

The Pleasure Garden,
from Vauxhall to Coney Island



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Edited by

JONATHAN CONLIN

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Introduction

JONATHAN CONLIN

When London's Vauxhall Gardens closed in July 1859 many felt that it represented the end of an era. Whether under the moniker "New Spring Gardens," "Vauxhall Gardens," or "Royal Vauxhall Gardens," at its close the Lambeth resort could claim a history stretching back to the Restoration, almost two centuries. Together with its many rivals, such as Ranelagh and Marylebone, Vauxhall Gardens provided jaded urbanites with a pleasant suburban retreat, a place in which to amuse themselves and entertain family and friends. Here they ate and drank, listened to music, admired paintings and sculpture, and enjoyed a variety of other spectacles, the most important of which was the crowd itself.

Though the first pleasure garden, London's Spring Gardens (Figure I.1), had offered little more than bowls in the 1630s, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pleasure gardens such as Vauxhall incorporated elements of masquerade, *chinoiserie*, and other exotic fantasies that transported visitors to new realms of fancy. Promenading along their shaded walks of a summer evening, visitors could escape the pains of the city while still enjoying its pleasures. Sudden contrasts of light and dark, familiar and strange, pleasure and danger that would have seemed deeply unsettling anywhere else became a source of excitement and wonder.

For tourists to eighteenth-century London, a visit to Vauxhall was almost obligatory. For composers and performers, it offered the quickest way of attracting a public following. For novelists such as Fielding, Smollett, Burney, Dickens, and Thackeray, it was the perfect place to send heroes and villains alike. The significant and illustrious contingent of foreign visitors was struck by the resort's success in bringing different ranks together without any obvious police. They admired this order, concluded it to be an inimitable product of a free British nation, then rushed home to establish their own gardens, adding yet more "Vauxhalls" to the many already found



Figure I.1. *Her Majesties Royal Palace and Park of St. James's*, colored engraving. From *Nouvelle Théâtre de la Grande Bretagne*, 5 vols. (London: David Mortier, 1715). © Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Rare Book Collection, Washington, D.C.

elsewhere in Britain—in Norwich, Shrewsbury, Tunbridge Wells, and other places. Though several opened near established hostelries or were operated by former publicans, it was clear that these resorts were not the same thing as beer gardens or taverns. They were something else, something new: a Vauxhall.

Over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the word *Vauxhall* duly entered the French, Dutch, Swedish, German, Russian, and Danish languages.¹ Pleasure garden fashions and frissons could even be enjoyed by those who did not visit in person. For every visitor who made the journey to a Vauxhall on foot or by boat or carriage many more journeyed there in their imaginations, by viewing a print, reading a newspaper, or singing the latest pleasure garden songs in their own homes. Pleasure gardens were London's gift to the world.

Pleasure gardens have been seen as typifying a nascent public sphere, one identified with the “commodification of culture,” the rise of the “middling rank,” and other symptoms of modernity. Our knowledge of these gardens, however, is largely restricted to London resorts, and much of what

we know about even those renowned sites derives from works by Warwick Wroth, now more than a century old.² Despite the importance of the individual artists (such as Hogarth and Whistler) and musicians (Handel, Haydn, and many others) active within them, pleasure gardens have been neglected by historians of painting, sculpture, and music. Those art historians and literary scholars who have addressed London pleasure gardens have focused almost exclusively on the 1760s and 1770s, ignoring their Caroline origins and Victorian development. Gardens outside London and abroad have been almost entirely ignored. Other pleasure gardens have been seen as little more than pale imitations of London's Vauxhall.

This volume is the first to consider the pleasure garden as an international phenomenon, as well as the first to survey these resorts from their origins in the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. Building on an interdisciplinary dialogue started by the 2008 Tate Britain/Garden Museum conference "Vauxhall Revisited: Pleasure Gardens and Their Publics," the chapters in this book address a number of areas that have yet to receive any scholarly attention, such as musical programming and American pleasure gardens. One of the most dynamic social spaces of modern Britain and the United States, as the range of disciplines represented here (art history, literary studies, musicology, the history of designed landscapes, and others) indicate, pleasure gardens can be approached in a number of different ways.

