

Domestic service, like sex work, represents the hiring out of the body's gender capacities, attributes and energies. This sense was clearly present within Haywood's insistence (discussed above) that a maidservant should save her capacities of beautification for her mistress, but it is applicable much more widely. Whether it was women, boys, or men

⁶¹ Steedman, p.46.

performing it, the work of housekeeping was inevitably known as ‘housewifery’ in the eighteenth century, and a large body of sociological and historical literature has explored how constitutive of gender this work was, and indeed is.⁶² A servant maid’s clothing, no matter her actual role within the household, should be ‘neat, cleanly, and housewifely’, recommended one advice book – a small indication of the way in which housewifery was formational to ideas of appropriate gendered conduct and dress.⁶³ Livery service, which both advice books and commentators agreed involved a ‘great part of their time ... spent in idleness’, could likewise be understood as a performance of masculinity foremost.⁶⁴

Adam Smith’s attitude to domestic service demonstrates the degree to which gendered performance was central to the transaction between a servant and their master. Servants were instrumental to the material economy of eighteenth-century Britain, producing meals from ingredients, soap and beer from raw materials, and sometimes helping their artisan, tradesman or mercantile masters with their production of goods.⁶⁵ Yet Smith characterised their work as ‘unproductive of any value’, even if it is ‘useful’ and ‘necessary’, and even though it has a value in the marketplace. Rather, he does not perceive what commodity the servant is selling:

the labour of the menial servant ... does not fix or realise itself in any particular subject or vendible commodity. His services generally perish in the very instant of performance, and seldom leave any trace or value behind them for which an equal quantity of service could afterward be procured.⁶⁶

Smith speaks of singers and dancers in the same terms, suggesting that both are engaged in activities which Smith understands as fundamentally performative, necessarily repetitive (for their work perishes ‘in the very instant of performance’) and entirely ephemeral. This characterisation does violence to the actual roles of servants (and also, perhaps, musicians), but it also sites their work in the body, since its physicality is otherwise imperceptible to Smith. None of the productive physical or intellectual labour of service (such as food

⁶² Ibid., pp.24-27; Meldrum, pp.137-138.

⁶³ *The Compleat Servant-Maid: or, the Young Maiden’s Tutor* (7th edition; London: E. Tracy, 1704), p.8.

⁶⁴ *The Complete Man and Maid Servant: Containing Plain and Easy Instructions for Servants of Both Sexes* (London: J. Cooke, n.d.), p.71; Meldrum, pp.164-167.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp.131-133, 153-158; Steedman, pp.43, 45, 349-353.

⁶⁶ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1776), pp.401-402. Quoted in Steedman, p.41.

preparation) was apparently a meaningful core element of these activities; they ‘seldom leave any trace or value behind them’. This made the clear, sustained economic demand for services something of a paradox to Smith, as it later would be for Marx: employers were and are clearly purchasing the labour of a vast proportion of the population for merely ephemeral returns.⁶⁷ However, it is the inadvertent siting of service in the body which suggests that, along with nourishment, the maintenance of space, light and heat, gender was one of the commodities being traded between domestic servant and master.

Considering domestic service in terms of embodied performance was a common discursive trope. Servants should, in the words of *The Compleat Servant Maid: or, the Young Maiden and Family's Companion* (the 9th edition of 1719), ‘perform their Duties in their several Stations’.⁶⁸ Although every degree of servant in *The Compleat Servant Maid* has ‘Business’ (learned knowledge and skills required to undertake various specialised work), behaviour and disposition are of far greater importance. A later edition states outright:

One of the greatest and most advantageous qualifications in all servants (but particularly females) is that of preserving a Good Temper, and endeavouring, to the utmost of their abilities, to give universal satisfaction. ... [T]hough you may be somewhat deficient at first in executing the business you are employed in, yet, when they see it is not occasioned by obstinacy and indolence, they will rather instruct you in what they find ignorant, than be angry that you are so. On the contrary, though you may discharge your business with the greatest propriety, yet if you appear careless and indifferent whether you please or not, your services will lose great part of their merit.⁶⁹

To a certain extent, this is representative of the shift which Sara Pennell, among others, have identified in iconography and advice literature towards the ‘managerial mistress’, the female head of the household, responsible for training her servants.⁷⁰ Yet the centrality of ‘a Good Temper’, and its clear gendering – parenthetically explained by the author – demonstrates that character, that is, the embodied performance of affect, is the core of domestic service.

⁶⁷ Steedman, pp.42-43.

⁶⁸ *The Compleat Servant-Maid: or, the Young Maiden's and Family's Daily Companion* (9th edition; London: Edward Midwinter, 1719), p.4.

⁶⁹ Anne Barker, *The Complete Servant Maid: or Young Woman's Best Companion* (London: J. Cooke, n.d.), pp.5-6.

⁷⁰ Sara Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen*, pp.24-25; Meldrum, pp.41-46.

This is also a possible reading of the enigmatic illustration, 'Moll Handy', which Carolyn Steedman reproduces and examines in *Labour's Lost*, depicting a maidservant whose body is constituted by the different tools and materials of service, pots, irons, kitchen wares and the like.⁷¹ For Steedman, illustrations like these represented the ways servants' labour was seen in contemporary legal discourse as extensions of their employer's labour, the intellectual and physical work of service alienated from the servant themselves.⁷² However, they also show the profound associations between service and embodiment. Every body part of this ideal servant is calculated to be optimally useful and pleasing: the tools and machines which constitute the body are carefully selected to create a woman's form. Even breasts are replaced by 'Two China basons'. Thus, these images depict both implications of the idea that the servant is merely performing their employer's labour: both that the labour is alienated from the servant, and that the servant, thus alienated from their skills and capacities, is less than a body. The employer has purchased not only a servant's capacity to do the work of service, but also their cleanliness, submissiveness and housewifery (all terms used frequently by *The Compleat Servant Maid*). These qualities were not inherent properties of a person's body, but were instead considered to be inherent properties of their (embodied) gender.⁷³ If, as many advice manuals claim, service was primarily about the performance of gendered characteristics such as 'good nature', 'character', 'housewifery' and 'obedience', employers were expecting to purchase a servant's capacity to express and fashion their gender.

This would have significant implications for understanding the ways in which domestic servants produced space. Susan Willis, writing in the 1990s, described how the 'marginalization and in some cases the erasure' of contemporary supermarket workers meant that instead, the supermarket was characterised by 'an array of theatrical labors,

⁷¹ Steedman, p.47.

⁷² Ibid., pp.46-52.

⁷³ Indeed, it could not be the maidservant's body itself that was being purchased or rented, because unlike the bodies of Black people, which could be owned as slaves, the bodies of white Christians were considered the property of God alone. Steedman, pp.59-61; Meldrum, pp.25-27; Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, pp.40-42, 56-58.

whose importance has more to do with the spectacle they create than the actual services they render'.⁷⁴ To conclude:

This is an instance where labor is truly rendered as performance; and hence, a commodity – customers consume the spectacle of work whether or not they actually buy the pineapples.⁷⁵

Servants apparently contributed to the household in much the same way, at least in the imaginations of the authors of advice manuals. The physicality and productive nature of servants' labours are minimised, and instead the 'spectacle' of their appearance and attitude (aspects of the value of their gender as a commodity) is central to the way householders expect space to be produced. Naturally, most advice manuals for servants also contained some kind of instruction in cooking, cleaning, and so on, and failure in these areas would have been deadly to a servant's prospect of success (just as Willis's supermarket workers also had to stock shelves accurately behind the scenes and after hours). Yet as 'Moll Handy' implies, that labour must be performed and embodied, not merely completed. Without the theatrical performance of domestic service – and thus of gender – the production of space is incomplete.

Nevertheless, discursive invocations of domestic service as a gendered transaction, such as in advice manuals, cannot testify to how gender was understood by domestic servants, nor even necessarily their employers. The high demand for domestic service led to a much more equal negotiation between economic parties than the patriarchal strategies outlined in contemporary discourse assumes.⁷⁶ Both Meldrum and Steedman show that servants' rights and women's bodily autonomy were sometimes protected in the courtroom, such as enforcing servants' right to depart with 30 days' notice (as part of the customary practice of hiring with 'a month's wages or a month's warning'), or occasionally prosecuting masters and mistresses for physical and sexual abuse of their servants.⁷⁷ Yet the ways in which the transactional elements of gender were implied as almost pre-discursive truths, in discussions of domestic service, suggest that this might be a conceptual framing with a wider applicability. In the next section, I will explore case studies of individual servants'

⁷⁴ Willis, *A Primer for Daily Life*, p.17.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.18.

⁷⁶ Meldrum, pp.207-209.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.39, 44, 108-109, 112; Steedman, pp.183-184, 322-325

gender relations, and how transaction is a useful framework for understanding their actions, beliefs and behaviours.

Servants Transacting Gender through Music (1) – Ellis and ‘his Fine Opera Tunes’

Like cultural capital, gender capital could be accumulated, through concepts such as ‘reputation’ and ‘education’ (or, as it was often termed in the eighteenth century, ‘breeding’, a concept that included ability to perform gender appropriately as well as cultural knowledge).⁷⁸ Erddig letter D/E/550, which was analysed in Chapter 2 in terms of cultural capital and cultural geography, provides clear evidence of this process of accumulation through memory. This is how John Williams, servant in a London household, remembered his friend Ellis to his brother:

Ellis comes to see us every day I should say every night we have all y^e. maids down into the Kitchin and Ellis sing his fine opera tunes to y^t. degree y^t. our maids is quite fallen in Love with him I brings him to the Seller first to drink a Cup of y^e Welch beer and likewise a Cup of y^e Reading beer that set Ellis voice on bravely[.]⁷⁹

This nightly musical performance is the archetype of a gender transaction, bound up with Ellis’s staking out of cultural and social status. By singing ‘his fine opera tunes’ – the possessive, probably added with little thought by John Williams, perhaps being significant – Ellis demonstrated high social and cultural status. Yet he appears principally concerned with producing gender through his song. It was clearly essential for all of the household’s maids to hear it; John Williams’s description of the performance, other than it being ‘fine’, entirely focuses on the maids’ reception rather than any particular musical features. Even the association with high cultural status seems merely instrumental to this goal. Whether this was a fair reflection of Ellis’s actual intentions or not, in the memories of John Williams, the effect of the ‘fine opera tunes’ was to increase Ellis’s romantic and sexual desirability as a man, and hence his gender capital. This letter, and the memories it represented, were forms by which Ellis could accumulate gender capital beyond the instant of performance.

⁷⁸ Thomas, *In Pursuit of Civility*, pp.40-41.

⁷⁹ Letter from John Williams [to John Jones] dated 18th December 1725, Erddig estate paper D/E/550, Flintshire County Archives.

It is worth breaking down, however, what precise currencies of gender were being transacted here, and what it meant for Ellis to increase the value of his gender. He had affected the spatial transformation of the kitchen – a working space, in which the most senior cooks had precedence – into a performance space, with him at its centre and the other servants willingly taking on the role of an audience. He had thus asserted masculine dominance by using music as a spatial practice, but that dominance could become laughable or pathetic if his singing did not redeem the expectation that having ‘all [the] Maids down into the Kitchin’ to hear him produced. In terms of his subject matter, Italian opera was not synonymous with proper manhood in eighteenth-century England; the servants to whom Ellis performed might have had a vague awareness of opera’s associations with ‘these Half-Men’, ‘Foreign Singers ... here to amass by their Squeeking and Squalling, such vast Sums of our *English Money*’ (as a pamphlet delivered free for marketing purposes by a patent remedy salesman in Devereux Court phrased it).⁸⁰ For singing expressly signposted as operatic (whether it had much in common with Italian opera or not) to have the effect of making maids ‘fallen in Love with him’, Ellis might have relied on two possible approaches, or a sensitive blend of them. These approaches were potential ways for Ellis to ‘own’ and appropriate the music he performed, translating it into a new and unique form.

The first was parody. Parodies of operatic performance were widely popular in the eighteenth century, from ‘ballad operas’ to Hogarth’s burlesque musical engravings.⁸¹ A number of men built strong careers founded on parody of elite music, such as Skeggs, who ‘played’ a broomstick as if it was a ‘cello (imitating the sounds vocally) and presented himself as ‘Seignor Bumbasto’, with utmost gravity in public performance, creating an amusing dissonance.⁸² Yet these parodies were often by people of a similar class to opera’s patrons, such as satirists Hogarth and Christopher Smart,⁸³ which were treated very

⁸⁰ Anonymous, ‘The English Man’s Two Wishes: the One, That Hanover Was Farther; The Other, That – – – –, &c.’ (London: The Anodyne Necklace, n.d. [?1720]), p.2.

⁸¹ Jeremy Barlow, *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth’s Musical Imagery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp.89-91, 97, 161

⁸² Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.97-98.

⁸³ Hogarth and Smart were both well-educated men who moved in similar sociable networks as the elite authors they parodied. Smart published his own periodicals and commissioned his own theatrical performances. Hogarth belonged to many learned and not-so-learned societies including the Academy of Ancient Music. Meanwhile, *The Beggar’s Opera* was written by John Gay, from a

differently to mockery from footmen in the theatre gallery (which led to riots and eventually banning them from the theatre).⁸⁴ 'Seditious' and 'libellous' ballads, for which ballad singers and small publishers were arrested and fined, were often not so different in content from sanctioned elite cartoons and parodies.⁸⁵ For Ellis, a parodic or ironic performance of an elite musical genre might have made him seem quick-witted, incisive, but also daring, since mocking one's betters subverted a socio-cultural hierarchy enforced through regular violence. Ellis was thus performing desirable masculine qualities: wit and bravery, as well as an eagerness for (discursive) confrontation.⁸⁶

The other route Ellis might have employed was to translate the operatic music seriously, using its sensitive interpretation as a signifier of 'good breeding'. 'Breeding' was more related to (the reproduction of) class than gender, but it placed emphasis on proper comportment, discipline and situational awareness, a set of learned behaviours and dispositions of the body and voice which were, of course, highly and explicitly gendered.⁸⁷ Richard Leppert discusses the ways in which musical performance and dance could function in this manner, as markers of genteel education and models of proper bodily and vocal deportment.⁸⁸ Yet 'good breeding' was an unusual currency of gender, in that some traits of genteel comportment could be transferred from heterosexually desirable masculine to heterosexually desirable feminine forms and vice versa.

genteel provincial family, who clubbed with Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift and the Lord Chancellor. Ibid., pp.4-5, 97; Paula McDowell, *The Invention of the Oral: Print Commerce and Fugitive Voices in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp.157-159; Tim Eggington, *The Advancement of Music in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Boydell and Brewer, 2014), pp.23-24; David Nokes, 'Gay, John', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition (www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 18.10.2019).

⁸⁴ Kristina Straub, 'The Making of an English Audience: the Case of the Footman's Gallery', in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830*, eds. Jane Moody, Daniel O'Quinn (Cambridge: CUP [2007], 2009), 131-144, p.132, 140-141.

⁸⁵ McDowell, ' "The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making" ', pp.156-161.

⁸⁶ Robert B. Shoemaker, 'Reforming Male Manners: Public Insult and the Decline of Violence in London, 1660-1740', in *English Masculinities*, 133-150, pp.144-145, 149; Elizabeth Foyster, 'Boys Will Be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800', in *English Masculinities*, 151-166, pp.164-165.

⁸⁷ Thomas, *In Pursuit of Civility*, pp.37-41, 46-49.

⁸⁸ Leppert, *Music and Image*, pp.71-72, 80-81.

This is implicit in a 1763 reprint of Laurence Price's seventeenth-century ballad 'The Lady turned Serving-Man', which might have presented a somewhat anachronistic conceptualisation of gender to contemporary audiences, but nonetheless, in its abridgement and editing, shows active eighteenth-century adaptation.⁸⁹ In this version, an aristocratic woman, impoverished by a burglary and the murder of her husband, presents herself to the king's court as 'sweet *William*', 'drest ... in Man's Attire'. She uses her knowledge of courtly deportment to gain a position (she 'bowed full low/ My love and duty for to show'), simply performing the masculine, rather than feminine style.⁹⁰ The king offers her a choice of positions, and she accepts the role of chamberlain, 'To make [the king's] bed so soft and fine'. Although this is a man's position, it is the one most compatible with genteel housewifery. 'Sweet *William*', left alone with 'an old Man' while the king and his court are hunting, apparently decides to reveal his secret through music:

Upon the Lute sweet *William* play'd,
And to the same he sung and said,
With a pleasant and most noble Voice,
Which made the old Man to rejoice.

The lute is an instrument with multivalent connotations, representing (in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century iconography and literature) social harmony, gentility and also female sexuality.⁹¹ Having thus established his cultural capital with a noble instrument and a 'noble Voice', the protagonist then deftly converts the gender capital bound up with it back from a male to a female style (succeeding sufficiently to seduce and marry the king at the end of the ballad). After outlining her noble heritage and marriage, and the past wealth of her family, she describes her breeding in terms of music, dress and court mannerisms:

I had my Music every Day,
Harmonious Lessons for to play,

⁸⁹ See the discussion of this ballad's provenance and earlier variations in James Francis Childs, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Vol. 2 (New York: Dover Publications [1886], 1965), pp.428-432. Also see a 1664 very similar to this 1763 print: 'The Famous Flower of Serving Men: or, the Lady Turned Serving Man' (London: Elizabeth Andrews [c. 1664], available through JISC Historical Texts, historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk, accessed 13th March 2022).

⁹⁰ Dugaw also considers this genre of ballad's hero(in)es to epitomise both male and female virtues: in this case, the gendered virtues being lauded relate to proper courtly deportment and other aspects of 'good breeding'. Dugaw, *Warrior Women*, pp.150-153.

⁹¹ For a full discussion of the sexual significance of the lute, see Julia Craig-McFeely, 'The Signifying Serpent: Seduction by Cultural Stereotype in Seventeenth-Century England', in *Music, Sensation, and Sensuality*, ed. Linda Phyllis Austern (London: Routledge, 2013), pp.299-317.