Although geographic and chronological parameters vary from chapter to chapter, the contributors share a number of concerns that must be central to understanding the pleasure garden as a designed landscape: the relative accessibility of the gardens to different social classes, the melding of different media and genres, and the relationship between town and country as well as that between reality and willed complicity in illusion. This introduction will return to these themes, as well as indicate avenues for future research; as with all the other contributions, it is as much an invitation as an investigation.

But first, a working definition is in order. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century nomenclature is unhelpful here, as "pleasure garden" was used interchangeably with "pleasure ground" to refer to privately owned gardens open only to friends and to the odd visitor, and they were usually located at some distance from town. In such parks visitors might never spy their host, though they might on occasion see fellow guests.³ It was nonetheless clear that the gardens were an expression of that host's authority and taste. Visitors were expected to praise and show deference.⁴



Figure I.2. Detail of Figure I.1.

Pleasure gardens lacked a clearly identifiable “host.”⁵ When Lord Digby was arrested in Spring Garden “for striking in the King’s Garden, he answered, that he took it for a common Bowling Place where all paid Money for their coming in.”⁶ On the other side of the wall, in St James’s Park, Lord Digby was a courtier, or at least subject to the raft of ordinances controlling behavior within the verge of the court. By stepping through the entrance into Spring Garden (Figure I.2), Digby had entered a different space, where he could meet, converse with, and beat up fellow customers without regard to a host. Even at that early date (1634) we have the sense of the pleasure garden as a resort where access is controlled by a fee at the door. Once gained, access brings with it a certain license, a right to “make oneself at home” in the space. Unlike at court, however, money, rather

than place or rank, is the main criterion for admission. Closed down in May 1654, Spring Garden nevertheless reopened the next month. Cromwell's London was willing to go without its theaters and fairs, which were successfully suppressed, but they weren't going to let the Puritans rob them of Spring Garden.

Thomas Myers Garrett's 1978 dissertation on the pleasure gardens of New York offers a useful definition of "pleasure garden": "a privately owned (as opposed to a governmentally owned) enclosed ornamental ground or piece of land, open to the public as a resort or amusement area, and operated as a business."⁷ This seems a helpful place to begin, more helpful than the definitions found in more recent dictionaries of landscape architecture, which either conflate pleasure gardens and public parks or acknowledge the distinction only to posit a prurient opposition between the "uplifting, educative environment" fostered by parks and the "louche" or commercial (as in tawdry) attractions afforded by the former.⁸ Most pleasure gardens were seasonal (that is, open only in the summer), suburban, and designed to be visited in the late afternoon or evening. Though some resorts may be challenging to categorize, pleasure gardens had a number of characteristics that distinguished them from tea gardens and spa gardens. Tea gardens were a Sunday-afternoon retreat aimed at a predominantly middling clientele (Figure I.3), and offered much less by way of musical or staged performances. Spa gardens were organized around the taking of medicinal waters, although this activity paled before the other attractions on display at the largest spas, such as Sadler's Wells or Beulah Spa in London, which were effectively pleasure gardens.⁹

That pleasure gardens were performative spaces is beyond doubt. John Dixon Hunt's chapter places pleasure gardens alongside Chiswick and Stowe as places where hospitality was performed. Rather than viewing Vauxhall from the gardens of Brown and Repton, Hunt notes how French and Italian designs and models of behavior were naturalized in the English pleasure garden. This chapter as well as Hunt's earlier work challenges historians of designed landscapes to abandon old approaches to garden history (in particular the "formal"/"informal" dyad) in favor of a new garden history focused on (among other things), the history of the reception and consumption of gardens.¹⁰ Scholars outside garden history might choose to interpret this as a case of garden historians "catching up" with developments outside their own field. On the contrary, in reaching out to other historical disciplines garden historians bring with them much that is of



Figure I.3. Carington Bowles, *Mr. Deputy Dumpling and Family Enjoying a Summer Afternoon* (c. 1780), mezzotint. Guildhall Library, City of London.

value to those in other disciplines, particularly to the study of pleasure gardens.

Peter Borsay's chapter describes the patterns of circulation and interaction that made these resorts so exciting for visitors. Though these rituals were common to resorts situated in London, Norwich, Tunbridge Wells, and other towns in this period, they carried significant hidden costs in terms of dress and time, costs that, he argues, would have led many would-be visitors to exclude themselves. Borsay also locates "an evolving green agenda" within these resorts, a movement "towards introducing green spaces and leisure services into the town." John Evelyn's account of pleasure gardens in his 1661 treatise *Fumifugium: or the Inconveniencie of the Aer and Smoak of London Dissipated* as at once a "place of Recreation" and a means of sweetening polluted city air suggests that such language is not anachronistic but was present from the beginning.¹¹

Pleasure gardens were multimedia environments that played sensory games with visitors. Focusing for the most part on Vauxhall and other London resorts, the chapters by Eleanor Hughes, Rachel Cowgill, Anne Koval, and Deborah Nord consider how the gardens and their visitors were represented in painting, music, and fiction. As these chapters show, the paintings, novels, and concertos, important works of art in their own right, also functioned as cues: entertaining visitors but also instructing them on how to behave, when and where to move, and even how to think. In addition to providing a much-needed survey of the composers, musical forces, and forms popular at the London gardens from the eighteenth through the nineteenth century, Cowgill's chapter sheds light on the shape of a typical evening's entertainment, in which the movements of performer and audience alike were carefully choreographed. The chapter also indicates just how much pleasure garden performances have to teach us about canon formation, listening habits, and the Georgian and Victorian soundscape.

The commissioning by Jonathan Tyers of paintings to decorate the supper boxes at Vauxhall in the 1730s and 1740s has been identified as a key moment in the emergence of a self-aware art public in Britain.¹² Compared to the pastoral revels depicted by Francis Hayman in his supper-box paintings, however, the naval history paintings by Monamy of around 1740 addressed by Eleanor Hughes have received little attention.¹³ Considered alongside songs celebrating hearty English tars, they provide fascinating examples of a form of patriotic discourse familiar from work on empire and identity in the early to mid-eighteenth century.¹⁴ Although reenactments of

Waterloo and other battles, which brought casts of uniformed actors, horses, and special effects to Vauxhall in the following century, marked a change in scale, those Regency spectacles were clearly part of a long tradition of celebrating military heroes and staging patriotic rituals of remembrance within pleasure gardens.

Charmed by twinkling lamps, excited by fireworks, or undone by the gloaming of the ill-famed “dark walks,” visitors to pleasure gardens enjoyed a range of light entertainment. Semidarkness was dangerous but also exciting. Though it covered a manifold of sins, it also revealed a “fairy-land.” Deborah Nord and Anne Koval share an interest in pleasure gardens as places for the willed suspension of disbelief, for a complicity in illusion that caused moral and class distinctions between “audience” and “performer” to melt away. As Nord indicates, complicity was often associated, oddly perhaps, with the innocence of childhood and youth. Maturity could come at too high a price for those who, like Charles Dickens, preferred the comforting illusion to the tawdry truth of a “Vauxhall Gardens by day,” when there were no shadows in which to hide.

Though the Whistler “nocturnes” that Koval considers date from a later period and depict a different London resort, she shares this interest in nostalgia with Nord. Her discussion of Whistler’s *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* (1875) in the context of the closure of Cremorne Gardens gives an added layer of significance to the painting as well as to the Ruskin/Whistler trial in which it featured so prominently. In John Keats’s ode “To a Lady Seen for a Few Moments at Vauxhall” (1818) as well as in Whistler’s nocturnes, Nord and Koval find parallels to Baudelaire’s project of “distilling the eternal from the transitory” within the city of modernity. The thrill experienced by these visitors was bittersweet precisely because they recognized that the relationships realized (if only for a moment) within a pleasure garden were of a kind that could not be conceived anywhere else. Such hypothetical encounters could be recollected, without having actually been experienced, long after the lady vanished, the music stopped, or the brilliant rocket fell to earth.