I had my Virgins fair and free,
Continually to wait on me.⁹²

This education taught a common store of genteel learning that became highly gendered in its performance, through modifications in gesture, voice and deportment. It is interesting to compare this ballad with another piece of eighteenth-century cheap print describing a cross-dresser, the 'true' history of Elizabeth Ogden. Ogden is characterised as a hedonist and workshy woman, impoverished by an unwise marriage, who dons male clothing to escape physical violence from her husband and gain economic independence. Unlike in 'The Famous Flower of Serving Men', this transformation did not represent a preservation of gender capital from a 'fair' woman to a 'sweet' man, but rather 'made a very advantageous alteration in her person, as the boldness of her aspect and deportment, was rather to be esteem'd as [in] a man, but an agreeable assurance'. Ogden lacked the surprisingly transferable currencies of 'good breeding' that made the ballad's heroine successful both as a male courtier and a noble wife: instead, she is characterised as rich in uniquely masculine characteristics ('boldness').⁹³

The ambiguous gendering of 'good breeding' is perhaps why the genteel conduct books which Leppert cites characterise music as an unmanly pursuit. For Leppert, it is instead because music is a wastage of power, 'for the result of the physical exercise ... is simply sound, a product that in its ethereality cannot be properly measured, and worse, one that immediately disappears'.⁹⁴ This is similar to how Adam Smith characterised both music and domestic service; yet focusing exclusively on these critical voices disguises the attraction underlying the upper classes' increasing indulgence in these inefficiencies. Livery service, as Meldrum has suggested, was likewise a flagrant display of waste and idleness, squandering money and physical effort for ethereal, immaterial benefit that (unlike the realities of most domestic service) truly does perish in the instant of performance. Although this was heavily

⁹² 'The Famous Flower of Serving Men: or, the Lady Turned Serving Man', EBBA 31501 (London: Unknown, n.d. [1763?]).

⁹³ One intriguing similarity between the two texts, which demonstrates the emphasis on external performance of gender in the eighteenth century, is that both switch to male pronouns for the cross-dresser after they become established in their role through employment. Anonymous, *The Female Porter of Shoreditch, a True Story, of the Surprising Extraordinary Adventures of Elizabeth Ogden, alias Kath. Emery, alias Jemmy Preston* (London: T. Bailey, n.d.).

⁹⁴ Leppert, *Music and Image*, pp.24-25.

criticised, as much as musical performance by gentlemen was (and indeed, unlike music, would become subject to taxation as a meaningless luxury), this celebration of excess was rarely considered unmanly, but more often as an expression of power and status.⁹⁵ Music being a wasteful endeavour is indeed considered problematic by the authors Leppert cites, but that has more to do (as Leppert indicates) with class and occupational identity than gender.⁹⁶ The alleged unmanliness of music – which is only occasionally referred to in conduct books – is instead associated with bodily comportment, its requirements for fine, dextrous movements, soft, relaxed joints, and melancholic affects.⁹⁷ These fears of unmanliness arise from the knowledge and physical dispositions held in common by both male and female performers of music, a fluidity feared by those generally nervous about the erosion of social hierarchy. Yet music clearly still had currency as a performance of masculinity, as well as femininity, perhaps precisely because it appeared unproductive: it could be a demonstration of excess power and virility, partnered with a (sexualised) interest in and sensitivity to feminine forms and affects.

Although John Williams provides no detail about Ellis's performance, it might be supplemented with a fictionalised version of a similar performance of cultural capital and 'good breeding' in the advice book warning against fraudsters, *Youth's Safety* (also discussed in Chapter 3). The fictional 'Town Shark' clawed his way up from being a ward of the parish to a footman. In order to 'make the Cook-maid fall in Love with him', and run away with her vails and savings, he learns 'to play on the Flajolet, Flute, Hautboy, or Violin', paying with his master's food and drink; or 'learns to Sing something tuneable, by imitating in the Upper Gallery at the Play-House'.⁹⁸ Although this fictional footman's ultimate intentions might have been somewhat different from Ellis's, and the account is implicitly critical and satirical, there are certain elements that are very familiar. The exchanging of musical learning for alcohol, and the purpose of impressing a maidservant, suggest that John Williams, in his narration of the musical performance, was referring to rhetorical tropes

⁹⁵ Meldrum, pp.164, 167-168; also see the discussion of footmen represented on stage in Straub, 'The Making of an English Audience', pp.135-139.

⁹⁶ Leppert, *Music and Image*, pp.19-21.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.18, 23-25.

⁹⁸ J. W., *Youths Safety: or, Advice to the Younger Sort, of Either Sex* (London: E. Whitlock, 1698), p.28.

shared, to some extent with *Youth's Safety*. More detail on the performance itself is provided by the 'Town Shark's later attempt to impress a male shopkeeper, hoping to embroil him in fraudulent card games and other scams:

after a chirping Cup [of wine] he pulls out his Flute, as he says, to try it; and playing a Tune or two, directly fixes his Eye on our Youngster's Face, to observe how the Passions agitate the Mind: From whence he gathers, whether he is delighted with Harmony, or not; if he find he is, he frames a Discourse of the Rarity of Musick in other Countries, where he hath travelled; and that he will, in respect to his good Company so generously afforded him, sing him a Song he learnt of a Venetian Lady; and then confident he understands not Italian, tunes his Voice to a certain Gibberish, which sounds melodious enough to an unintelligent Ear, and extorts Applause from the Auditor. ...

And thus in a little time, other Discourse passing about, they become as intimately acquainted, as if they had Sucked one Nurse.⁹⁹

This description of a musical performance drew upon common ideas and perceptions to which Ellis's performance would also have referred. This is not to say that the fictionalised performance in *Youth's Safety* closely resembled Ellis's, but the convergent conditions of performance and discursive resemblances imply that Ellis's actions would be related to fictional performances like this, both by himself and by his auditors. For the most part, the 'Town Shark's performance is transparently an assertion of cultural capital: claims of foreign travel, accomplishment in the most genteel portable instrument, the German flute, and apparent knowledge of a foreign language associated with nobility and prestige. Yet it also represents a relationship to masculinity, later cemented by the 'Town Shark' introducing a number of women acquaintances to the shopkeeper's business, and 'tickl[ing] him with a prospect' for marriage.¹⁰⁰ The 'Italian' song was allegedly learned from 'a Venetian Lady', not from the opera house itself or a famous singer: the 'Town Shark's prowess at impressing and befriending noblewomen is perhaps as, or more impressive than the prestige of opera. The flute, meanwhile, is an indelible mark of masculinity as well as gentility. Women rarely played the transverse flute, and its performance was often associated with noblemen.¹⁰¹ These are merely the signifiers of masculinity that can be teased out from a brief written description, with gendered aspects of body language and use of the voice left untranslated and untranslatable.

⁹⁹ J. W., *Youths Safety*, p.31.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.32, 37.

¹⁰¹ Thomas McGeary, 'Music, Men and Masculinity on the Grand Tour: British Flautists in Italy', *Early Music*, 49 (2021), 101-128, especially pp.105-106, 111-114.

Ellis was producing both cultural capital and gender capital through his performance, some degree of which passed to John Williams by association. This made Williams an unreliable narrator when it came to the behaviour and motivations of maidservants, since he would only gain gender capital by asserting their infatuation with Ellis, regardless of the truth. A similar problem affects iconography, which represents the ideal (or its inverted echo, the parodic) rather than the real, especially in paintings of this period.¹⁰² Women's sexual agency was thus mediated through a symbolic language which homogenised their characters into eroticised mythical archetypes and required the erotic to be projected onto acts and scenes that are not inherently sexual, such as mothers breastfeeding children.¹⁰³ The projection of the erotic onto everyday acts, gestures and behaviours was a strategy that helped to blur the boundaries of sexual consent, in men's favour, leading to the hyper-scepticism about rape described in the next section – many gestures and actions could be erroneously described as evidence of romantic interest. Yet women also faced pressure to take part in this libidinal economy (as shown in their continued attendance at these musical evenings), having their own motivations for performing romantic interest in Ellis, as a form of affective labour. That they did perform some degree of interest in Ellis is apparent from their coming down into the kitchen to hear him, as well as their ceding this space to him, their consenting to become his audience.

These motivations were not necessarily economic in a financial sense. This has been pointed out by social historian Steven King, criticising the links made between large-scale demographic and economic changes by the 'Cambridge Group' since the 1980s, which assumed a continuity between economic factors and sexual/social behaviours. Instead, King argues that individual stories of courtship suggest courting partners sometimes made fundamentally (financially) irrational decisions, marrying in times of poverty and becoming reliant on aid from friends and family.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the women were probably not signalling

¹⁰² Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2006), pp.8-10.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp.26-29, 87-90.

¹⁰⁴ Steven King, 'Chance Encounters? Paths to Household Formation in Early Modern England', *International Review of Social History*, 44, 1 (1999), 23-46, pp.32-33.

serious interest in Ellis as a courting partner, since no jealousy appears to be expressed. Their motivations could best be explained as a means of staking their position within a libidinal economy. More than one of the maidservants apparently showered Ellis with affection, normalising each other's performance of sexuality and gender, and demonstrating that they were receptive (to an appropriate degree) to male heterosexual desire. Historians of sexuality claim that women were understood as sexually passive in the eighteenth century, at least in ideal, but women's actual practice was, and had to be quite different, were they to preserve and amass their gender capital.¹⁰⁵ Even respectable, chaste women had to demonstrate themselves to be available and agreeable, willing and able to produce gender for male partners, while not losing the core of 'innocence' which was an exhaustible and non-replenishable resource. This was a process of commodification, of establishing one's gender as marketable while retaining value through (tactically) attempting to establish scarcity. Marrying into a master's family was an ideal of self-marketisation to which, as Meldrum suggests (as indeed do contemporary advice manuals) many maidservants may have aspired, even as they feared the potential for sexual abuse.¹⁰⁶ Light-hearted admiration of a man who flirts in an unserious and noncommittal manner, such as through song, was a way to establish availability without compromising innocence too fatally.

Since this normalisation of each other's sexual identity, a means of keeping one's gender capital secure, was probably the maids' primary purpose – not marriage with Ellis – the expressions of interest could be rhetorically playful. Ellis's primary purpose, increasing his gender capital by increasing his perceived attractiveness (through compelling affective labour), also did not require passionate seriousness, which was only necessary to a different currency of masculinity, the honesty and earnestness which moralists urged young women to seek in marriage partners.¹⁰⁷ Since Ellis was apparently not seeking marriage through his actions, he did not yet require that particular currency. Indeed, the dynamics of the transaction would entirely change were Ellis to be seeking that currency in his performance:

¹⁰⁵ Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex', pp.78-80.

¹⁰⁶ Meldrum, pp.105-106.

¹⁰⁷ For instance, Haywood, pp.36-37; also see the sample letters from a daughter to her parents regarding a marriage proposal in *Madam Johnson's Present: or, Every Young Woman's Companion* (London: W. Nicoll, 1765), pp.54-56.

trying to perform earnestness and honesty would be antithetical to singing 'fine opera tunes' to an audience of unattached women. Contemporary discourse, such as Hogarth cartoons or advice manuals, usually posited public musical performance by foreigners as the inverse of the honest working Englishman's behaviour, and its influence as adulterating the purity of that currency of masculinity.¹⁰⁸ It would also have disturbed the delicate economy of sexual validation the maidservants were participating in. They could validate each other's interest in Ellis precisely because he was not seeking courtship; if he were, that would transform the context of their interest, such that it went from harmless admiration of an entertaining performance (of masculinity) to the hazardous 'Encouragement' of suitors which Haywood warned against, for reasons of both safety and modesty.¹⁰⁹

Servants Transacting Gender through Music (2) – Cases from the *Old Bailey Proceedings*

Many of these implicit economies are illuminated by another musical interaction from the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, the first of three on which this section will focus. In the early hours of a Tuesday night in June 1733, poulterer Aaron Newbolt (known for walking '100 Miles in Moorfields in 27 Hours') visited the George alehouse, between parting with a drinking-party of bell-ringers at 1 a.m. and his early 3 a.m. start at his workplace.¹¹⁰ The case regarded the theft of half a guinea from his pocket in the alehouse, sufficient to incur capital punishment for the thief, if convicted. Newbolt accused Mary Cotterel, who had been in the George alehouse with her husband and another married couple, of this theft. The principal point of contest was whether Newbolt had 'pick'd up' and become intimate with another woman, who had picked his pocket. Newbolt presented himself as behaving appropriately as a drinker: he 'call'd for a Mug of Ale, and afterwards for a Quartern of Brandy, and sung a Song or two'; after being asked by one of the couples' husbands to drink with them, he paid 6d., 'which was more than my share came to'. A witness called by Newbolt described him as 'a sober, virtuous Man'; this was a necessary characterisation to take Newbolt's accusation against Cotterel seriously. However, if Cotterel had behaved as Newbolt suggested and

¹⁰⁸ Leppert, *Music and Image*, p.76; Barlow, *The Enraged Musician*, pp.185-195.

¹⁰⁹ Haywood, p.35.

¹¹⁰ Most Londoners' work started between 6 and 7 a.m. Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Time and Work in Eighteenth-Century London', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58, 1 (1998), 29-58, p.33.

stolen half a guinea from him through physical contact, it would imply she had sought out his company and been unfaithful to her husband, despite his presence. Most strikingly, too, in this account Newbolt's singing is to nobody in particular, a social practice without any other participants or clear motivations. As a means of producing space, song requires other participants: without producing a space for auditors, the song could not fulfil any social functions. Not all song necessitated a substantive motivation, gender-economic or otherwise, but a rationalisation of his behaviour that included one would be more compelling to the court.

Cotterel's account presented a more rational gender transaction. She presented Newbolt as both drunk and flirtatious with another woman: '[h]e went with her to one end of the Table, and sing'd a very fine Song to please Ladies, and then he brought her to us and sing'd another Song ... and went out with her'. Only then was there a confusion during which the original woman allegedly slipped away, leaving Cotterel in Newbolt's custody. Cotterel saw his song as inherently sexual, which is why she interjected in her cross-examination of Newbolt's account to protest 'I don't know what to say to him. He's not worth my Argument; I was with my Husband'.¹¹¹ This sexualisation suggests a motivation for Newbolt's song, since he would have been producing gender capital by 'pleas[ing] Ladies', as Ellis had in D/E/550. Moreover, if Newbolt was behaving flirtatiously, Cotterel was most likely exonerated, since her husband would not have tolerated a man flirting with his wife right in front of him – there must have been the unattached woman Cotterel alleged was the real thief. The risk to her reputation as a faithful wife, and his presumed reputation as a virile and dominant husband, would have been too great: the half-guinea they allegedly stole would have been a meagre trade. Newbolt's reputation as an extroverted competitive walker, and his previous drinking with the bell-ringers also tipped the balance in Cotterel's favour. The jury probably found Cotterel's account of her and Newbolt's motivations more compelling, since they acquitted her.

In this example, the transaction of gender capital was amicable. Mary Cotterel may have disputed Aaron Newbolt's account of it after the fact, but both parties painted a

¹¹¹ *OBPO* t17330628-20.

convivial picture of the event itself. Other *Old Bailey Proceedings* cases involving musical performance, however, suggest gender transactions coerced or denied. In 1778 Sarah Bethell brought Robert Moody to trial on charges of rape, which unfortunately had little chance to succeed in the eighteenth-century legal system. Conviction rates for rape cases were very low, and as Simon Dickie has found, plaintiffs were relentlessly mocked both in joke books and even in official trial reports, through unkind editing of their testimonies and comic typography.¹¹² The burden of proof for capital cases such as rape was very high, and required the survivor to not only recall precisely every detail of the event (something which trauma notoriously prevents),¹¹³ but have corroborating physical evidence of their resistance.¹¹⁴ Bethell's case was critically weakened by her clothes not being torn, by nearby watermen not hearing her screams, and by her thighs not being bruised. There were also procedural weaknesses, such as the long delay between Bethell obtaining a warrant for Moody's arrest and his actual capture (which, to an eighteenth-century mind, might imply blackmail or a frivolous fake accusation).¹¹⁵ Finally, assumptions about consent were radically different from what twenty-first century readers might expect, as Haywood's discourse about resisting a master's unwanted sexual attention implied. That Bethell and Moody had been neighbours, that Bethell's husband had just been declared an incurable lunatic, that Bethell had been drinking with her rapist and affable beforehand, all counted against her.¹¹⁶ In the eighteenth-century view, rape only counted as such if a woman had maintained a wary guard at all times, and never allowed herself to be in a vulnerable situation with a man. Comic literature and joke books from the period, such as the *Female Glossary*, implied that all women were untrustworthy and open to carnality, and those perceived as 'unchaste' would get little public sympathy.¹¹⁷ Thus, even though the jury

¹¹² Indeed, the 1772 collection *The Humours of the Old Bailey; or, Justice Shaking Her Sides* introduced its 'merry and diverting Trials' as being 'particularly for Rapes and private Stealing'. Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp.191-193.

¹¹³ Jane Herlihy and Stuart Turner, 'What Do We Know So Far about Emotion and Refugee Law?', *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly*, 64, 1 (2013), 47-62, pp.52-57.

¹¹⁴ Edelstein, 'An Accusation Easily to Be Made?' pp.364-365.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.374-380, 384.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.370-371, 374.

¹¹⁷ The *Female Glossary* reimagines the legendary rape of (paragon of mythical female virtue) Lucretia by Tarquin as being a false rape accusation by an actively libidinous woman. *The Female Glossary*, p.18. Also see Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, pp.194-195, 197.

could not, or would not convict Robert Moody, Sarah Bethell's evidence may well be true (indeed, it fits the pattern of many rape survivors' stories), and is certainly the product of an epistemology of extreme, weaponised scepticism.

Sarah Bethell's testimony demonstrates that the highly transactional, commodified sexual system of the *Female Glossary* had unironic adherents, who used it tactically (and indeed strategically) to justify rape, both to themselves and others. Her testimony also demonstrates music's role(s) in producing and reproducing sexual status in this transactional system. Bethell encountered Moody on a journey from London back to her home in Wandsworth. Moody had been her neighbour for 'many years', and was now working as a waterman, and offered to take her instead of the waterman she had originally contracted. The boat's only other passenger left after a short distance because it was too cold, and so Moody persuaded Bethell to get out of the boat and accompany him to a public house twice along the route. At the first they shared a 'pint of hot', that is, gin mixed with beer, although she did not drink at the second. Later, Moody began to make demands of Bethell:

[Bethell:] ... Just before we came to Battersea bridge, he began; he said, Mrs. Bethell, give us a song.