Pleasure gardens and Vauxhalls thrived in cities across the United States in the nineteenth century, from Butte (Montana) to Charleston (South Carolina). With the exception of Garrett’s dissertation mentioned earlier, these resorts have been entirely neglected. Confronted with a vast new field to explore, Naomi Stubbs and Lake Douglas adopt different approaches. Stubbs provides a geographically and chronologically broad survey of

resorts located in major cities on the East Coast. Her chapter explores how resorts struck a balance between imitation of renowned London pleasure gardens and attempts to create a home for “American” pleasures. Douglas focuses on New Orleans, a city famed, then as now, for its leisure facilities, and which had more pleasure gardens (fourteen) than any other city in the nineteenth-century United States.

As Douglas shows, the Vauxhall, Eliza, and New Vauxhall pleasure gardens of that city provide compelling examples of how the pleasure garden responded to the challenges posed by a remarkably diverse community; diverse not only in racial terms but also in terms of the different European communities (French, German, English) that jostled in the city. These resorts were exceptional in being patronized by free blacks as well as whites, if on slightly different terms. They offer a case study of how New Orleans society operated before the introduction of physical segregation. Viewed more broadly, the resorts described by Douglas and Stubbs represent an unexplored world of urban green space absent from traditional histories of designed landscapes in the United States, with their focus on municipal projects of “reform” or “improvement” centered on the public parks of the second half of the century.

Did pleasure gardens die or did they evolve into new forms of entertainment in the years around 1900? Josephine Kane’s chapter suggests that a better knowledge of the Victorian pleasure garden will help us to situate amusement parks in their historical context, resisting the tendency to view them as American novelties or simply as spin-offs of world’s fairs. Historians of amusement parks, such as Gary Cross and John Walton, have proposed the pleasure garden as part of their ancestry. Kane’s chapter is nonetheless the first attempt to evaluate the nature and extent of the pleasure garden legacy.¹⁵ Though they did not have rides of the sort that provided visitors to New York’s Coney Island with physically jarring thrills and license to squeal, pleasure gardens did provide the thrill of encountering what one might call the expected unexpected.

This book focuses exclusively on the pleasure gardens of England and the United States. Irish pleasure gardens such as Dublin’s Vauxhall (1793–?) have yet to be studied. Although Parisian “Wauxhalls” have received some attention, that attention has focused on the pre-Revolutionary period.¹⁶ During the French Revolution these resorts were suspected of harboring royalist plotters and so were subject to heavy surveillance. Despite this, they enjoyed a resurgence under the Directory and Empire, adding new

roller-coaster-style rides and helping to reestablish Paris as Europe's capital of pleasure.¹⁷

Tantalizing shreds of information attest to pleasure gardens elsewhere in Europe. A remonstrance survives from the musicians of Brussels complaining to Emperor Joseph II that his military bands who were playing in the city's Vauxhall robbed them of business. They pleaded for the Emperor to prohibit such bands from playing "chez des Bourgeois."¹⁸ Although Joseph II's decision in this case is unknown, it is clear that he encouraged public access to similar spaces in his capital, Vienna.¹⁹ In 1745 Frederick II gave permission for two Huguenot entrepreneurs to open a pleasure garden, "In den Zelten," in the Berlin Tiergarten.²⁰ As in ancien régime France, encouragement of these resorts may have represented a public relations exercise on the part of self-consciously "enlightened" regimes.