[Advocate:] Are you used to sing? – [Bethell:] No. I said, I cannot sing; I am not so light-hearted.

Did that frighten you? - No.

What did you mean by not being so light-hearted? - My husband is out of his mind; he has been in the mad-house, and was turned out incurable; it lay on my mind.

Does he live with you? - No; he is in the work-house. On my saying I was not so light-hearted, he swore if I could not sing I should do the other thing; with that he pulled me down. I cried, for God's sake.

Was you in the stern? - Yes. He pulled me down in the bottom of the boat.

Moody then raped her, an act described in granular, dispassionate detail according to the rigours of court testimony. After it was over, Bethell expressed her anger: 'I set myself up, and said, Moody, I will expose you to every body I know ... He swore he did not mind being exposed'. Once she was in public again, she attempted to pay him a shilling for the journey, but '[h]e made answer, the woman is a fool, and swore, and said I paid him once before ... He would not take the money'.¹¹⁸ By suggesting that Bethell had already 'paid' for

¹¹⁸ *OBPO* t17781209-58.

the journey, Moody strongly implies he believes he has received a service. There is thus a non-consensual transaction here, in which Moody considered his services paid for not with money, but with either a song or a coerced sexual favour. A woman singing for a man, and a man (forcibly) penetrating a woman sexually, are two very different acts in physical terms, but to Moody, there was clearly some sense in which they were analogous. The *Female Glossary*, writing about a woman's sex as if it was a commodity to be rented out, or 'monopoliz'd' through marriage, implies that a man who penetrates a vagina has received a service.¹¹⁹ Yet the service Moody originally desires is a song: perhaps this is indicative that the service he obtains from (compelled) sex satisfies a similar desire to receiving a song.

There is some association between sex and song: in a 1732 theft case, a waiter in a St. James Westminster public house, his mistress away, brought in a female Irish singer who 'used to sing at our Door, and my Mistress used to give her Six-pence or a Shilling'. Having fed her and plied her with brandy, he took her to bed.¹²⁰ Through this juxtaposition, the willingness to be paid for song appears to be an indication of willingness to accept money (or gifts) for sex. In 1783 (only five years after Bethell's rape), a woman charged with theft of a watch, Mary Smith, gave an account of drinking with the prosecutor (and victim),¹²¹ Richard Harrison. According to Smith, Harrison was very drunk and hungry; he 'went out sick; he went into the open street, there was about a dozen women, and he had one of them in the house, and made her sing songs'.¹²² The ambiguous wording 'made her sing songs' may not imply coercion, especially in Harrison's inebriated state, but the scenario has a number of similarities to Bethell and Moody's situation. Furthermore, it is a near-inversion of the performance scenario in D/E/550, in which a man singing to an audience of women produces or invokes cultural and gender capital. In this 1783 case, Harrison's 'ma[king]' a woman sing for him, before a mixed audience, is a more naked attempt at garnering gender capital than Ellis's, demonstrating his power to compel a woman (whether through direct coercion or emotional manipulation) to perform for him, produce gender for him. The same

¹¹⁹ *The Female Glossary*, p.12.

¹²⁰ *OBPO* t17321011-26.

¹²¹ Almost all eighteenth-century criminal prosecution was private, in other words, the victim or a relative generally acted as prosecutor.

¹²² *OBPO* t17831029-64.

may also have been true for Moody, who allegedly 'did not mind being exposed'. The physicality of singing, including the sexualised open mouth,¹²³ may have played its part in making this a gendered interaction, but primarily this performance of gender was about expressing power.

The ability to exert a compulsive power over women (whether coercive or otherwise) was a particularly misogynist, and contested currency of gender – the court, who refused to convict Mary Smith and the other defendant, was perhaps not impressed by Harrison's behaviour. Yet an ability to compel sexual or romantic performance from women was at the root of most transactions of gender capital, both in contemporary fiction and reality.¹²⁴ Such force and manipulation, Dickie suggests, was considered 'an accepted or even commensensical reaction' to the alleged modest passivity of women.¹²⁵ This is why both 'jade' and 'whore' were such commonly levelled insults: a 'jade' was incapable of or unwilling to be dominated by a man, while a 'whore', through her wily tactics, never let herself be truly dominated, either escaping through wilful promiscuity or inverting the power dynamics by demanding payment for her sexual service.¹²⁶ Haywood replicated this paradigm by suggesting that maidservants act neither 'proud [n]or prudish' around manservants, knowing that these two faults were liable to be punished by casual sexual violence or verbal humiliation.¹²⁷

Men gained gender capital by expressing power over women and – secondarily – other men (whether that power was physical, socio-economic, cultural or moral) through apparently wasteful or inefficient exercises, such as musical performance, employing livery servants, physical feats, grandiose hospitality, or even perhaps 'reform' efforts for 'fallen'

¹²³ Bonnie Gordon, *Monteverdi's Unruly Women: The Power of Song in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), pp.73, 206.

¹²⁴ Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, p.200.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.203-204.

¹²⁶ See the way rape victims are portrayed – either as sexually insatiable or attempting to take advantage of men – in contemporary literature analysed in Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, pp.196-200.

¹²⁷ Haywood, p.35; also see discussion of Haywood's depiction of corrective rape in her novels, Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, p.221.

women.¹²⁸ This illuminates why Moody's first act of sexual violence was to try to coerce a song from Sarah Bethell. His inhibitions perhaps loosened with drink, he desired an acknowledgement of his manhood, an evaluation of his gender capital. On a less extreme level, it also explains why, for example, livery servants, the subjugated extensions of their masters' masculine power over others, were sometimes portrayed as effeminate and foolish (due to their subjugation) and often portrayed as sexually dangerous to mistresses and maidservants, thieves of their masters' gender capital.¹²⁹ As symbols of their masters' power to compel a performance, in this context they are placed in a feminine position, just as the woman 'made to sing a Song' by Harrison was; yet as men, and furthermore, extensions of their masters' noble manhood, they had the alleged capability to subjugate the women they came into contact with. That capacity had been purchased by their master, so any development of their own gender capital had to be suppressed. Hence the sensational coverage of the affair between Diana Dormer, a wealthy married woman, and her footman, Thomas Jones; he was stealing his master's wife and amassing gender capital for himself. He bragged to a fellow footman that 'his Lady maintained him ... for he had debauched her', that he had cuckolded his master, and then he 'took his privy members from out his breeches and let them hang down bare and exposed for some considerable time', concluding 'his prick was his plough'.¹³⁰ Transactions of gender capital, cultural capital, even economic capital, are all inseparable from the power relations which they produce, perform, mystify and encode.

Women could gain gender capital through performing the economic and cultural power they held, however: historians of domestic service often discuss the different ways in which mistresses performed genteel womanhood through the management and education of their servants, or through the quality of the household's food and produce.¹³¹ Yet there was a fundamental asymmetry introduced by the passive sexual roles women were expected to take, which could compromise any other form of capital they might develop. In an

¹²⁸ For details about early institutions for 'reforming' sex workers and the power they exerted over women, see Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender and Sexual Identity', pp.196-201.

¹²⁹ Meldrum, pp.115-116, 118-119.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p.120.

¹³¹ Sara Pennell, *The Birth of the English Kitchen*, pp.18, 22-24.

extremely chaotic *OBP* case from 1736, Elizabeth Sayer, who owned a coffee house (by St. Clement Danes church yard), was prosecuting nearby 'disorderly' public house owner John Warwick. She alleged she had contracted him to help outfit her coffee house, and that he had later stolen furnishings from her house, removing the lock from her street door. The witnesses she was able to call to demonstrate this might explain why Warwick, who as an alleged organised criminal was able to bring a mass of witnesses to defend his character, still needed his advocate to defame the prosecutrix. The counsel alleged that Warwick and Sayer, both of whom were married to other spouses, were cohabiting, since Warwick rented a room in her house (which the prosecutrix stated was to keep some valuable goods safe from seizure by the Sheriff of Middlesex). Interrupting a material witness, Warwick's counsel said to the court: 'He had a Wife else where, but he lodged at her House. 'Tis a very scandalous Story'.¹³² Sayer's economic independence from her husband made her an easy target for attacks on her reputation of this kind; further, it encouraged her to accept investment from organised criminals such as Warwick. The asymmetry between Warwick and Sayer, who owned similar businesses, was purely one of gender.

However, this asymmetry was refracted through a thousand situational elements: specific spaces, individual motivations, the success and failure of different strategies and tactics of gender production, the performance of race and class structures. For instance, virginity and innocence, a resource that could not be renewed, increased the value of men's sexual conquests and thus its preservation was often in the class interest of men as well as women, albeit for different reasons. Yet men seeking to maintain 'innocence' often required them to police other men, because it was generally the province not of tactics but of long-term strategy, undertaken by figures with de Certeau's 'proper' place such as magistrates, charitable Societies and parish vestries.¹³³ Even those in strategic positions, when at home, found a more instant, tactical, violent logic of gender capital compelling: Colonel Francis

¹³² *OBPO* t17360908-37.

¹³³ Jeremy Gregory, 'Homo Religiosus: Masculinity and Religion in the Long Eighteenth Century', in *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, 85-110, p.109; Shoemaker, 'Reforming Male Manners', pp.136-138. Trumbach emphasises that most strategies to control sexual behaviour were aimed at women: 'Sex, Gender and Sexual Identity', pp.200-203.

Charteris ended his political career, and nearly his life, by raping a maidservant.¹³⁴ The consequent discursive conflict, between strategies to maintain the value of womanhood – in this case, specifically value to men, as a sexual prize – and tactics to seize that prize, provided room to manoeuvre for women with different interests to affect their own gender-economic logic.

The trial of Thomas Meller, a man of uncertain occupation, for rape in 1769 brings together music, domestic service and gender violence while also representing a rare instance of a woman successfully defending her innocence in court. Mary Warnett was a young maidservant of seventeen, who had been in service to a merchant's agent for just over a year, interrupted by being 'afflicted with fits' half way through the term. After seven months, her master deposed, 'she came and begged we would take her again, as she was better'; she then worked with them another five and a half months. Tim Meldrum suggests it was quite common for mercantile and artisan masters to feel no *noblesse oblige* towards servants who were taken ill; they were no longer functional and so needed to be replaced.¹³⁵ The importance of testimony from Mary Warnett's master was that it showed she was a functional and respectable maidservant, in other words, that she was capable of producing housewifery. This had profound consequences for her gender capital, because it showed she could produce gender reliably for her master. The transactional logic of gender provided the context which gave Warnett's service relevance to her rape prosecution.

Unlike Sarah Bethell, whose case was compromised by acquaintance with the defendant, all parties in the case agreed that the day on which the incident occurred was the first time they had met. Mary Warnett was accompanying her friend Mary Curtain to obtain a hearing with the Lord Mayor over a warrant for a lost gown, when a stranger – a young woman – asked if she would like to come with her to the Wood Street Compter (a debtors'

¹³⁴ Antony E. Simpson, 'Popular Perceptions of Rape as a Capital Crime in Eighteenth-Century England: The Press and the Trial of Francis Charteris in the Old Bailey, February 1730', *Law and History Review*, 22, 1 (2004), 27-70, pp.32-35.

¹³⁵ Meldrum, pp.89-91.

prison, but quite a lively sociable environment).¹³⁶ The two agreed, and this is where the three women met Thomas Meller and his companion, a man named Litchfield. The two men insisted the women accompany them to a series of public houses, further and further out into the countryside. When the women tried to leave, Warnett claimed 'they lugged us back and brought us away, and said we should go along with them'. Eventually, in a hayfield, he threw her down and forcibly raped her, leading to visible and graphic injuries about which a midwife was able to testify to in court. Warnett had her friend Mary Curtain to corroborate this story closely, and evidence given by the men to whom they had gone for protection after the attack.

Thomas Meller therefore could not deny he had done the deed, even if he had wanted to; misjudging the gravity of the offence, he spoke of the event as '[going] very pleasantly together', and Warnett as being 'as agreeable as if she had been my wife'; he describes the act as 'play[ing] with them'. For light relief, he informed the court: 'I lay with her; she was rather tightish'. Meller's first defence witness emphasised the singing as evidence of good character, when Meller sang, and consent, when the women sang:

I saw him on that Thursday between five and six-o'clock at the Bull-Head at Haggerstone [a rural public house which was the second the women described being taken to]: there was another man and the two girls with him. I was in the yard when they first came in. Then I came into the room where they were. I heard the prisoner sing. I thought it was very agreeable. He sung a good song. I took my beer and went and sat down facing him in the same box. ... They were very jocose together. We went into another room by ourselves to hear the ladies sing. They sang a little bit of a song, which was very agreeable. There was nothing but modesty on both sides. The girls did not appear to be there against their wills, but far from it.

Meller and his witnesses thus implied that the quality of his song and his other charms were sufficient to sway Warnett, a 17-year-old stranger, to fall in love with him to the extent of wishing to behave and live with him 'all the same as my wife'.¹³⁷

There is also a spatial dimension to both Warnett's and Meller's accounts: Warnett implies that Meller kept control over Warnett by disorienting her and physically restraining

¹³⁶ Walter Thornbury, 'Cheapside: Northern tributaries, Wood Street', in *Old and New London*, Volume 1 (London, 1878), pp.364-374. Available at *British History Online* (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk>, accessed 23/10/19).

¹³⁷ *OBPO* t17690628-8.

her, both violent and coercive means of controlling Warnett's spatial environment which would be visible to onlookers. In contrast, Meller's witness implied that the spatial power Meller effected over the maidservants was a charismatic one, deriving from the power of his 'good song'. In keeping with his account that 'there was nothing but modesty on both sides', the women did not sing in public, but only for the private audition of Meller, his friend, and the two women, something which would imply a degree of romantic interest. Assuming that this witness was telling the factual truth, an alternative reading might have been that being enclosed in a private room allowed Meller to exert more coercive control over the women.

However, as with the case of Mary Cotterel and Aaron Newbolt detailed above, Meller's defence and the testimonies of his witnesses did not make any transactional sense in terms of gender capital. As parish bastardy examinations testify, women did not, of course, always act in their rational self-interest when it came to gender capital. Moralists cautioned women against men manipulating them into compromising situations; meanwhile, comic literature created the fantasy of young maidens who desperately wanted to be raped.¹³⁸ Yet that manipulation, at least in advice literature if not in comic miscellanies, usually involved men promising marriage, or some other elevation of gendered status, and a long-term campaign of deception.¹³⁹ This is a very different scenario from a 17-year-old being apparently so overwhelmed with Meller's charm, upon first meeting, that she would compromise that most valuable gender currency, innocence, to lie with him. Sexual hook-ups on first meeting certainly did occur – the 1726 trial of Phillis Noble presents a colourful encounter between a bricklayer and a stranger in a public house off Drury Lane, for instance – but the woman is there presented as initiating the encounter, thus implying innocence was of little value to her.¹⁴⁰ Meller's story, which like Newbolt's was rejected by the jury, is perfectly possible, but lacks what contemporary discourse might present as reasonable motivations for the different individuals' actions (outside the pages of a joke book). Juries might have used a transactional logic of gender to interpret credibility in cases like these.

¹³⁸ Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, pp.201-204.

¹³⁹ e.g. Meldrum, pp.104-106.

¹⁴⁰ *OBPO* t17260114-5.

The case also illuminates the complex inter-relations between the strategic production of gender and its tactical reproduction and appropriation by individuals. Magistrates, judges, juries, and the rest of the legal hierarchy were archetypal strategic producers of gender: their positions provided a 'proper' place to prescribe and manage gender norms (even though, in their private lives, their relationship to gender was by definition tactical). Their role's legitimacy was the source of a network of gender-productive relationships with not only the parties in the cases before them, but the popular press who reported on their decisions (in forms according with their own interests), and all those who considered their positions as subjects of the law. For instance, Sir Mathew Hale's view (as quoted by later legal commentator Blackstone) that rape 'is an accusation easily to be made' shaped not only the outcomes of hundreds of cases – through the way rape trials were framed by judges and advocates, and interpreted by juries and the press – but also popular consciousness.¹⁴¹ The belief that false rape accusations were a real and serious problem (which hurt women like Sarah Bethell materially) was strategically disseminated – legal, social and cultural structures ensured that it was in many people's tactical interest to accept it. The legal promulgation of this belief was not an especially transformative strategy, in that it represented prior, popularly held beliefs (as visible in Figure 5.1, a ballad printed before the posthumous publication of Hale's writings).¹⁴² Yet a strategy it nevertheless was, reifying and reproducing existing values, placing a heavy emphasis on women's roles in policing their own conduct and thereby protecting their own chastity.

Conversely, any strategy, however totalising, permits tactical appropriation, and both Warnett and Meller executed their own tactics with regard to the law's strategies of gender production. Meller tried, and failed to discredit Warnett, bringing witnesses who appealed to the belief that women brought false rape charges against men they had consensually lain with, as a way to protect their honour. Meanwhile, Warnett appealed to contemporary ideas about female innocence and sexual passivity, in which women were only libidinous when 'corrupted' by a combination of male company and inherent

¹⁴¹ Edelstein, 'An Accusation Easily to Be Made?', pp.355-358.

¹⁴² Alan Cromartie, 'Hale, Sir Mathew', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition (Oxford: OUP, 2004, www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 01.06.20).

fecklessness.¹⁴³ The emphasis placed on her youth, her respectability as a servant and having only met Meller that day thus militated against Warnett having the sexual appetite Meller implies she showed. This was calculated well for a London legal setting: these ideas filled some elite men with a reformist zeal to 'rescue' vulnerable women from a path of male temptation that led to sex work.¹⁴⁴ Although this was not out of concern for their psychological wellbeing (given the rigorous, arbitrary discipline and enforced isolation of institutions like the Lock Asylum),¹⁴⁵ Warnett could tactically engage with this moralising impulse through the strategic power of the court, to clear her reputation and protect herself from her attacker.

This section has given some examples of how both male and female servants, and a few older married women (of a similar economic and social class, such that the women would have either been servants themselves in the past, or been the sisters, parents or cousins of servants) transacted gender through musical performance. Understanding gender as a commodity, indeed a form of capital, has helped to clarify people's reactions to and engagement in music: as a means of realising cultural and gender power for Ellis or Aaron Newbolt; for the women to whom they performed, a space to express sexuality in a safe and gender-economically rational manner. It has also shown that these dynamics were underwritten by violence and convergent with other forms of power. Robert Moody wished to express his power by compelling Sarah Bethell to sing, and when frustrated, punished her with violence. Thomas Meller sang, or fabricated a report of singing, as a way to normalise his assault on Mary Warnett. Yet even when the appearance of the transaction was amicable, Ellis benefitted from the threat of sexual violence against women who are (in Haywood's terms) 'proud or prudish', playing a role which compelled the unmarried maidservants (to whom he performed) to give him admiration, or else risk the appearance of pride or prudery. Mary Cotterel benefitted from understanding and tactically reproducing, in her narrative, the logic of gender capital, a hierarchy of respectability and desirability which ensured that some women's labour – that of both sex workers and charwomen – remained

¹⁴³ Trumbach, 'Sex, Gender and Sexual Identity', p.194.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.197-202.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.200.

cheap. Even Mary Warnett, by emphasising her youth and her lack of prior acquaintance with her attacker, thereby gained credibility at the expense of women like Sarah Bethell. Gender capital can be understood in Marxist terms as a commodity extracted coercively by the powerful from the labour of those who have less power to resist. This applies to every form, every currency of gender conceptualised in this chapter; even music must be reconsidered as an instrument of power, used tactically, or strategically, to gain leverage within these exploitative structures, or reinforce them.

Although this is just a small handful of cases drawn diachronously from a broad period of time, sensational cases like these were powerful and broadly-disseminated gender discourses, not at all marginal in the production of gender.¹⁴⁶ The *Old Bailey Proceedings* strategically reinscribed the exploitative structures of gender produced by churchmen, legal thinkers, writers both literary and popular, and civic authorities at the parish, city and national levels. These few cases would not be sufficient to prove that all eighteenth-century subjects perceived gender in transactional terms, but they do demonstrate the utility of that framework for modelling the different paradigms of gender these cases invoked.

Conclusion

The central theoretical contention of this chapter is that the body of a gendered person is a site of (performative) labour, and that person a labourer. In an 'early capitalist' economic system such as that of the eighteenth-century British Isles, in which a strict social hierarchy is negotiated through transactions of capital, labour and commodities, gender can be modelled as a commodity, directly bought and sold in fields like domestic service or sex work. Both of those were uniquely gendered forms of labour, in which purchasers obtained rights over workers' capacities to produce gender, in the same way that other eighteenth-century employers saw themselves as obtaining rights over workers' capacities to produce other goods and services. The perceived value of a person's gender could be modelled as a

¹⁴⁶ Rape cases were frequently republished decades after the initial trial, and were omnipresent in comic literature. Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter*, pp.191-193; also see Robert B. Shoemaker, 'The Old Bailey Proceedings and the Representation of Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 47, 3 (2008), 559-580, pp.564-565, 575.

form of capital, analogous to cultural capital, a representation of their power and status within the libidinal economy, and an indication of their ability to produce the commodity of gender (or have gender produced for them). Like cultural capital, gender capital was only realised in performance, situationally and relationally defined.

This framework is intended to supply a significant gap in classic studies of music and gender in eighteenth-century Britain such as Richard Leppert's *Music and Image*. In Leppert's work, part of the late 1980s project of New Musicology, music and its representations are understood in relation to a 'dominant ideology', which it either conforms with or subverts. This 'ideology' is not entirely univocal and is sometimes contested (as in the discourses around female education Leppert discusses), but for the most part it is characterised as a fixed structure whose relation to human agents is occluded. Sometimes – as in Leppert's analysis of Lady Coke's portrait – individuals are shown reacting to and responding to gender 'ideology', but the practice of gender is somewhat removed from ideology, as if the ideology has an existence separate from its habitual performance.¹⁴⁷ Conceiving of gender as a socio-economic commodity instead, however, brings ideology into the material realm: male hegemony becomes the product of human labour, intellectual, emotional and physical – much of it undertaken, as this chapter has suggested, by women.

Furthermore, the language of economy is capable of showing how human agents construct, perform, subvert and reinscribe gendered power dynamics through the strategic and tactical utilisation of institutions and socio-geographical structures. Like other areas of the economy, gender was produced strategically, by actors with power, and defined roles ('proper' places, in de Certeau's terminology) which gave them legitimacy and control over a network of gender relations. The eighteenth-century economy was not as centralised as that of the twentieth century (when de Certeau was writing). Strategic power over gender was negotiated between a number of different actors at different social levels, which would blur the boundaries between the strategic and the tactical were it not for the vast gulfs in power between, for instance, the aristocracy (and their plutocratic equals in wealth) and

¹⁴⁷ Leppert, *Music and Image*, pp.171-175.

most commoners, or between men and women. Nevertheless, this chapter has contained a number of examples of women using tactical agency to increase or maintain the value of their genders, whether through the currency of innocence, respectability, competence or availability. Not all of these efforts were successful: Sarah Bethell's attempts to leverage the institutional power of the court to protect her innocence and reputation backfired tragically. Yet many people successfully maintained their position within the social hierarchy by producing a valuable gendered commodity through tactically calculated performance.

For instance, Eliza Haywood and other female advice book authors hoped to express good 'housewifery' – the particular gendered commodity masters purchased from domestic servants – through their books about domestic service (which also produced cultural capital). Housewifery was often associated with modesty and 'plainness', meaning that music rarely played a role in its performance. However, a witness in an *Old Bailey Proceedings* fraud case from 1738, Mary Telford, perhaps expressed housewifery by singing to a suicidally depressed man with whom she was 'living in the House' (either as a servant, or a fellow lodger in a third party's property; had there been any intimation of sexual relationship it would have been recorded in the *OBP*). She 'was singing a Verse of the 138th Psalm to him, and he wish'd [Mary Telford] could sing him into Heaven with that Tune', communicating to the court not only his mental distress but also her sensitivity and desire for his best interests, something that otherwise might be in doubt given the circumstances of the case.¹⁴⁸

Transactions of gender were not expressions of rational self-interest by two (or more) parties with freedom to decline, as contemporary theorists misleadingly viewed economic transactions. Rather, compulsion of others, usually the less powerful, to produce gender on one's behalf was an important symbol of men's status within the hierarchy of gender, and thus it was in men's interests to ignore, defraud or override consent. This chapter has furnished many sensational examples of this, but it was also present at a more routine, structural level, for instance, in keeping maidservants' wages low, or by demeaning occupations (such as charring or ballad singing) in which women were a majority. As these

¹⁴⁸ *OBPO* t17380628-7.

latter examples demonstrate, transactions of gender are, of course, economic transactions, and so this legacy of systematic coercion and exploitation (mostly of women and other non-men), by design, belies the understanding that economic transactions are free expressions of rational self-interest.

Indeed, it demonstrates that the nominal legal equality and freedom of contract, which eighteenth-century legal and economic thinkers saw as hallmarks of contemporary progress and rationality, were a means of reifying hierarchy. Although eighteenth-century currency had a value loosely attached to that of gold, every other good, service, labour, commodity and form of capital had a value that was defined relationally (that is, within the libidinal economy). This was true of gender, and it was also true of music: the value of both was determined in the moment of performance (or transaction), but according to habits of thought, semiotic connotations and social relationships formed structurally, over years and decades. When those social relations were profoundly unequal, value could be manipulated to suit the powerful, and thus the rational self-interest of the less powerful was restricted to echoing the desires of their superiors (unless they could find a tactic of manipulation to situationally raise their apparent status). Economic inequality also created another layer of compulsion, namely, the fear of destitution. People who did not perform their genders in such a way as to gain recognition from the powerful (did not gain gender capital) faced profound limitations in their livelihoods and could end up relegated to eighteenth-century Britain's begging population. It is no surprise, then, that over 90% of London's begging population was female, many of them unmarried mothers, according to an estimate from the end of the century.¹⁴⁹ The visibility of the demonised population of street women, sex workers and ballad singers was a sword of Damocles hanging over every woman in eighteenth-century Britain, and that vulnerability could be exploited to coerce housewifery, music, affective labour and sex from them.

¹⁴⁹ Tim Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 3 (2005), 478-498, p.481.

Conclusion

This thesis has, by bringing together social history and musicology, produced new insights into both the lives of eighteenth-century domestic servants and the musics they experienced. This study provides new information to those who study domestic service as a form of labour, such as by replicating, extending and reinterpreting D. A. Kent's 1985 study of domestic servant wages using Westminster parish settlement examinations, contextualised by servant wills and Erddig estate account books. Yet investigating domestic servants' opportunities to hear or participate in music-making, an activity which (aside from footmen saving a place at the theatre for their masters) almost always lay outside of their obligations to their employers, has shown a different side of the sociology of domestic service than studies broadly focused on their working relationships, like those of Tim Meldrum or Carolyn Steedman. Domestic servants were enmeshed in a web of complex hierarchical relationships, some of which – like the master-servant relationship – had a degree of stability imposed by law and custom, while others were more fluid and defined performatively. It is the latter kind of relationship – the relationship between a manservant and a drinking companion, or the complex dynamics of gender and class between a maidservant and a ballad seller – where taking a more holistic view of domestic servants' lives provides much more insight.

These complex hierarchical relationships were recreated spatially: in the home, the country estate, the public house and the urban street, different people produced and used space in different ways. As this thesis has shown, music functioned both to produce space and to directly perform a hierarchical relationship. To invoke once more Michel de Certeau's terminology, some of these uses of music

were strategic, legitimated by institutions:¹ for instance, when the Yorke family at Erddig paid for fiddlers at a 'Children's Ball', as a way to cement their social standing through a transformation of the country house's space into a dance hall. Other musical performances were tactical attempts to appropriate space, such as David Mills playing the genteel German flute in the porter's hall of a baronet's London townhouse (see Chapter 4). Sometimes these tactical appropriations were actively antagonistic to the people with institutional control over space, and therefore met resistance in the form of derision, mistrust and even criminalisation: ballad singers, in attempting to claim performative authority within an urban street or a country fairground, were demonised by the newspaper press and other institutions of elite control. Analysis of fiddle tunes has demonstrated the primary importance of temporal organisation in vernacular musical performance, synchronising bodies and thus controlling space.

Examining the contexts of vernacular musical performances, and how servants interacted with them, has also suggested that gender in eighteenth-century England functioned as a form of capital, transacted through labour and performance, and often fungible for cash. Music could represent an expression of gender capital as well as cultural capital, particularly for men, showing their cultivation and masculine force by singing 'fine Opera tunes'; it could also represent an extraction of gender capital, such as when women were compelled to sing by men in the public house. This framework for understanding gender also works well to explain some of the customary attitudes to the domestic service relationship held by masters, servants and commentators. The libidinal economy of gender helps to explain why 'housewifery' was more than cleaning and cooking, but instead required of maidservants a particular demeanour, a uniquely feminine presentation and

¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press [1984], 1988), p.xxi. See also discussion of de Certeau's concepts of strategies and tactics in Chapter 5.

submissiveness to men within the household. It also demonstrates the obstacles to organising feminist solidarity between women in the eighteenth century. For women with considerable gender capital, such as an aristocratic mistress or a housekeeper in a large household, their interests were aligned more closely with the men who legitimated the value of their gender, than with those women from whose labour they abstracted gender capital, such as lowly charwomen or junior maidservants. This understanding of gender as a commodity, as a product of workers' labour and a surrogate currency within the libidinal economy, could be more broadly applied to historical studies of gender in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, and perhaps other cultures in which a totalising capitalist logic coexists uneasily with customary relations of class and gender.

The ways in which musical performance could function as a transaction of gender capital helps to explain – along with the disparities in wealth, income and ability to accrue possessions shown in the St. Clement Danes parish settlement examinations and the sources which contextualise it – the overwhelming asymmetry between how female and male servants (and their peers of the same social rank) engaged with music. There is almost no evidence of women below the status of the plutocratic 'middling sort' (that is, the statistical majority of women) playing musical instruments. Other than in engravings by Hogarth, the only example of such women engaging with musical instruments I have been able to find is a woman allegedly acting as a pawnbroker who received a stolen violin from a burglar in 1752 (see Chapter 4). Unless they sang ballads for their livelihoods, women were also reluctant to sing for an audience or in a public setting, unlike men such as Andrew Newbolt or Ellis. The only contexts in which I have found women explicitly singing in front of other people (instead of merely being part of a mixed gender group, some of whom were singing) were ones in which they were either compelled to do so, or singing in a private home for only one other person. This seems markedly different from, and indeed more conservative than, the diverse attitudes to women performing music

among the upper classes which Richard Leppert examines.² Further study of attitudes among the eighteenth-century poor to women making music might find interesting correspondences to, or differences from those evinced in aristocratic letters and diaries.

One significant limitation of this thesis is the lack of attention to parish church and Nonconformist chapel music. For the researcher, church music acts as a counterpoint to the theatre, where a great many descriptions, depictions and documents are extant regarding musical performance, but the ease with which servants – other than footmen in certain specific circumstances – could access it is largely unknowable. Services at the parish church or Nonconformist chapel were explicitly open to all, and participated in by a wide cross-section of society (even if many apprentices and artisans preferred to drink and play instead).³ Unlike vernacular fiddling or ballad singing, which was accessible to all, but evidence regarding which is sparse and highly partisan, there is a considerable body of documentation regarding eighteenth-century parish church music in county archives, from manuscript hymn- and psalm-books, to records of payment for musical instruments and choir members, to descriptions of parish church music both factual and partisan from organisations such as the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. Nicholas Temperley's work on Anglican parish church music serves as an excellent introduction to the subject,⁴ but few detailed studies have been made into how church music functioned within the communities it was rooted in – what role, for instance, the growth of parish choirs and the installation of organs had on local vernacular music-making, and the diffusion of different styles. It would also

² Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988).

³ W. M. Jacobs, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP [1996], 2009), pp.52-54.

⁴ Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, Volume 1 (Cambridge: CUP [1979], 1983).

be valuable to produce an explicitly social history of eighteenth-century church music, taking inspiration from the work of W. M. Jacobs on popular engagement with the parish church. The maidservant mentioned at the end of Chapter 5, who sang a verse of a psalm to her ill master or house-mate, was instantiating rich and heterogeneous Christian musical traditions which are rarely considered by musicology.

Another significant limitation – perhaps a direction for further research – is the continued invisibility of London’s ‘mollies’ in this thesis. Mollies were people generally from an urban poor background (and thus of similar social status to many servants), assigned male at birth, who had a richly variant sexual and gender practice in which many presented as women (including using female pronouns) for some or all of the time, slept with each other, and appear to have had rich associations with music and dance also.⁵ An earlier version of this thesis contained some material derived from contemporary popular print regarding mollies’ alleged musical practices, but these proved difficult to verify, and engaging with a broader base of sources would make the musical practices of mollies a viable thesis project in itself. Mollies were – as Chapter 1 indicates – vital to the formation of gender and sexuality in eighteenth-century England, as villains or antiheroes in the contemporary imagination.

In the context of the renewed struggle for equality which 2020 has witnessed, this thesis should be understood as antagonistic towards the white-supremacist institutions and cultural structures which hold hegemonic power in Britain today, as they did in the eighteenth century. I have acknowledged individual Black

⁵ Randolph Trumbach, ‘Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity in Modern Culture: Male Sodomy and Female Prostitution in Enlightenment London’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 2, 2 (1991), 186-203, pp.191-193, 195; *Select Trials at the Sessions-House in the Old Bailey*, II (Aug. 1723 – Apr. 1726, Dublin: S. Powell, 1743), p.355.

slave/servants such as the 'Erddig coachboy', and considered the ways in which they suffered (in the terms of Frank B. Wilderson) 'social death', a fundamental alienation from their own families, histories and personhood, as well as a legal and social precarity that demeaned their subjectivity and rendered them valid objects for violence and violation.⁶ In the case of the 'Erddig coachboy', this alienation and depersoning has continued after death, his likeness stolen and name erased to better fit with a narrative the Yorke family wished to tell. However, since this study confines itself to domestic service within the British Isles, it has primarily considered white servants, particularly the poor and precarious white women whose 'housewifery' and other labours were an essential foundation for the British economy and all musical activities.

This emphasis on Britain's poor must come with an important caveat. The increasing material luxury of the British economy during the eighteenth century, which was seen at all levels of society (through, for instance, the passing on of old clothes and the conditional provision of tea and sugar to servants), all directly or indirectly resulted from the profits of the slave trade and slave plantations in the Americas, as well as the colonial exploitation of the Indian Subcontinent. In addition, as the final chapter of this thesis outlined with regard to hierarchies of gender and respectability, even poor white people in eighteenth-century Britain were necessarily invested in the maintenance of their own social superiority over those beneath them. Simon Dickie notes the universal popularity of jokes mocking the disabled, ill and impoverished;⁷ mollies betrayed each other to the deadly force of the law;⁸ and ballad singers sought to distance themselves from sex workers and the Roma (an

⁶ Frank B. Wilderson and C. S. Soong, 'Blacks and the Master/Slave Relation' (Interview), from *Afro-Pessimism: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Racked & Dispatched, 2017), 15-30, p.18.

⁷ Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp.17-19.

⁸ *Select Trials at the Sessions-House in the Old Bailey*, II (Aug. 1723 – Apr. 1726), p.355.

effort which modern ballad scholarship has also taken up).⁹ At every level of human degradation and exploitation, however, this desperate scrabble for scraps of respectability was motivated by the fear of social death – the depersoning to which enslaved Black people had already been subjected. Although there were not very many Black people in eighteenth-century Britain, outside of some areas of East London, David Dabydeen and Norma Myers have explored their outsized presence in popular art and literature.¹⁰ Not only did Black people's blood and sweat produce the increasing material affluence of eighteenth-century Britain, the *idea* of Black people, as humans who were not really persons – either feared as animalistic savages, or as *memento mori* of a social death that could befall anyone – underwrote the libidinal economy through which all of British labour and culture was transacted. Scholars of colour, particularly Black scholars, should be supported to conduct further research into the lives of enslaved Black people during this period, attempting to reclaim to any small extent the individual histories, self-expressions and human dignities violently wrested from them. I stand in solidarity with recent calls for UK Research and Innovation to address inequities in funding which often shut out Black scholars and other scholars of colour from researching such histories and cultural traditions.¹¹

The final avenue for further research would be a detailed examination of changes in vernacular music in the first half of the nineteenth century. Domestic service was a sector somewhat insulated from the profound changes to the organisation of the economy which the nineteenth century brought, with marked

⁹ Mary Saxby, *Memoirs of a Female Vagrant, Written by Herself* (London: J. Burditt, 1806), pp.13-16; David Atkinson, 'Street Ballad Singers and Sellers, c.1730-1780', *Folk Music Journal*, 11, 3 (2018), 72-106, p.97.