From Court to Town

Though pleasure gardens have been far less studied over the past fifty years than theaters, parks, and other spaces for recreation, they have not failed to arouse antiquarian interest. Such interest has focused almost entirely on Vauxhall and Ranelagh Gardens. Alfred Bunn clearly took an interest in the Georgian history of Vauxhall Gardens in the 1840s, when he was manager of the resort, and used extracts from what may have been the gardens' own institutional archive to promote a wigs-and-powder vision of "Old Vauxhall."²¹ Victorian scrapbooks indicate that there was a body of amateurs interested in collecting pleasure garden ephemera, especially the admission tokens.²² The numismatist and British Museum curator Warwick Wroth was the first to research the history of pleasure gardens, however. Aided by his brother Arthur, Wroth collated accounts of pleasure gardens from earlier parish histories with topographical prints, published diaries, and literary accounts to produce a garden-by-garden survey of *The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century* (1896) with details of admission charges and opening times, layout, ownership, and musical performances.²³ Until the publication in 2011 of David Coke and Alan Borg's *Vauxhall Gardens: A History*, most historical studies of London gardens drew heavily on Wroth.²⁴ Perhaps because of a certain po-faced aversion to pleasure, these gardens were ignored by Marxist social historians of the 1970s.

In the 1990s an important historiographical shift led by Roy Porter and John Brewer renewed interest in pleasure gardens. It became clear that pleasure gardens had more interesting stories to tell than ones revolving around quaint old fashions or what “dear old Pepys” had noted in his diary.²⁵ Chief among these was the shift from a court-centered to a public-centered culture. Porter and Brewer championed a new approach to eighteenth-century studies, one that focused on audiences, reception, and in particular the intermediaries such as dealers, print sellers, and impresarios whose business was the retailing of “the pleasures of the imagination” to the middling audiences that constituted that “public.” Thanks to Peter Borsay’s 1989 book on the “urban renaissance” in the English provincial town it was now possible to show how far these networks spread outside London.²⁶ Brewer and Porter’s approach also chimed in well with publications on London’s concert life by scholars whose interest in reception and performance practice had been piqued by Cyril Ehrlich in the late 1970s and 1980s.²⁷

Brewer described the pleasure garden as a natural successor to the satirical bricolage he found in John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (1728). “It offered a mixed audience a variety of entertainments from opera arias to ballads in a place where high and low life, respectability and intrigue could combine.”²⁸ This bricolage represented “the commodification of culture” within an emergent “public sphere,” but the process appeared ludic rather than dismally economic. Upon its translation into English in 1989, Jürgen Habermas’s *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962) afforded an intellectual framework. For Habermas, resorts such as opera houses and theaters were sounding boards for a “public opinion” carefully crafted and monopolized by an emerging middle class. Though they drew heavily on Habermas, Brewer, Porter, and others working in the 1990s overlooked his pessimism, particularly regarding the “commodification of culture”: “To the degree that culture became a commodity not only in form but also in content, it was emptied of elements whose appreciation required a certain amount of training—whereby the ‘accomplished’ appropriation [i.e., the training] once again heightened the appreciative ability itself. . . . Of course, such enjoyment is also entirely inconsequential.”²⁹ In the 1990s “commodification of culture” was celebrated, rather than bemoaned, and inspired a number of articles, essays, and books on the visual arts, literature, and society of eighteenth-century America and Europe. “Commodification” was linked to the “commercialization of culture.” Both were about upward social mobility and the trickle-down of elite fashions, in the spirit

of that “consumer revolution” of Wedgwood plates and print sellers.³⁰ Although one suspects that Habermas would not have viewed consumption as an equivalent to participation on his public sphere, a focus on consumption was welcomed as a way of valorizing the private sphere and enfranchising women, something seen as a correction of Habermas’s account.³¹

The “rehearsal” of Handel’s *Music for the Royal Fireworks* organized by Jonathan Tyers at Vauxhall in April 1749 was highlighted as the ideal illustration of this shift from a court- to a public-centered culture.³² The piece was commissioned by George II to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and performed in Green Park on 27 April, to the accompaniment of a pyrotechnic display launched from a “firework pavilion” designed by Jean-Nicholas Servandoni. Tyers secured the right to stage a “rehearsal” at Vauxhall on 21 April as a quid pro quo for supplying the court with equipment and technical expertise needed for the official performance. Although Tyers’s performance was a great success and supposedly drew a crowd of 12,000, the Green Park performance was a failure.³³ Dampened by recent rain, the fireworks initially refused to light. Servandoni and the King’s Master of Ordnance got into a fight. After some time, inattentive staff accidentally set fire to the pavilion, which burned to the ground. For Brewer the episode “perfectly expresses the longstanding inability of the monarch and his court to represent themselves effectively on a public stage,” which he contrasted with the commercial success and professionalism of Tyers, “a man who viewed culture as a commodity to be sold rather than as a means to praise monarchs.”³⁴

An Inclusive Space?