¹⁰ David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art* (Kingston-upon-Thames: Dangaroo Press, 1985); Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain 1780-1830* (London: Frank Cass [1996], 2006), pp.38-55.

¹¹ Addy Adelaine et al., 'Open Letter to UKRI', *Knowledge Is Power* (knowledgeispower.live/about/, accessed 14.09.2020; archived at web.archive.org/web/20200914145041/https://knowledgeispower.live/about/).

continuities from the late seventeenth century through to the early twentieth.¹² Yet the deep economic traumas of the Napoleonic period – with the first significant inflation in living memory, urban hunger and increasing strictures on poor relief – catalysed new forms of social organisation among the nascent ‘working class’, including trade unions and radical political organisations.¹³ Anna Clark’s analysis of gendered discourses in the early Chartist movement also demonstrates a marked move towards a new form of social conservatism in the early nineteenth century, a renegotiation of the economy of gender towards domesticity and perhaps even separate gendered ‘public’ and ‘private’ spheres.¹⁴ The seeds of these changes are visible in this thesis: for instance, the organisation by footmen to keep vails as a customary practice in England in the 1760s,¹⁵ or the way in which the Crown and Anchor tavern in St. Clement Danes, recently vacated by the Academy of Ancient Music, became a site associated with heavily policed radical politics.¹⁶ Hollowell Street in St. Clement Danes, just opposite the Strand from the Crown and Anchor, would become home to socialist printers and pornographers (sometimes the same people); and at the same time, the outcry against sex work which had always been powerful among the merchants and artisans of St. Clement Danes became increasingly genocidal in intent.¹⁷ By the time the Royal Courts of Justice were built in 1867, demolishing 4,000 people’s homes and driving sex workers and Irish

¹² Meldrum, pp.13-14.

¹³ John Bohstedt and Gareth Shaw, *The Politics of Provisions : Food Riots, Moral Economy, and Market Transition in England, c. 1550–1850* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2010), pp.167-170; Robert D. Hume, ‘The Value of Money in Eighteenth-Century England: Incomes, Prices, Buying Power – and Some Problems in Cultural Economics’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 77, 4 (2014), 373-416, p.376; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books [1968], n.d.), pp.113-116, 119-123.

¹⁴ Anna Clark, ‘The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity: Gender, Language, and Class in the 1830s and 1840s’, *Journal of British Studies*, 31, 1 (1992), 62-88.

¹⁵ Robert B. Shoemaker, ‘The London “Mob” in the Early Eighteenth Century’, *Journal of British Studies*, 26, 3 (1987), 273-304, p.280.

¹⁶ Eds. Francis Calvert Boorman, Jonathan Comber and Mark Latham, *The Victoria History of Middlesex: St. Clement Danes, 1660-1900* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2018), pp.81-85.

¹⁷ ed. Boorman et al., *St. Clement Danes*, pp.31, 81-82; Francis Boorman, illustrated talk, ‘St. Clement Danes 1660-1900: The Victoria County History Returns to Westminster’ (7th March 2019 at the Westminster Archives, 10 St. Ann’s Street, London).

migrants further to the margins, urban areas such as St. Clement Danes were radically transformed both in governance and in material conditions.¹⁸

The ways in which vernacular music reacted to these new conditions has been studied extensively and thoroughly by scholars such as Vic Gammon through the texts of broadside ballads, a form which was often discursively political and allegedly undergoing a revival in the early nineteenth century.¹⁹ However, a number of changes took place around the middle of the nineteenth century which drastically affected the material aspects of vernacular music-making: the development of music halls (chronicled rigorously by Dagmar Kift),²⁰ the ever-increasing availability and volume of pianofortes,²¹ and the lifting of stamp duty and import taxes on French harmoniums around the midcentury.²² The impact of these material changes on the musical practices of, for instance, ballad singers and vernacular instrumentalists has been rarely studied and is ill understood, overshadowed by explosive growth in provincial and suburban theatres and formalised orchestral performance.²³ As Britain's population of people of colour continued to grow through the nineteenth century, and colonial atrocities continued to amass abroad, research into nineteenth-century vernacular music should also consider the ways in which musical practices and discourses enforced or subverted racial hierarchies – on which topic musicology continues to speak far too quietly. It is hoped that the methods and insights of this study can be used to further extend historical knowledge into the musical experiences and practices – and thus individuality, dignity and agency – of poorer

¹⁸ Walter Thornbury, 'St Clement Danes: The law courts', in *Old and New London: Volume 3* (London, 1878), pp. 15-25, available at *British History Online*, www.british-history.ac.uk (accessed 24.7.2018).

¹⁹ Anthony Bennett, 'Sources of Popular Song in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain: Problems and Methods of Research', *Popular Music*, 2 (1982), 69-89, pp.69-70.

²⁰ Dagmar Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, trans. Roy Kift (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).

²¹ See Francesca Carnivali and Lucy Newton, 'Pianos for the People: From Producer to Consumer in Britain, 1851-1914', *Enterprise & Society*, 14, 1 (2013), 37-70.

²² Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.100-103.

²³ Ehrlich, *The Music Profession*, pp.54-56, 59-62.

and more marginalised people, as this thesis has achieved for eighteenth-century domestic servants.

Appendix – *Layers of London Posts*

This collection (available as of 6th March 2022 at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800>) was published on the Institute for Historical Research's *Layers of London* website project between March and June 2019. These posts were drawn from primary research I conducted for Chapter 3, and were intended as a means to link together local streetscapes with the eighteenth-century histories which intersected with them. As such, they make a valuable companion to Chapter 3, allowing a fuller understanding of the unique geographical dynamics of the parish of St Clement Danes. They are able to be broad explorations of several dimensions of a place's history, without the constraints inherent in the need to present a coherent continuous argument or relate straightforwardly to either music or domestic service.

Several posts use existing physical architecture as a catalyst for talking about larger historical themes: '33 & 34 Surrey Street' explores vernacular architecture; 'St Clement Danes' uses the church itself to discuss parish governance and parish records; 'Devereux Court', a place rich in extant seventeenth-century architecture, is linked to the history of the Twinings family and its servants as well as the culture of the coffee house. Due to the extensive demolitions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, other posts testify to a local history visible only in street-signs, and sometimes not even then. 'Clare Market' – which discusses eighteenth-century commerce through the prism of the meat and livestock market which took place there – is now a stub of pedestrian alleyway on a postmodern university campus. The portion of Drury Lane within St Clement Danes would be unrecognisable to an eighteenth-century visitor, its architecture entirely reshaped by nineteenth-century 'improvement'. Its theatrical reputation remains, however, and the post 'Drury Lane' focuses on the street's theatrical life and the public houses which served it.

'Holywell/Hollowell Street' is a discussion of a place which no longer exists at all, now part of a widened Strand, but which has important links to both the history of publishing and the history of London's Jewish community. Finally, the post on John Henley's 'Oratory' treads familiar ground from Chapter 3, although is free to go into more depth on aspects of the Oratory's programme and public reputation which have less relevance to music.

There are five further posts intended to be added to this collection by the end of 2022: first, a discussion of racism and vernacular art (drawing on some of the research undertaken for Chapter 2), focused on the statue of the Black boy in Clement's Inn garden; secondly, an exploration of the parish's policing, press censorship and trade regulation, through the prism of New Lincoln's Inn Fields where the Stamp Office was close to a regulatory office for hansom cabs; thirdly, an examination of travel and transport, linked to the stabling in Boswell Court; fourthly, an examination of sex work (drawing on some of the ideas in Chapter 5), focusing on Star Court; and finally, a discussion of nineteenth-century clearances that removed so much of this parish's architecture and population, centred around Ship Yard (now part of the Royal Courts of Justice).

33 & 34 Surrey Street²⁴

Surrey Street, along with Arundel Street, Norfolk Street and (now built over) Howard Street were laid out between 1678 and 1690 on the site of Arundel House, the property of Lord Howard. Most of this area was redeveloped in the 1880s, losing much of the older architecture. However, 33 and 34 Surrey Street - currently part of the Philosophy faculty of King's College London - still survive, townhouses built in 1767. Before this, from about 1692, a small brick mansion had sat on this site, owned by the Fox, Vernon and Danvers families (all important, prestigious dynasties). The two houses we see today, each three storeys high, three windows wide, and two rooms deep, with a modest plat bond between the ground floor and first floor, are quite large but otherwise typical of eighteenth-century townhouses.

The basic pattern of London housing, already well-established in the time of James I, was to have a one- or two-room deep house built right up to the street, as high and narrow as possible. This kind of house developed because street frontage was expensive and in high demand, meaning that keeping houses to twenty or even fifteen feet across on the street side brought a considerable economic advantage to developers. Speculative building projects in London began before the end of Elizabeth's reign, and by the end of the seventeenth century they were the dominant mode of construction. Developers usually purchased land piecemeal from aristocratic landowners (or built on waste ground, or common land) leasehold, that is, reverting to its original owners after a certain length of time. As a consequence, many buildings in London are still owned by the hereditary aristocracy. The length of the lease often resulted in radically different developments. The 99-year leases on which developments in the north and west of London were built - most notably Russell Square and Bedford Square - encouraged developers to build sturdy, stylish housing that could attract prestigious tenants. In contrast, south of the Thames, some leases in Southwark and Lambeth were much shorter, and this encouraged developers to erect small, flimsy wooden houses that they could build cheaply and quickly to receive as much rent as possible.

²⁴ Available at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800/records/33-and-34-surrey-street> as of March 2022.

Brick gradually became the material of choice for London townhouses through the 17th and 18th centuries, largely for reasons of fashion and economics (according to Peter Guillery). After the Great Fire of London prompted new building regulations in 1667, all new houses within the City of London were supposed to be built of brick, and from 1707 these regulations applied to Westminster too. This certainly did not mean the end of timber construction in London, since regulations could sometimes be avoided, or brick frontages used to hide timber structures, but by 1767 it was usually more economical to build from local brick than imported timber in any case. St. Clement Danes, however, still had a large number of older timber buildings, particularly along Wych Street, Holywell Street and in the area now occupied by the Royal Courts of Justice. When Wych Street was demolished to build Kingsway and Aldwych in the early twentieth century, London lost some of its last vernacular Medieval housing!

An equally significant change in architecture catalysed by the Great Fire of London was the widespread adoption of basement kitchens. The 1667 building regulations required even small City of London houses to have a brick-lined basement at least 6.5 feet deep (about 2 metres), a challenge to dig out and keep dry in London's wet clay soil, but valuable potential extra living space for developers and residents. When a light well was added in front of the building, as at 33 and 34 Surrey Street, the basement could be used for servant accommodation, or a kitchen, or both. This had multiple advantages. Firstly, it left the ground floor free to be used as a shop or workshop - indeed, 33 Surrey Street was used as the business entrance for the 'Roman baths' behind (actually a 17th-century garden water butt, but sold as a Roman health cure). Secondly, the kitchen used the most water of any room of the house, so siting it low made a great deal of sense, for easy access to early piped water systems or household wells. Thirdly, it kept noisy, smelly kitchen tasks, and the undesirable servants who performed them, out of family living spaces. The basement kitchen was far from universal, but it was very fashionable from the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century.

To rent an entire house was not an impossible dream for a successful artisan or tradesperson. Around half of London's houses could be rented for less than £11, and about a quarter for less than £5. Higher food costs, fuel costs and other expenses meant that rent typically took up 1/8th of a working family's budget; so that a family earning £40 a year - a healthy labourer's wage - could afford a cheap house to the east of London, or in Clerkenwell, or in St. Margarets Westminster (to the south west, along the river). St. Clement Danes seems to have been a little more expensive, based on information from the Four Shilling Aid tax assessments of the 1690s, with mean household rents around £10-26. In areas like St. Clement Danes, a poorer family - that is, most families - had a few options. With most houses having a one- or two-room floor plan, renting a single room meant renting an entire floor, and this was an acceptable option for many individuals or small families. Alternatively, a family might rent the whole house and sublet one or two rooms to make ends meet. The cheapest place to rent was the garret, the loft space, long associated with poverty. In houses occupied by a single household, servants often slept there. The first floor was considered the most prestigious, and genteel houses had their grandest public rooms on that floor. The ground floor was, in St. Clement Danes, a perfect place for a shop, workshop or drinking room, but a night-time intruder might find apprentices, servants or even shop owners' families sleeping there - eighteenth-century households were flexible about where they slept!

What would it have been like to live in these houses? Sara Pennell's excellent book *The Birth of the English Kitchen, 1600-1850* explores one of the central rooms of the eighteenth-century house, the kitchen. Everyone in the household would have passed through the kitchen in the course of a day: warming up by the house's largest fire, fetching water for washing or working, chatting with the kitchen servants, washing or repairing clothes, perhaps brewing beer or distilling unlicensed spirits, or of course preparing food. Until the end of the century, when enclosed and semi-enclosed ranges began to propagate, the kitchen would have been bright, hot (yet sometimes still damp, when in a poorly-built basement) and filled with coal smoke. Although London had adopted coal as its main fuel in the mid-17th century, it took a long time for chimneys, hearths and fire irons to adapt to the differences between wood and coal fire, and many fires were ventilated quite poorly as a

result. Despite this, respectable Londoners tried desperately to keep their houses sparkling clean, expecting their servants to clean the entire house from top to bottom - removing and replacing all furniture - once a week. The kitchen would have been filled with gleaming tinware cooking vessels, cheap, bright and practical: even the dowdiest bachelor was usually in possession of a toasting-fork and a long-handled skillet (for cooking bacon over an open fire). A household with its own kitchen usually owned a spit for roasting meats, which could be turned with a variety of simple but expensive clockwork mechanisms, or laboriously by hand. Victorians later bemoaned that their 'scientific' sealed steam ovens produced far inferior roasts than the moist, tender meat a good spit roast could yield. In one corner of the kitchen might have been a stone or copper water tank with a tap, for storing piped water (which usually only flowed into the house for one or two hours a day).

Thinking about the kitchen is a good launching point for discussing one of the key differences between how early modern people organised their houses and the classic twentieth-century suburban semi. Those who rented a single room/floor did not have a dedicated 'kitchen' as such, but they still often had basic cooking equipment. Trundle beds could be placed anywhere, and could be found even in kitchens and laundry houses. In 1690 one Lucey Jefferies, a servant, allegedly stole valuable household goods from her employer; some missing cutlery was found 'in her Bed, at another House adjoining, being the Wash-house, where the Prisoner lay'. While twentieth-century vernacular architecture generally favoured specific rooms for specific purposes, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries room use was a lot more flexible - as it had to be. Not only were there far fewer internal walls, the early modern home was also a workplace, and piece-workers in London's houses fuelled one of the world's fastest-growing economies. From the parish settlement examinations (see the record for St. Clement Danes), we know that St. Clement Danes housed a huge variety of different trades. In Surrey Street, alongside residential occupation and lawyers' homes, both Prudence Meredith and Henry Haddon worked for a brazier (usually a wholesaler of metal goods), while Ann Bunker worked at a public house called the Cheshire Cheese. All of the industrial and commercial occupations the people of St. Clement Danes busied themselves with required both workers (apprentices, hired servants or journeymen) and storage to be present in the house. When John Par, a pawnbroker,

accused his child's nurse Isabel Gery (a native of St. Clement Danes) of theft, he noted that his warehouse was 'up Stairs on the same Floor with the Nursery'. The simple one- or two-room plan of a house like 33 and 34 Surrey Street could contain a confusing, flexible array of different arrangements of furniture, goods and people.

An even bigger surprise is how much the division between 'public' and 'private' space was eroded. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was quite common for public house kitchens to be open to customers, and was even used as a drinking room. Further, very few people ever slept alone; indeed, when the master of the household was away, the mistress of the house often shared a bed with a maidservant, allegedly to protect chastity but also to keep warm and experience companionship. Further down the social scale, journeymen, apprentices and the unfortunate were compelled to share temporary berths in dwelling houses. Edward Farrel, an inhabitant of St. Clement Danes, allegedly stole his room-mate John Wallis's clothes in 1731, once the latter had left for work. Wallis was a staymaker, that is, he crafted the robust and ubiquitous female undergarment known as 'stays': a skilled craft, yet he shared a room with a stranger in a dwelling house owned by a third party. In houses with lodgers, servants or multiple occupancy, the likelihood of finding privacy - anywhere more hospitable than a shared outdoor privy - was low. You would be more likely to find private conversations happening in a public house. If you are interested in the huge range of services an early modern public house provided to local residents, see the record for Drury Lane. 33 Surrey Street was not quite a public house, but as the entrance to the 'Roman bath' in the 1780s, it was probably a place where 'public' and 'private' interwove in fragile, ever-shifting patterns.

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Clare Market²⁵

In a Parliamentary act of 1656 aimed at regulating London's unbridled urban sprawl, a clause specifically allowed the Earl of Clare to hold an open, free market three times a week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, on what were then known as Clement's Inn Fields. This antiquated name was a testament to how much open space the parish had before it was enveloped by seventeenth-century speculative building. London's population doubled over the course of the seventeenth century, to become Europe's largest city. Markets were a vital part of the economic infrastructure of seventeenth-century Britain: not only for householders to purchase goods, but for farmers, merchants and retailers to seal deals, and for employees to find employers (or complain about their current employer!).

This made markets a key social space in early modern London. Claremarket might have been known as a meat and livestock market, but there were still plenty of public houses that served it. All these public houses needed servicing, and Claremarket had a few cheese shops, gin distillers - legal and illegal - and chandlers' shops, which sold not only candles but much of the other paraphernalia of daily life. See the record for Drury Lane to find out more about the world of the early modern public house. The most important public house in Claremarket was the Sun Tavern in Clare Street, a vital meeting-place for business both legitimate and not-so-legitimate. It was here that Matthew West, a goldsmith, arranged a 2 pm meeting in 1720 of all of his associates who had clubbed together to invest in "South-Sea Stock, Bank Stock, India Stock, African Stock, and all other Publick Stocks, tolerated by Parliament".

Here, probably in a back room, a cross-section of London elite society - from master artisans up to minor gentry - sat and drank weak beer at the centre of an economic network that enveloped almost the whole world. The Royal African Company, whose stock they had clubbed together to buy, was the principal agent through which the British slave trade operated. Most of these Londoners, of course, had little or no knowledge of the blood and

²⁵ Available at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800/records/clare-market> as of March 2022.

terror that brought them a good return on their investments. For more information about the ways London's commercial and cultural life was thoroughly enmeshed in slavery, look at the excellent UCL Legacies of British Slave-Ownership database (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs>), which maps slave owners compensated by the government after the freeing of slaves in 1838. Several claimants lived within St. Clement Danes! Meanwhile, the East India Company, another stock Matthew West's group invested in, was little better, transporting indentured workers around South and East Asia in appalling conditions to work on plantations forcibly imposed on the landscape and its indigenous peoples. Their direct rule over India, Pakistan and Bangladesh was notoriously controlling, capricious and incompetent. The South Sea Company, although it dabbled in slave trading, would become famous for something rather different - namely, their stocks being the subject of such heavy speculation that share value exploded and then crashed very rapidly, an incident known as the South Sea Bubble. Groups of investors such as Matthew West's, precisely because they had so little direct experience of these colonial ventures, were vulnerable to the manipulation of rumour and reputation.

Business dealings in the early modern period were entirely reliant on trust and reputation. What we tend to see in newspaper stories and the Old Bailey Proceedings (see the record for Holywell Street) are usually times when that trust has failed. For instance, in 1729 a certain M-- N-- was convicted of stealing cows after trying to sell them to a chapman, that is, a trader, in the George Inn, near Clare Market. The chapman grew wary after haggling reduced the cows to a suspiciously low value, and brought a local constable to arrest him (see the record on New Lincoln's Inn Square for more information on early modern law enforcement). Within the Sun Tavern again, we see an incident where trust again fractured, this time in a distinctively eighteenth-century way. Although you could enlist the help of a parish constable to prevent violence or to arrest an offender, almost all prosecutions were private - that is, the wronged person had to bring a criminal to trial themselves, and pay all of the many expensive, troublesome fees that involved. For this reason, dealing with crime was much more of a commercial matter than you might expect. When Elizabeth Carter and Mrs. Hatchet, two burglary victims, were approached in 1722, by a pair of men offering to return some of their possessions and hand over the thief for a

substantial fee, they were intrigued by the proposal. Their meeting in the Sun Tavern only turned sour when the 'thief' they produced, dressed in an oversized hat and coat, turned out to be a lot skinnier and paler than the muscled craftsman Mrs. Hatchet remembered seeing during the theft. It was implied in court, then, that these 'thief-catchers' were acting in league with the thieves to cheat money out of the two businesswomen. They were transported to the colonies, along with the man who impersonated the thief.

The Sun Tavern was on Clare Street, overlooking the most open part of the market. This would have had livestock passing through it on their way to local slaughterhouses; farmers, butchers and slaughtermen conducting their business; householders, servants, retailers and hawkers collecting provisions; passers-by on their way between London and Westminster; and dogs - nominally 'owned' and stray alike - wandering through, looking for morsels of meat and bone. We have, from newspapers and trial reports, glimpses of the kinds of interactions these different people and animals had with each other, and the power dynamics that shaped them.

Claremarket was no stranger to chaos, or violence. Butchers and slaughtermen were always armed with sharp implements, meaning that the stresses of everyday life in the early modern period could result in truly deadly incidents. One Friday, around the New Year, 1747, two dogs were fighting over scraps in the market, causing a ruckus. 'Two Slaughtermen, who were stript and killing of Sheep, came out with their Knives to stick them' (that is, stab them to death), according to a news report. These half naked, sweaty, bloodied men, lunging with long knives still dripping sheep's blood, both missed and accidentally struck each other, one in the arm and the other in the hand, possibly disabling both for life. From time to time, Claremarket saw violence of a more homicidal nature. In 1740, apparently without provocation (although it would be foolish to trust the judgement of 18th-century journalists), a master butcher assaulted a colleague with a large knife, plunging it so deep into his belly that 'when it was pull'd out his Caul hung out of the Wound'. A riot on St. Patrick's Day saw mass violence between the local Irish community and Claremarket's butchers, wreaked with cutlasses, sticks and bludgeons. However, these were exceptional incidents, stories of brutality eagerly consumed by a voyeuristic literary elite.

Violence was common enough in early modern England, but it was usually more subtly deployed, to maintain rather than disrupt order. Since the government provided little in the way of practical policing, people instead took it into their own hands to achieve retribution and prevent disruption. Wives, children and servants would all have experienced corporal punishment at the hands of their parents, husbands and masters, for instance; to the early modern mind, this was necessary to maintain the patriarchal social order. Such everyday violence tended to be small-c conservative, resisting both marginalised people who forgot 'their place' and the powerful when they overstepped or abused their authority. There are some incidents of violence at Claremarket which many at the time would have seen as justified, limiting excessive abuses of power.

One particularly colourful example was a case from February 1722. A wealthy young woman leaving the theatre - probably the theatre on Portugal Street, newly renovated - was shoved by someone unseen into a man's private coach. This was a dangerous and compromising situation for a young woman, and she must have been very afraid when the coach sped away into Claremarket. There, 'the young Lady Cry'd so loud for Help, that in a Minute there were Fifty Butchers, and a great Rabble after the coach, crying stop the Coach' - an impressive sight, given how muscled and well armed Claremarket's butchers had to be. Out of fear, the man who probably planned to sexually assault the young woman (described by the newspaper as a 'Spark') jumped out of the coach and ran into the dark anonymity of Bear Court. Bear Court was a failed extension of Claremarket, a place of dilapidation, criminality and poverty. That it was yards away from the grand townhouses of Lincoln's Inn Fields explains a lot about why tensions exploded into violence so often in early modern London.

Finally, we return to the Sun Tavern, one of the hangouts for a group of theatricals and creatives associated with the actor Joe Miller. Together, they collected a joke book, *Joe Miller's Jests*, which was very successful and republished many times. Most of the jokes are very sexual in nature, or very cruel, or both. However, the fourth joke in the book helps to

sum up the interactions between business and leisure, rich and poor that happened in Claremarket, and playfully hints at the differences in language and culture between them:

"Joe Miller sitting one day in the Window at the Sun Tavern in Clare Street, a Fish-Woman [a street pedlar who delivered fish straight to homes] and her Maid passing by, the Woman cry'd, Buy my Soals, buy my Maids: Ah, you wicked old Creature, cry'd honest Joe, What, are you not content to sell your own Soul, but you must sell your Maid's too?"

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St. Clement Danes²⁶

St. Clement Danes is a parish church now on the junction of the Strand and Aldwych. It stands on the boundary between Westminster and the City of London: Temple Bar (see record) once marked the boundary between the two. The current church was built in 1684 to a Christopher Wren design, with the tower raised in 1719. The building itself has changed little since then, although its surroundings have been drastically altered. So too have we changed, as observers of it; we no longer 'read' a building in the same way an early modern mind would. Buildings had different meanings deriving from their different functions and different observers' frames of reference. Let's look at a contemporary observer, then, and see how they viewed the church. We can compare this observer's view with other contemporaries and our own reading of the building, to see if he has different priorities or understandings to us.

Seymour's 1735 *Survey of London and Westminster*, heavily based on Strype's earlier *Survey* of the same name, describes the church thus:

"This church is built of curious Stone, both strong and beautiful, of the Corinthian order. The East End, both of the Church and Chancel, are elliptical, and the Roof is covered with lead, as are also two Cupola's at the West End over the Stair-cases; and there is a spacious circular Portico fronting the Strand, supported by six Pillars of the Ionick Order.

"It is a very neat ornamental Church, both Inside and Outside; for the latter, you have at the East End a circular Pediment with Shield, with the Anchor [the symbol of St. Clement Danes]; a Cornice around the Church; the Windows are adorned with Cherubims (on the Key-Stone); the Arches with Enrichments, and the Battlements, and other proper Places, with Vases."

It is clear that, to this eighteenth-century observer at least, the way to 'read' a church was through the ornaments it held and the meanings those ornaments had, as much as the forms and proportions. His principal interest, though, were burial monuments, gravestones and the like, so perhaps this aesthetic interest is more personal than indicative of his time

²⁶ Available at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800/records/st-clement-danes-church-and-parish> as of March 2022.

period. Seymour's survey then goes on to describe the ornaments of the inside of the church in a similar level of detail, including the triple-decker oak pulpit, from which the priest would deliver sermons, "curiously carved and enriched with Cherubims, Cupids, Anchors, and Branches of Palm, Festoons, fine finnierring, &c.". Pulpits were important firstly because they were the centre of the congregation's attention for almost the entire length of the service – the second tier was commonly reserved for the parish clerk, who led sung worship in the absence of an organ – and secondly because they were a kind of amplification device, the raised, resonant wooden boxes helping to project the priest's voice out across the building.

Who attended church in the Restoration and the eighteenth century? Some historians have characterised the eighteenth century as a relatively 'secular' period, between the wars fought over religion in the seventeenth century and the religious revivals of the nineteenth century. Certainly, the 1689 Act of Toleration meant that the government was no longer quite so interested in enforcing Anglican doctrine on the populace, and after 1689 very few people were prosecuted for failing to attend church (the crime of recusancy). Yet religion still played a very important part in people's lives, shaping everything from their political allegiances to the language of the cheap press (see the record for Hollowell Street), and everything in between. While most people did not attend church every week, they could be relied upon to come for important festivals such as Easter and whenever else they felt the need for spiritual refreshment, William Jacobs' book _____ suggests. London was no less 'spiritual' than the countryside: numerous Dissenting preachers stirred up religious fervour in the city, and Parliament arranged for the construction of several new churches to cater to the demands of the populace. Many London parish churches had daily services, and multiple services on Sunday. London and Westminster parishes often had the money and power to install the period's grandest symbol of religious authority, the organ.

Congregations, meanwhile, were quite happy singing unaccompanied psalms in the distinctive way that they are still sung in the Scottish Islands ([link](#)), where each note can last several seconds and every change of note is a collective decision. Organs, being incredibly expensive, were a sign of worldly power as well as spiritual discipline, one that rankled for

many ordinary members of the congregation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, parish churches were not merely religious centres, but the hub of local government. The parish vestry was responsible for collecting local residence taxes (rates), local policing (through the appointment of parish constables and night watchmen), and benefits for the destitute (parish poor relief). You can see the St. Clement Danes parish boundaries outlined in red in the image at the top of this page. Within this area, thousands of people lived, worked, claimed parish poor relief, and paid taxes – and yet the parish vestry was ‘closed’, in other words, controlled by a few self-appointing prominent citizens. This small elite circle – around 40 people – elected officials, oversaw parish finances and administered poor relief with little or no input from ratepayers, even though, until 1700, there was no legal basis for this system.

This set the groundwork for tensions to explode into open legal conflict in 1699, when the parish overseers (those in charge of overseeing poor relief) co-signed, with many local inhabitants, a complaint to the justices of Middlesex about alleged corruption by the church warden, facilitated by ‘a body of pretended vestrymen ... by a pretended right of auditing the parish accounts’. Suspicions were heightened when the select parish vestry held elections for the church warden in secret, without informing parishioners. The resentment had built up over decades, with the parish getting into serious debt from the rebuilding of the church in the 1680s, and that debt only getting larger with time due to mismanagement and confused accounting. Extra taxes and levies had not been enough to pay down this debt, and ratepayers were concerned that charitable funds ringfenced for poor relief were actually being used by the parish vestry to pay for their grandiose building projects and personal corruption (such as spending excessively on refreshment in local taverns).

In response to the vestry’s secret election, the rate-paying parishioners nominated their own candidates for the two churchwardens, and took their dispute to court. In the meantime, however, the rector had gone behind their backs and confirmed the select vestry’s candidates in their posts. The parishioners retaliated by forcibly occupying the parish vestry, stating they had the right ‘by public contract’. By December 1700, the courts

had ruled in their favour, and the parishioners rapidly made significant reforms to local electoral processes and account auditing. However, following a complaint by the rector to the Bishop of London in 1701, the Bishop eventually provided a faculty – that is, legal permission – for a select parish vestry of 44 men, the local elite once again seizing control. The two sides had to reach a compromise. The Bishop's support crushed any legal route for local rate-payers to take control of parish affairs. Yet the vestry did bring back some general meetings of parish rate-payers – including for the election of churchwardens – from 1723. An uneasy balance between the local elite and local taxpayers continued until 1764, when a Parliamentary bill converted St. Clement Danes into an 'open' parish vestry, in which all rate-payers had equal civic rights in parish affairs. That was unusual, since at this time more parish vestries were formally becoming 'select'. Perhaps St. Clement Danes's rate-payers were more successful at lobbying than other parishes, or perhaps the parish's vestry was so incompetent it was an embarrassment to the government.

In any case, the poor of the parish didn't get a say in the running of the parish. Only those whose rent exceeded £10 a year – which was a lot – or who owned property outright paid parish rates and therefore had any say in local government. This is why so many parishes, including St. Clement Danes, resented paying poor relief and restricted claims on it. The claim was that poor relief that was too generous would attract the poor from all over London. Stories abound of pregnant women in labour forcibly dragged by parish officials across parish boundaries so that the child would not be eligible for financial support. Unmarried mothers and their children were eligible for financial support from the husband; all impoverished residents were eligible for money and food from the parish. This is the reason that modern historians have the information that we have about ordinary people's lives in St. Clement Danes: the parish sought to check very carefully about whether poor claimants were really resident or not, and kept meticulous records that still survive. The system very closely resembled modern immigration control, except that each parish sought to control the movement of the poor, rather than each country.

St. Clement Danes' records not only survive in a fairly complete state, but they have been digitised and transcribed on the groundbreaking London Lives website

www.londonlives.org). That website has a lot of important information about the different kinds of records that the parish kept and how complete and reliable they are. My St. Clement Danes collection on *Layers of London* has mostly involved parish settlement examinations, as well as a few bastardy examinations. The purpose of the former was to prove that you were an eligible resident of the parish. For that, you had to have been (a) a former ratepayer, or the daughter or wife of a ratepayer; (b) an apprentice in the parish, or the wife of an apprentice; (c) a hired live-in servant in the parish who has stayed with one employer for a year, or the wife of a hired servant. In the parish settlement examinations, then, people recounted details of their previous employment to parish officials, who would then sign off on it if they were satisfied that it was true. Often, claimants were trying to remember a period of employment from twenty years ago, or even longer; wives generally gave their husband's settlement in preference to their own, so widows were often trying to remember what jobs their husband had had before marriage. People didn't find it easy to remember specific dates, in this period of partial literacy, messy calendar reform and inconsistent record-keeping. As is the case in many countries with minimal governance today, people rarely even knew their birthday. These memory problems are why, when the same claimants have had multiple examinations, the precise details tend to shift a little. However, there was no reason for them to systematically lie about anything about where their employer lived (since if it wasn't in St. Clement Danes, they had no right to parish poor relief and could even have been forcibly relocated). So we can find out a fair amount about what people earned in St. Clement Danes, and what kinds of industries people worked in.

Bastardy examinations are more colourful, if less frequent and less reliable. Their purpose was for unmarried mothers to be able to claim financial support from their child's father. Of course, for the unmarried mothers themselves this was often a source of great shame and humiliation that would stick with them for the rest of their lives, and the entirely male parish examiners pried into private details insensitively and in public. Unmarried fathers, on the other hand, faced little stigma (although they were required to pay maintenance for their children). However, these records not only testify to the dreadful misogyny of early modern society, but show us where and how people were meeting and courting, a snapshot of sociability.

This collection uses the parish of St. Clement Danes, and all the records it kept, as a focal point that allows us to dive down deep into the sheer variety of things that were all taking place at the same time on a London street. If you were to focus on merely one aspect of life in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London, such as art, transport, fashion or food, you would miss the ways that all of these phenomena were interconnected simply by proximity. That is, while you were out buying food, you would most likely encounter street hawkers, ballad singers, wig makers' boys and chairmen, all within the space of a few yards. Intellectual and cultural life flourished around important marketplaces and busy retail streets. Brothels and theatres were across the street from each other. Hopefully this collection will help you to imagine all of the different ways Londoners connected with each other in St. Clement Danes, and help you to understand how the grand brushstrokes of history played out, street by street, building by building. If you have a suggestion, correction or comment, please email me at micah.neale@rhul.ac.uk (pronouns: she/her).

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Devereux Court²⁷

Devereux Court, a narrow lane south off the Strand just before Essex Street, still has a few intact seventeenth-century buildings; the dog-leg route of the court has not changed since it was laid out in the 1670s, on the site of Essex House, a grand old house with extensive gardens. After the death of its final owner, dowager Duchess of Somerset Frances Devereux, King Charles II failed to purchase it on behalf of the Earl of Essex, meaning that developer Nicholas Barbon was able to lay out Essex Street and Devereux Court on the site. In 1735 Robert Seymour described it thus: "It is a large Place with good Houses, and by Reason of its Vicinity to the Temple, has a good Resort, consisting of Publick Houses, and noted Coffee Houses; from this Court is a Passage into Essex-street."

Coming from the Strand, the entrance is narrow, hemmed in by a twentieth-century building to the left, and the George public house to the right. The George has existed in some form or another on that site since 1751, having been a coffee house until 1825, and then the George Hotel, before becoming a public house relativeley recently. After that narrow entrance, Devereux Court is about 2-3 metres wide for its entire length. The right-hand side of Devereux Court, past the George, is a nineteenth-century brick building currently occupied by the Cervantes Institute.

On your left as you go around the first bend is 9 Devereux Court, formerly the Twinings building, rebuilt in 1952 after wartime building destroyed the original buildings. Roughly where the entrance to 9 Devereux Court is now would have been the entrance to Tom's Coffee House, bought in 1706 by Thomas Twining. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Twinings owned all of the left-hand side of Devereux Court up from here to the Strand, with a banking-house, a family residence and a warehouse all growing into one communicating complex of buildings. In 1787 the Twinings opened an entrance directly on the Strand, reflecting changes in how the gentry travelled around London (for more

²⁷ Available at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800/records/devereux-court> as of March 2022.

information, see the record for the Crown and Anchor Tavern). The entrance to the Twinings teahouse remains at 216 Strand to this day.