Pleasure gardens are hailed, therefore, for their indiscriminating accessibility, for offering a space in which members of a rising middling rank could mingle with their superiors, hone their social skills, and learn how to consume and comment intelligently on “the polite arts” of painting, sculpture, and music. Although the eighteenth-century private pleasure ground has been described as a “landscape of exclusion,” diverting public roads, depopulating villages, and blocking views of other habitations in order to isolate the house, the public pleasure garden has appeared as a landscape of inclusion.³⁵ A middle class is needed, we feel, to explain Wilkite agitation in the 1760s, the “Consumer Revolution,” the failure of radical reformers in the 1790s—and their success in the 1830s. Demographic historians have

struggled to dampen this excitement, pointing out how small the “middling rank” was (10 to 12 percent of the total population) and that it did not grow as a percentage of the overall population.³⁶ Meticulous research into the audience for the April 1749 “rehearsal” of Handel’s *Music for the Royal Fireworks* has demonstrated that it would have been physically impossible for the often-quoted 12,000 people to have attended at Vauxhall. Close analysis of tides, turnpike tolls, and advertisements (which only gave two days’ notice of the event) suggest that an estimate of 3,500 is more realistic.³⁷ Far from successfully courting a wide following through such events, Handel tried to cancel it, and Tyers probably ended up losing money.

The one shilling or (in America) dime/“one bit” admission fee paled before the considerable costs in time, transport (including bridge and turnpike tolls), and, above all, dress—all before one reached the pleasure garden entrance. Once inside, it was hard to resist the social pressure (or pressure from one’s own family) to buy notoriously overpriced food and drink. Given the license that seems to have been afforded visitors within the gardens to stare at or comment loudly on the dress or deportment of other visitors, many less wealthy visitors would have found their first visit less pleasant than they had imagined it would be. American pleasure gardens seem to have been more willing than English ones to post additional entry requirements based on dress, decorum, and race.

If it is so easy to describe pleasure gardens as inclusive spaces then that is partly because that is how pleasure gardens liked to describe themselves. Lockman’s 1739 song *The Charms of Dishabille* refers to “Red ribbons” (a reference to the red sash of the Order of the Bath) “grouped with aprons blew”: “This is the famous Age of Gold / Mankind are merely Jack and Gill [*sic*].”³⁸ In fact those in working clothes and liveried servants were prohibited from entering most pleasure gardens. Many similar accounts referring to different ranks, trades, and professions mingling in pleasure gardens could be cited.³⁹

This is not to deny that domestic servants such as footmen and ladies’ maids, middling shopkeepers, and a smattering of what we might call “white-collar” (rather than Lockman’s blue-aproned) workers such as lawyers’ clerks did patronize eighteenth-century pleasure gardens. At tea gardens they predominated; however, at pleasure gardens they would have been in the minority. There is evidence that employers in the 1740s paid for their servants to attend as an annual treat.⁴⁰ For the shopkeepers and professionals, for the hangers-on they brought as their guests, and for

visitors from out of town, a visit would also have been a rare treat. Perhaps timed to celebrate a birthday, an engagement, or another rite of passage, a visit would have been much anticipated, intensely enjoyed, and endlessly analyzed once one returned home.