Several members of the Twining family were born in Devereux Court, even though the family had residences elsewhere. From the parish settlement examinations (see my record for St. Clement Danes for more information), we know that one Mary Evans served the family for just over a year, quitting in 1746. She was about 39 when she was hired, and was paid £7 a year. This put her among the very highest-paid of live-in maidservants: fully 90% of maidservants (from my sample of 623 parish settlement examinations) earned £6 or less per year. This generous salary probably indicates that her skills - whether they were in housework, childcare or cooking is unclear - were highly valued by the Twinings. Like many women interviewed in the parish settlement examinations, she was unmarried. Could women like Mary Evans have been financially independent, earning enough money from their service skills that they did not need to marry? Or is the fact that, 8 years later, she is applying for parish poor relief (the early modern equivalent of the benefits system) evidence that older women faced economic precarity? Read the record for St. Clement Danes and reach your own conclusion.

Going round the dog-leg and facing south on Devereux Court, you will see the gate into the Temple on the left, and the court bending sharply to the right to join with Essex Street. Just before the gate and the bend to the right are two buildings constructed by Nicholas Barbon in 1675/76: Devereux Chambers and 20 Devereux Court. Both of these have been thoroughly reshaped by later usage, but the core fabric of the building has been there for over 330 years. On the left is Devereux Chambers, a building updated around the turn of the nineteenth century with a Neoclassical stucco finish and fancy window pediments on the first floor. You can read more about how to 'read' an early modern vernacular building on the Surrey Street record. Notice the semi-circular grate at the base of the front wall? That was the original coal-hole, through which coal deliverymen would pour coal into a coal-cellar in the building's basement.

20 Devereux Court is a building with a very interesting history. Almost as soon as the building was finished, it became the new home of the Grecian Coffee House, a hotbed of genteel political and literary thought. Literary figures including Joseph Addison, founder of the Spectator, met there, as well as scientific luminaries - Isaac Newton, Edmund Halley and Sir Hans Sloane all frequented it. The business lasted until 1842, and the picture attached to this record is an 1809 painting of the Grecian Coffee House. You can see how much lower the street level was: while today the front door is flush with the street, in 1809 there were two substantial steps down to the street, which continued to slope away downwards towards the corner. This left the coal-hole (now covered by an iron grate) fully visible. The building also looks much plainer without the heavy coat of stucco and huge window pediments added in 1842; also noteworthy are the dormers visible on the roof. From the Restoration onwards, attic rooms (known as garrets) were often rented out to poorer families or inhabited by servants. You can read more about how people inhabited early modern houses in the record for Surrey Street.

One of the servants who might have inhabited the Grecian Coffee House's drafty garret, up amid the low, heavy coal smog that blanketed London, was Angelo Trogar. In 1752 his wife was examined for parish settlement, presumably because she was claiming poor relief. You can find out more about the parish settlement examinations in the record for St. Clement Danes. As a woman, your husband's or father's parish settlement could stand in for your own if you did not meet the conditions of settlement yourself. Indeed, the parish examiners actively preferred to take your husband's settlement. Margaret Trogar remembers that she married her husband in 'the Greek Chapel in Change Court upwds. of 30 years ago', and that before her marriage her husband had worked for his uncle, George Constantine, a former sailor and owner of the Grecian Coffee House. He was paid £12, which made him better-paid than 90% of male servants in the parish (from my sample of 176). However, it would not have been enough to live on unless he lived in or was provided with free room and board, since even unskilled labourers tended to demand £20 a year or more to sustain a family (indeed, this is what some eighteenth-century observers defined as subsistence level). A young migrant in a highly xenophobic country, he must have been grateful to his successful uncle for a solid start in his career. However, the mixing of familial, friendly and

business relations that was ubiquitous in early modern life - your choice of friends could furnish or ruin your career at the drop of a hat - allowed quietly abusive dynamics to flourish.

Round the corner, facing towards Essex Street, are two more Barbon houses on the right-hand side, nos. 22 and 23. No. 22 was probably re-faced to match the old appearance of the Grecian Coffee House, with those distinctive stone plat bands around the second floor and the flattened brick arches with stone centrepieces. No. 23 was built around the same time, but looks completely different, having been refaced with different materials and with a top storey built in the mid-twentieth century.

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Drury Lane²⁸

Drury Lane has been a very culturally important street for a very long time. Until Kingsway was finished in 1905, it was the main arterial route for traffic between, on one side, Bloomsbury and all of the fashionable new developments to the west, and on the other, the River Thames and the City of London. Due to its length, it was split between several parishes. Within St. Clement Danes was only the eastern side of Drury Lane from the junction with Wych Street (now bulldozed and replaced with Aldwych) to just south of the junction with Princes Street. Even this tiny stretch of Drury Lane was so heavily populated and economically important it gave its name to an entire ward of the parish.

The theatre was a very important influence on this part of Drury Lane from the Restoration onwards, with the Drury Lane playhouse just yards away from the St. Clement Danes parish boundary; this was for a long time one of only two 'patent theatres' in London, with royal permission to perform spoken drama. In lesser theatres, like Sadler's Wells, there were a variety of light theatrical entertainments, but only Drury Lane and its lone competitor – based out of the Portugal Street playhouse from 1695 until the early 1720s – staged full plays. From the 1730s a dedicated opera house opened not far from the playhouse in Covent Garden, again yards away from St. Clement Danes's portion of Drury Lane. These two uniquely important venues brought hundreds of genteel audience members to Drury Lane every week during the London season, all purchasing tickets and transport, and many seeking refreshment, or even carnal pleasure. This exuberance of spending allowed a professional leisure industry to flourish, from elite musicians to actors to sex workers.

As you would expect, a lot of the servants recorded in the St. Clement Danes parish settlement examinations (see the record for St. Clement Danes) who worked along Drury Lane worked for public houses. There were plenty of tradesmen's servants too, though – a servant to a cheesemonger, another to a button maker, and a third to a coach maker. A shoemaker's servant and a tailor's servant worked in some of the courts and alleys leading

²⁸ No longer available online due to a PDF upload feature being removed (as of March 2022).

off Drury Lane. Other than the coach maker, there were tradesmen like this in every neighbourhood of London, providing victuals and mending clothes. There were also some servants to country gentlemen who were staying in lodgings in Drury Lane, probably above a shop or public house. However, musicians, actors and sex workers are all invisible in these records, since they rarely hired servants to help them in their work (and in the case of the latter category, servants would not wish to disclose their employer's trade to a parish official). We have to find other ways to discover who lived and worked in Drury Lane.

Researcher Catherine Harbor, drawing from a database of musical newspaper advertisements, collected a list of musicians' names and addresses, as well as concert venues in the first half of the eighteenth century. I have placed all of those in the vicinity of St. Clement Danes on a German map of 1735 (see cover image). Although most of these genteel musicians lived further to the west, amongst the gentry in St. James Westminster and the new developments around Oxford Street, there are considerable clusters of musicians living on either side of Drury Lane, including the composer Thomas Arne, who lived on Duke Street and (at a different point in his life) Great Queen Street, both opening onto Drury Lane. Arne composed 'Rule Britannia' and harmonised 'God Save the Queen'. Actors also lived and congregated in the area, an informal theatrical club forming at the Black Jack tavern in Lincoln's Inn Fields (see record for Carey Street).

In terms of sex work, although brothels and sex workers could be found in every poorly-lit alley, Drury Lane had a notorious reputation as a red-light district. In a short, lewd booklet named *The Female Glossary*, published in 1732 (which attempts to define various euphemisms for a woman's genitals) a number of sexual terms are considered unique to 'the Hundreds of Drury', namely, Drury Lane and all of the many narrow courts, lanes and alleys that led from it. (Hundreds were an ancient, purely nominal division of English local government separate from parishes or counties.) This reputation made sense when you consider the urban landscape. Drury Lane was a principal arterial route between London and Westminster, a playground for the wealthy and the 'middling sorts', and yet it was a narrow street lined with old, warren-like buildings and narrower, noisome courts and lanes. All manner of people passed through Drury Lane, many of them at perfect leisure to

indulge their appetites. The old, complex warrens of narrow yards and tall buildings provided plenty of privacy. As for the nature of the work carried out, and the complex relationships between sex work, rape culture and misogyny, see the record for Star Court.

However, the central infrastructure of all early-modern leisure – musical, theatrical, conversational, sexual – was the public house, and Drury Lane abounded in these. (For more information about how the public house was central to commerce, trade and work, see the record for Claremarket.) They came in all shapes and sizes, from the grandness of the Crown and Anchor Tavern on Arundel Street – important enough to merit its own record – to the dusty parlours of unlicensed gin distilleries. This record will explore how people used public houses for leisure, what the sources of entertainment were, what food and drink and other services were available, and the power dynamics of the public house. If you are looking for a full-length history of English public houses, I thoroughly recommend Peter Clark's book *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830*.

Let's look at some real examples of visitors to Drury Lane's public houses. Data collected from court witness statements (analysed by Hans-Joachim Voth) suggests most people stopped work around 6, at the end of a 12-hour workday, but many people popped into public houses for refreshment or meetings throughout the day. Even so, Drury Lane's public houses would probably have been fullest in the late evening. Even well past midnight some witnesses were entering and leaving public houses. Between 1 and 2 am Benjamin Gosling, a bricklayer, met with one Phillis Noble at the corner of Bennet's Court, a tiny, densely inhabited alley a couple of blocks from Blackmore Street. This was in the early hours of a chilly Monday morning, 3rd January 1726. Sunday was almost always a day off in the early modern period, unless work was absolutely unavoidable. Those who did not go to church – and some who did – often drank heavily on a Sunday, and took Monday off as well when they could. This practice was so common the day was nicknamed 'St. Monday' – for, like a saint's day, there was more drinking and sleeping than working. Benjamin Gosling, being out so late into Sunday night, probably was not preparing to wake at 6 a.m. the next day to begin heavy manual work.

Thanks to the wildly inconsistent level of detail the Old Bailey Proceedings provide (see the record for Hollowell Street), we have a verbatim record of what Gosling said in court. This is how he described meeting Phillis Noble:

“as I was coming by the Corner of Bennets Court, in Drury-Lane; who should I meet but [Phillis]? so says she, How dye do my Dear, - 'tis bloody cold Weather, - I wish you'd give me a Dram. Whereof, says I again, I don't care if I do, if we can come to a good Fire, and so - what signifies lying - we struck a Bargain, and went to a Gin Shop, and I thought I had better do so than wander about the Street all Night, tho' I must needs say, I might as well have gone home to any Wife, - but that's neither here nor there”.

There is a certain level of innuendo here that suggests their tryst was not merely platonic. Although women were vilified for having sexual partners outside marriage, it was increasingly acceptable among men (see the record for Star Court), so that he felt happy making these intimations in a public sphere. Public houses were a great place to begin an affair or negotiate a night's paid fun. Benjamin Gosling's case very closely resembles that of William Hopkins. In February 1728, 11 pm on a Sunday night, he “treated [Sarah Hudson] with a Quartern of Geneva [gin]”, in a Drury Lane brandy shop “he knew ... to have a very ill Name”, before the two retired together to a back room, where his pocket was allegedly picked. The way Phillis Noble picked up Benjamin Gosling was exactly the same, asking for a shot of hard liquor (a dram) in a public house and seeing how things would go from there.

In any case, whether your interest in a person was sexual, friendly or commercial, introductions were important to early modern Londoners. Around 75% of Londoners had come to the city from elsewhere – in the seventeenth century, often escaping rural poverty in the North of England, and in the eighteenth, mostly young people from the Home Counties attracted by higher wages and new social opportunities. You needed a network of friends and acquaintances around you to gain a good, trustworthy reputation – otherwise getting a job, getting credit from shopkeepers or defending yourself from crimes or disputes was impossible. People also supported each other through lean times or cash flow crises. Getting to know new people was not just an emotional imperative, then, but necessary for survival.

One way people introduced themselves to each other was through song. There are many instances of people gaining a stranger's trust through song, often in the street, or in

the public house. In one robbery case from 1756, from the other side of London, is a striking description of a group of friends accepting a new member:

“I [John Williams] went along with Clark to that house about eleven o'clock that night, and at the same time [Rice Price] follow'd us in, where we found [William Pratt], James Nailer , another man, and my landlord together; they were drinking rum and water. I took hold of the pot and drank to the man of the house, he drank to Clark, and Clark to [Price], [he] drank it up, and bid the landlord till it. Then [Price] went and sat down by the right side of [Pratt], sat there some time, and sang a song or two”.

Late in the evening on a Tuesday night, Rice Price – probably a Welshman – entered a public house to find a convivial scene. Four men were drinking together, happy in each other's company; two more men came in, their acquaintances, and Price came in with them. They toasted each other and paid their respects to the landlord (“the man of the house”), and by dint of being included in the toasting, Price was included into the group too. He then cemented his status in the group by sitting with them and singing. Given he was in new company he knew little about, that was a sound choice. With his vocal tone and the content of his song he could persuade them he was a convivial companion, without revealing much about himself or assuming too much about his newfound acquaintances. If it was a song they already knew, it was something you had in common; if it was a new song to them, it might pique their interest. Whether your song was bawdy and rowdy or elegant and operatic, music could help you find new friends and establish your status in a new environment. In the record for Hollowell Street you will find more about ballads and how people learned, selected and sang them. Footmen could act like gentlemen and sober tradesmen like drunken kings with the right language of song, gesture and dress.

Power and social status still mattered, however. You might have been able to perform a higher-status role in the theatre of the public house, but there was still an implicit hierarchy that restricted the roles you could play, and meted out terrible consequences to those who stepped outside the boundaries. Most explicitly, in the mid-seventeenth century there were still sumptuary laws, which banned people of low social status from wearing particular items of high-status clothing. The eighteenth century saw an end to these laws, and a more fluid attitude to the language of clothing, but this horrified elite writers, people

like Daniel Defoe, who feared that maidservants might be mistaken for mistresses and the clarity of the social order undermined. Presenting yourself in higher-status clothing than your status at birth merited was, however, increasingly normal, despite the increasingly deranged anger of moralists. Yet by the eighteenth century, enforcing the hierarchies of race and gender became more and more important to the average public house visitor.

Eighteenth-century anti-Black attitudes were gradually hardening into the reflexive scientific racism we unfortunately still recognise today. For more evidence from St. Clement Danes about how this process took place, see the record for Clement's Inn. As for gender, public houses in England were safer for women than Paris's cabarets in the same period, where a woman merely passing the threshold would face shouted abuse and violent threats. Even so, the unequal expectations of men and women, where men were considered sexually incontinent and women charged with protecting their chastity at all costs, meant women were hardly free to inhabit public space without danger. Sometimes, the same behaviour was interpreted very differently when men and women performed it. When women sang, for instance, it was always sexualised in a way that it rarely (but occasionally) was for men.

This can be seen in one of the rare rape trials that actually led to a conviction (in an era when obstacle after obstacle was placed in the way of women seeking justice). One Thomas Meller and his friend coerced a 17-year-old maidservant and her friend from public house to public house, out on the north eastern fringes of London, finally dragging her into a ditch in a deserted field and raping her. In one of the public houses, however, he had sung "several Songs", and a witness for the defence alleged the women also sang. He claimed to be "a slender acquaintance" of Meller's, who happened to be in the public house at the same time. He testified:

"Then I came into the room where they were. I heard the prisoner sing. I thought it was very agreeable. He sung a good song. ... We went into another room by ourselves to hear the ladies sing. They sang a little bit of a song, which was very agreeable. There was nothing but modesty on both sides. The girls did not appear to be there against their wills, but far from it."

Here, Meller's song is supposed to be evidence of his good character, while the women's song – which the witness seems to have invented – is evidence that they consented

to his advances and were attracted to Meller. The double standard could not have been clearer. On this occasion, even the jury was not convinced, sentencing Meller to death. However, if a woman was assaulted in (or rather, usually just outside) a public house, most juries tended to side with her attacker. Men had all kinds of ways to destroy a woman's reputation in a public house, from buying strong liquor, to pretending intimate familiarity, to alleging theft. This ensured women knew that their access to the public house was conditional only on men's approval, keeping them in their 'proper', subservient role.

Benjamin Gosling and his newfound companion Phillis Noble confined themselves to enjoying only gin and a good fire in the unnamed Drury Lane gin shop they walked to together. But different kinds of public house had different facilities for hospitality. Most gin shops, especially the illegal, unlicensed ones that proliferated in the 1720s and 30s, confined themselves to basic furniture, a roaring fire, and hard spirits, not needing to diversify to satisfy their customer base.

Alehouses, several rungs up the ladder from the notoriety of the gin shop, were starting to become more substantial institutions, with more furniture and even sometimes private rooms for functions or large groups. In a good London alehouse you could drink in the main parlour, a small room to the side, or in the kitchen, the warmest and brightest space, if the messiest and busiest. Alehouses offered ale, of course, which in the seventeenth century was often brewed onsite but by the end of the century was usually from a local professional brewery. Prices were fairly low, and remained stable from the late 1690s until the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars. You could also get simple bar snacks in a good alehouse, with bread, cheese and bacon being staple foods. Some occupations, like tailoring and haberdashery, had 'houses of call', alehouses where customers were sure to come across the freelance tradesmen they needed. Alehouse owners were quite happy with this arrangement, since it kept their house full of tradesmen drinking beer and eating snacks until they could find their next job.

At the top of the scale were inns and taverns. St. Clement Danes had several along the Strand, and around Claremarket, but Drury Lane was too old and too narrow for any of

these grand institutions. Some of these inns and taverns had seating capacities of thousands, and generally added hot meals, multiple private rooms – some of them very grand – and accommodation for guests and their horses (for more about horses, travel and transport, see the record for Boswell Court). This kind of public house was extremely important to communication and infrastructure, as well as a place where all classes could take their leisure. The record for Claremarket explains how taverns like the Sun were tremendously useful for business. All sorts of people often used inns, taverns, and the better sort of alehouses as their mail addresses, since in the period before house numbers, when tenancies were often very short-term, a public house was an easily found address. What distinguished inns and taverns from alehouses was their hard-won sense of genuine respectability. Women and the gentry sometimes met at alehouses, but not without a sense that these were spaces that could tarnish their reputation – especially among the flesh-pots of Drury Lane. In contrast, even when men got hideously drunk at a tavern's glee club, or quietly executed scams on gullible marks in a corner of an inn's public bar, the reputation of inns and taverns were not much affected. They were seen almost as a neutral space, like the street itself. However, just like a street, they could become unfashionable, and this was the fate that met several of St. Clement Danes' grand inns in the nineteenth century, notably Lyon's Inn. Without genteel support, even a healthy customer base was not enough to keep these huge ventures profitable.

Drury Lane, in many ways, has remained a playground for wealthy and middling visitors. It might not have the same reputation for sex work, since 19th-century gentrification efforts – and, to be honest, sex worker eradication efforts – succeeded in driving sex work to other areas. Yet there are still plenty of public houses along Drury Lane. Next time you're in a public house, think about how you perform a variety of social roles while you're buying drinks, socialising with friends, and interacting with strangers. How are you performing your gender, race and class identity? Are you enforcing or breaking down hierarchies? What can we learn from early modern pub etiquette?

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Holywell/Hollowell Street²⁹

Holywell, or Hollowell Street was a narrow, surprisingly secluded thoroughfare that ran parallel to the Strand, from St. Mary Savoy eastwards to join up with Wych Street at an acute angle. The area where it joined up with Wych Street – and sometimes the rest of the street as well – was commonly known as ‘the Back Side of St. Clements’, and it must have been quiet at night, for in 1692 two gentlemen who had been arguing over a lady in a Fleet Street tavern held a private duel there on their way back up to Bloomsbury. In the first half of the eighteenth century, it was a respectable place of business for ‘divers Salesmen and Piece-Brokers’, according to Seymour’s 1732 Survey of London and Westminster.

The parish settlement and bastardy examinations (see the record for St. Clement Danes) can give us rich images of what ordinary residents’ lives were like. In the 1740s and 1750s there were servants here to robemakers, tailors and of course public houses (see the record for Drury Lane). In some of these cold bureaucratic records we can see hints of people’s motivations, the places and people that mattered to them, and how they spent their time. Mary Pointer, a tailor’s servant, became pregnant by a metalsmith in Covent Garden, having an assignation on a chilly January night in the house of a salesman in St. Giles Holborn (a very impoverished and disreputable parish at the time). Of course, she would lose her job and most likely irreparably damage her reputation for this act, and be reliant on the grumpy, disapproving parish overseers’ charity for years to come, the joy of birth transformed into tragedy. Hannah Gregory had served at the Three Black Lions on Holywell Street – perhaps helping out with cleaning guest rooms, bussing and serving in the public bar, and/or kitchen drudgery such as fetching water – at the age of nineteen. She stayed there for a year, earning an above-average wage of £4 10s, and then quit, as people often did, perhaps to take advantage of exciting new London job opportunities. Four years later, however, she is a pauper being examined by the parish, declared ‘a Lunatic’ at just 24, after six weeks of being ‘Mad’, perhaps the result of a long breakdown. A man from Bloomsbury named Randolph Turner answers the examiners’ questions on her behalf, perhaps a friend,

²⁹ Available at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/st-clement-danes-1660-1800/records/holywell-hollowell-street> as of March 2022.

lover, or an employer. More happily, back in the 1730s Margaret Bothamley was employed by a Mrs. Pyke living on Holywell Street on an informal basis while her regular servant was off recuperating from illness in the country. It's unlikely Mrs. Pyke paid her unwell servant any money to fund her recovery, but by the standards of the time it was generous to give her the option to come back whenever she pleased. Mrs. Pyke also paid Margaret Bothamley a sensible wage of £4, despite the informality of their arrangement. Whether it was moral pressure from others, or a deep internal conviction, people sometimes acted with a kindness and decency they were not required to.

The street's most significant feature, the Inn of Chancery Lyon's Inn, was a place of faded grandeur shading into disreputability. Already, by 1732, the grand buildings of Lyon's Inn were considered 'but small and old'. The nineteenth-century historian Diprose wrote that by the early nineteenth century, after the Inns of Chancery had been made redundant by lawyers' professional associations (see the record for Clement's Inn), it had 'degenerated into a haunt for all kinds of men about town – good and bad, clever and rascally, gamblers and swindlers'. He considered that whole area of narrow courts between Wych Street and Holywell Street had 'witnessed [scenes] of the most disgraceful and infamous character'.

Over the second half of the eighteenth century and particularly the first half of the nineteenth, the social makeup of the street changed considerably. Wealthier tailors opened shops in the fashionable new western developments around Oxford Street and Piccadilly, leaving behind manufacturers of dress items (such as staymakers, makers of women's underwear and corsetry) and sellers of old clothes. Among the latter there was a significant and growing Jewish community, the targets of anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, Holywell Street was notorious for something else: pornographic books, many of them published and printed by men who had cut their teeth producing illegal radical political and religious texts. A very accessible article by Iain McCalman talks about the lives and careers of these agitators-turned-pornographers (see the Bibliography below).

Cheap print helped shape the lives and entire cosmologies of St. Clement Danes's residents, so it's worth considering it in a bit more depth. From the time of Queen Elizabeth, the form of print that was cheapest and most widely disseminated was the broadside ballad. These were single sheets, sold for a penny each, with a printed verse written to fit a pre-existing tune, and often a woodcut (a simple picture printed from a boxwood block). They covered a variety of topics, from religious and moral instruction, to political satire, to timeless love songs and drinking songs, to extraordinary events. The English Broadside Ballad Archive (<http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>) is a searchable database of ballads that still survive, in the collections of Samuel Pepys, the Roxburghe collection, and others.

Looking at a broadside ballad on your computer today, as a 21st-century reader, you lose two-thirds of the meaning. In the first place, ballads were made to be performed – they were sold at markets, fairgrounds, and in urban streets, by ballad singers. Usually poor, often female (sometimes male), they would purchase a few dozen copies from a chapman or direct from the printer, and sing the verses to the tune specified at the top. Some tunes, like 'The King Will Enjoy His Own Again', or 'Lilibulero', had very specific political meanings; others were just pretty, memorable tunes that allowed skilful singers to bring out the different characters of the ballads they sang. People hated and mistrusted ballad singers, even discounting their evidence in court, partly because of their ability to manipulate listeners' emotions and command the space, like any good performer. The printed ballad would be something you associated with a performance, not appreciated as a dry text.

Secondly, the woodcuts helped to bring another level of meaning to the ballad. Some woodcuts were over a century old and still in use, partly because it saved the printer the trouble of commissioning a new design, but mostly because the woodcuts began to accrue different resonances and new significance as time went on. Patricia Fumerton and Megan E. Palmer show how the same early 17th-century woodcut of a woman, her arms open in welcome, was sometimes used to give a ballad a Royalist subtext; at other times, an anti-Royalist one; could evoke lasciviousness or nostalgia; or perhaps all of these at once. Perhaps the best way to explain how the interplay of text and image worked is by analogy to

internet memes – the picture gives a particular set of meanings to the text, and if you're not aware of what significance the picture has, the text seems nonsensical.

Broadside ballads remained popular well into the nineteenth century, and there were few long-lasting changes to the structures of the industry or the content of most ballads. There was a constant turnover of printers, however, new entrepreneurs buying presses, woodcuts and ballad stocks from older printers as they went out of business or died. The centre of the ballad printing industry therefore shifted from time to time, but never moved too far from St. Clement Danes. Little Britain, near the Old Bailey, was a big centre of printing for a long time; St. Paul's Churchyard and Bow were two more important centres in the eighteenth century. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, ballad printing moved west to Seven Dials, becoming dominated by two families, the Pitts's and Catnachs. Charles Dickens remembered in his youth the febrile ballad-printing environment of Seven Dials, as well as the newspaper writers on Fleet Street – St. Clement Danes was right in the middle of this hub of these national print networks, old and new.

The eighteenth century saw a veritable explosion in print in Britain, as state regulation of the industry relaxed, technologies improved and the cost of paper fell. Consequently, print diversified, with customers finding a wider range of content affordable. Most people could not afford a newspaper subscription, but they might be able to borrow an issue from their friends, or read one in a public house. For those who couldn't read very well – a sizable minority of women, for instance – excerpts might be read for you by 'mercury women' (women who sold newspapers), employers, friends or acquaintances.

One source that I cite often in this collection is a good example of this diversification of print. The Old Bailey Proceedings were published from 1674, and quickly became a frequent, regular publication that sought to present a record of all of the cases that had been brought at the Old Bailey, a criminal court that dealt with felonies (major crimes, usually with death as the punishment). It was a strange hybrid: on the one hand, it was regulated by the Lord Mayor of London, who changed the publisher that he licensed at least 25 times in

58 years (from 1720 to 1778). He wanted it to prove the legitimacy of British justice and to also be a useful source of information. On the other hand, the commercial publishers wanted it to be entertaining, vivid and saleable. This leads to an interesting set of tensions. The commercial publishers wanted to go into great detail on cases interesting to their middling-sort audiences, which included grisly murders but also business fraud and theft by servants. If they could squeeze in a verbatim transcript of a witness with a funny accent, so much the better. For the Lord Mayor, on the other hand, records had to have the stamp of authenticity, to be effective propaganda; they also had to emphasise the evidence against the condemned. Defence testimony was omitted entirely or heavily edited, as a result. Robert Shoemaker has written extensively about the reliability of the Old Bailey Proceedings, but concludes it is still a useful source once its biases are taken into account.

It was also accessible to ordinary residents of St. Clement Danes. Each issue only cost a few pence, and it was sufficiently widely read that people could find somebody to borrow the latest issue from. In 1774, John Viney, an apprentice to a music printer, was talking to his friend John Graves in a public house, playing skittles. John Graves – a burglar and a glazier – was curious about the trial of a robber, and wondered if he could read about it. Viney said, “[if] we would go to [my] master he would lend it us for nothing”. It is also highly accessible to us, at <https://oldbaileyonline.org>, a searchable, transcribed database of all of the Old Bailey Proceedings until their end in 1913. It includes extensive contextual information to help you understand what you are looking at and what the original authors’ biases are.

Music printing was another great example of this massive expansion of print: at the end of the seventeenth century, there were only a few music printers in London, and almost none anywhere else in the country. By the end of the century, there were countless music shops in London selling their own copperplate scores, and a few big players like Longman and Broderip. In St. Clement Danes, there was the shop of Thomas and William Cahusac on the Strand, flute and violin makers, and music printers. A number of their editions still survive in the British Library. By this time, music was engraved in mirror image onto pewter plates, with stamps for common characters (such as musical notes, letters and staves).

Imagine trying to stamp text, staves and notation, and engrave freehand slurs, brackets and beams, all in mirror image, on a metal plate where no mistakes could be easily corrected!

Astonishingly dextrous craft skills like these helped catalyse the artistic revolution that occurred in late eighteenth-century London, with techniques such as mezzotint allowing paintings to be easily and faithfully rendered (albeit monochrome) in print. This, combined with the guerrilla printing experience of early nineteenth-century radicals, accustomed to printing and distributing illegal socialist newspapers, allowed Holywell Street to take its place as the centre of Victorian London's pornography trade.

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The Oratory³⁰

In 1729 John Henley, a former Anglican priest, moved his Oratory from Newport Market, just west of Seven Dials, to the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields nearest Claremarket, exchanging one meat market for another.

John Henley had a unique perspective on education and the world of letters, believing that oratory and the 'speaking arts' were of primary importance – as they had been in ancient Greece and Rome. As a teacher back in his days as a vicar in Melton Mowbray, he had favoured freeform oral examinations over conventional rote learning and drills. After the Bishop of London blocked off the possibility of Henley getting a well-paid London benefice, Henley decided to put his beliefs into practice in a more radical form, founding the Oratory in 1726 with a flurry of self-published promotional materials. It was to describe itself as a 'universal Academy', its purpose:

to teach indifferently Persons of all Ranks [i.e. social classes], Ages, Conditions and Circumstances ... in Proportion to their Genius [i.e. skills] and Application, by proper Masters, under my Inspection, what they desire to learn in all Parts of divine and human Knowledge, Languages, Arts and Sciences[.]

This was a radically empowering aim – shying away from the commonly-held contemporary notion that people should have different degrees of knowledge based on their rank and station in life.

It is hard to describe the range of functions the Oratory performed. Henley himself – perhaps to ensure its freedom of speech was legally protected – argued it was fundamentally a Nonconformist church, but entry was ticketed, and cost between 6d and 1s on normal Sundays, or more for special events. This was a price easily affordable even to servants and piece-workers, on the seasonal or occasional basis on which many lay-people appear to have attended church in the eighteenth century. However, weekly attendance would have come to a minimum of 26s per year, more than many Londoners were likely to afford, although within the reach of some artisans, upper servants in great houses and

³⁰ Not yet published as of March 2022.

tradespeople: butchers, shoemakers and the like are known to have constituted a substantial part of Henley's audience. Some subscribers, paying between £2 and £15, obtained a medal which granted free entry for a season or a lifetime (not only for themselves but for their whole family, servants probably included). Later on Henley offered private lessons and small group sessions to generous patrons. Like a contemporary Anglican church, for the Sunday service men and women were segregated, and either stood or sat in pews. They followed a 'Primitive Liturgy' of Henley's own concoction, with sung psalms and a Eucharist as well as a sermon.

Yet a number of features (besides the entry fee) truly marked it out as distinct from the eighteenth-century conception of a church: firstly, Henley's unabashed mixture of sacred and secular, even profane subjects. Every Wednesday Henley hosted a session on a secular subject, from the ancient art of oratory (in which he claimed specialist knowledge) to the arts, history, law, politics, natural philosophy and church administration. In Henley's words, since the holy Bible and theology cannot be understood without all the other arts and sciences, [the Oratory] will also take in, on a religious footing, an academy of the sciences and languages.

He also put on regular 'Chimes of the Times', topical satirical entertainments (entirely performed by himself) that could be highly politically dangerous. In the highly charged atmosphere following the Jacobite revolt, Henley was arrested in 1746 for denouncing English brutality against the Jacobite forces, the third time he had been indicted in the past twenty years.

The second point of difference between the Oratory and more socially sanctioned churches was Henley's commitment to free debate. He regularly held 'disputations' and 'conferences' on controversial subjects, in which a number of auditors could say whatever they wished so long as they subscribed to his rules of debate (which were principally to ensure people kept to the point at issue and did not become personally insulting). These topics included the historicity of Jesus Christ and the miracles attributed to Him, discussions of whether women should be allowed to speak in Quaker houses of worship (the disputants all Quakers, and one a woman), and the authority of the Church of England. Henley

believed that reasoned debate, rather than trusting to institutional authority, was the foundation of religious truth:

But how can we know what Powers, or Privileges any of these particular Men have from the Apostles, unless they exhibit their Warrants, or authentick and known Copies of Warrants from St. Paul, from St. Peter and the Rest? 'Till then every Man has an equal, and none a particular Right to execute these Constitutions, or any Laws of Christ, none but God being Judge of them.

That the Freedom of reasoning upon and canvassing impartially all Subjects in this Institution may be of evil Consequence, and corrupt the Minds and Principles of the Hearers, is no just Allegation against it. For the freest Reasoning can be no injury, but a Service, to the Interest of Truth; and without it, Truth can never be found, nor promoted.

Henley's commitment to universal education was what made him particularly despised by the literary and religious elite (besides his trenchant satire of them). He believed that 'Men of low Callings might have been qualify'd for the first Stations, the Differences of Men arising chiefly from Education, and what is call'd Fortune, but is really Providence'. This contrasts sharply with the ideology of education prominent in contemporary advice literature, in which education should fit each person's current station in life. Rather than educating people sufficient to meet their current obligations within the hierarchy, Henley turns this on its head: even those 'of low Callings', paupers and piece-workers and pedlars, were differentiated from the elite only by education, and therefore could be educated to meet the demands of a higher position.

This was a discourse of self-improvement which not only prefigured nineteenth-century educational movements, but reflected the reality of social mobility which many eighteenth-century urban-dwellers perceived in their own careers, particularly those in domestic service. James Macdonald, only a few years after his childhood begging on the street in Edinburgh, was intimate with a duke, well-paid, with a number of valuable skills which proved their worth in an international, prestigious career. The essential equality of humanity to engage in intellectual pursuits was one of Henley's most radical conceits, but was still only a delayed reaction to rapid socio-economic change.

Arising from this belief, and from his contention that to understand theology properly required a thorough grounding in 'all the other Arts and Sciences', Henley set out to make his Oratory like a university. His foundational plan for the Oratory outlines this purpose:

To supply the want of an university, or universal school in this capital, for the equal benefit of persons of all ranks, professions, circumstances, and capacities: to rectify the defects, remove the pedantry and prejudices, and improve on all the usual methods of education[.]

To this end, as well as delivering lectures, conferences and disputations to a universal audience, Henley distributed cheap print on a variety of useful and improving subjects, including the oft-republished Butcher's Sermon. He relentlessly advertised both his events and his books in several London newspapers, maintaining a lively, entertaining, informal style that proved ripe for satire (and often self-satire).

Pope in his *Dunciad*, the *Grub Street Journal*, and playwright Henry Fielding all mocked Henley relentlessly, especially for setting up shop among butchers, and maintaining a wide audience of artisans, craftsmen and women. It was even alleged he granted free entry to crowds of the poor to help fill the room on a Sunday. Although these claims of a wide popular audience might have been exaggerated to discredit Henley, Paula McDowell suggests that Henley's rapid fame in print (upon setting up the first Oratory in Newport Market) might be indicative of explosive success. The establishment of a debating society on Butcher Row, a place not known for its gentility (with notorious places of ill resort such as Sheir Lane on the north side, and 'butcher's shambles' on the south) is also a probable sign of Henley's impact.

Certainly, it appears that the Oratory played a lively part in the cultural and intellectual lives of St. Clement Danes' inhabitants, and Henley also liked to relate his message to familiar sights, smells and sounds. His description of the lecture 'On the Town, or the Critical History of London' included 'London musically consider'd: Difference of the Cries, and Singing at ----', as well as discussions of 'Houses orderly and disorderly; for

Coffee or Conversation', and more enigmatically (to a modern reader), 'Reasons for Mace and Custard, worth hearing'. Henley's advertisements for the Oratory are full of impenetrable jokes, tropes, puns and satires, and they are a rich source of information on eighteenth-century humour for the modern reader who does not fear bamboozlement.

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