For the elite beau monde who were steady patrons of pleasure gardens, being in a space alongside servants and middling people did not mean one treated them as equals. On the contrary, pleasure gardens “performed exclusivity.”⁴¹ As an example one might cite the case of a certain Mrs. Cary in summer 1765, who presumed she had developed a friendship with Lady Sarah Bunbury, daughter of the Second Duke of Richmond, after Bunbury spoke to her at Ranelagh. There seems to have been some misunderstanding as to the significance of this meeting, as Lady Bunbury’s letter to a friend the following January indicates: “I was vastly diverted with my *friendship* with Mrs. Cary: you know she dined one day at the Pay Office. I saw her at Ranelagh one night this year, & went up to make her a civil speech: & that is our friendship. As to her fashions, I am sorry to say they are but too true among the common run of people here, for such figures as one sees at publick places is [*sic*] not to be described; I am sorry for our English taste, but so it is.”⁴² Mrs. Cary may have been the wife of a senior Pay Office functionary, one of those who worked under Bunbury’s much older brother-in-law Henry Fox, who was Paymaster General until May 1765. Cary clearly took a speech Bunbury saw merely as “civil” as the sign that a friendship had begun, misunderstanding the unwritten rule that conversations solicited within a pleasure garden did not “count” outside the garden. Borsay notes a similar rule in force at the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells.

Lady Bunbury is clear in her mind that such a friendship is impossible. The gap in status is wide enough, indeed, for the suggestion to be amusing to her. Both parties have derived a kind of pleasure (a slightly unpleasant kind, in Bunbury’s case) from this exchange among “equals,” but for both sides it derives from knowing in the back of their minds that they are *not*, in fact, on the same level. Though it is hard to speak of “middling values” in this period, one suspects that there would have been many “Mrs. Carys” who did not wish to emulate Lady Bunbury (who by then had broken off one engagement, married, and was engaging in adulterous affairs) but who derived pleasure from being able to watch Bunbury and her friends walk the same walks and listen to the same music.

The importance ascribed to such voyeurism may explain why we sometimes conclude that pleasure gardens are caught in a downward spiral once

the beau monde ceased to patronize them. The elite stopped attending London's pleasure gardens in the 1820s, but we can no longer see that as tantamount to the beginning of the end.⁴³ Complaints that a pleasure garden was less splendid than one recalled, the company less select, and the effect less intense should be recognized for what they so often were: a way of indicating that one was "at home" in the garden. Mock disappointment was one form of vicarious proprietorship, a role performed before one's own guests and the company as a whole. In a resort where variety and novelty were important, such declarations were bound to be insistent.

There were pleasure gardens where the company of what we might consider the elite (defined by wealth) was neither sought nor desired. Though very little documentation survives, black pleasure gardens such as New York's African Grove (1821–?) and the Haytian Retreat (1829–?) would surely have had their own elites and may well have excluded whites.⁴⁴ Lake Douglas's chapter on New Orleans pleasure gardens shows that mixed-race resorts can and did thrive in a community divided into free whites, slaves, and "free people of colour." Although slaves were entirely excluded, otherwise pleasure gardens appear to have coped very well with *plaçage*, the convention for white men to have mixed-race concubines and families. They did not divide their grounds into segregated "white" and "black" areas.

We are relatively adept at considering how gardens changed "over time": season to season or even century to century. But we are only beginning to appreciate how gardens changed "in time." The makeup of the crowd, the entertainment, and the behavior was different on a weekday from what it was on a Saturday and different at five o'clock from what it was at ten. One strategy that made the New Orleans system work was having separate nights of the week for "people of color" and for whites. In 1825 Simon Laignel of the Faubourg La Course had three nights for subscribers (whites of both genders), one for white men and free "women of color," and one for "free people of color of both sexes." Though race was not a factor there, even quite small English pleasure gardens had unwritten rules that shaped what sort of people and what behaviors were acceptable at a certain hour. For the prostitutes and others intent on "Keeping it up" at 1870s Cremorne, the ten o'clock fireworks display marked not the end but the "real" beginning of a night at the pleasure garden.

The lamps used at Vauxhall Gardens in the 1760s only had enough oil to last an hour, from nine until ten o'clock, when the concert ended. As the technology of lighting advanced from lamps to gas to electricity, so

pleasure gardens colonized more of the evening, from late afternoon to past midnight, affording several different kinds of reveler the opportunity to make the resort their own, for an hour or two at least. Pleasure gardens thus form an important chapter in what Craig Koslofsky has recently dubbed “the colonisation of the night” in the early modern period.⁴⁵ Light could also be used to divide a pleasure garden into brightly lit “core” areas and darker, fringe areas.

Though the fireworks were an unavoidable cue, often the time or spatial dividing line separating the “safe” zones from the more experimental or disreputable zones was not clear. As several chapters demonstrate, to understand pleasure gardens we need to be careful not to base too much on a series of uniformly lit, bird’s-eye snapshots.⁴⁶ We need to be careful how we use newspaper items, which were often puff pieces, and—in the case of Vauxhall—fictional accounts. Etherege, Addison, Fielding, Smollett, Burney, Egan, Ainsworth, Dickens, Thackeray, and, much later, Georgette Heyer and Jean Plaidy: a raft of English authors sent characters to Vauxhall. Often enough something extraordinary happened—or, as Nord notes in her discussion of the scene in *Vanity Fair*, almost happened. On the one hand, we may ask whether Vauxhall ever witnessed the suicides (Burney) or elopements (Ainsworth, Heyer) described in such accounts.⁴⁷ On the other hand, we should remember that these authors were describing an actual place in Lambeth. Readers were also visitors, something that presumably held authors back from making their Vauxhall scenes so dramatic as to be unbelievable.

Many visitors liked “their” pleasure gardens to have light and dark areas. Concern about the dark walks occasionally led managers to block off dark walks or to illuminate them better, to ensure that all areas could be easily surveyed. When the macaronis tore up the fences blocking off the dark walks or smashed lamps in 1770s Vauxhall they were not simply a bunch of overdressed inebriates engaging in random acts of vandalism; rather, they were asserting their concept of the pleasure garden as a collection of spaces for different types of person and forms of behavior, spaces whose borders were blurred and so easily (or unwittingly) transgressed.

The “spatial turn” is helping us understand behaviors as a haggling over space and its uses rather than as a dispute between politeness and its opposites. Recent scholarship on the history of popular pastimes affords a useful model. Nineteenth-century antiquarians such as Joseph Strutt and latter-day Marxists alike have structured their histories of such pastimes teleologically: as a progress from “barbarism” to “civilization” on the one hand,

and as erosion or commercialization of an “authentic,” single plebeian culture on the other.⁴⁸ It is more helpful to understand this story as a process by which town squares changed from being mixed-use spaces (commercial and recreational) to being the exclusively commercial ones. Though the recreations had not changed, the space had, as urban space became more neatly classified into distinct settings for different activities. So those who continued to use squares and streets for recreations such as cock-throwing were criminalized—not for causing cruelty to animals but for causing a disorder or public nuisance. “Different spaces had the power to invest popular recreations with new meanings.”⁴⁹ Such changes were part of a new economy of time, as increased use of machinery and wage rather than piece labor created a “right” and a “wrong” time for recreation, as well as a right and a wrong place.⁵⁰

Though the world of wakes, fairs, and bull-baitings seems somewhat removed from that of pleasure gardens, such work provides useful tools. Among other things, it suggests we should be careful before attributing the closure of pleasure gardens to campaigns for “rational recreation,” temperance, or improved national morals.⁵¹ Economic opportunities played a far more important role. In many cases, the lure of making a fortune by selling a site for residential development proved too great, leaving devotees distraught, snapping off twigs from the trees as mementos at Vauxhall’s last night in 1859. As Koval shows, in Cremorne’s case Whistler’s evanescent “nocturnes” served as unlikely, if more effective, mementos of that temple of transience after its closure in 1877.

Recovering “Gardenhood”

Throughout their two-hundred-year history, these resorts were celebrated by visitors and promoters alike as new Edens and as an escape from the cramped, crowded, and care-worn city. Though the birdsong might be manufactured and the pleasant country views nothing but canvas, it is clear that these resorts retailed a certain idea of “countryside.” Patrons’ fine clothes, their modes of transport, and the resorts’ location on the city’s edge all conspired to lend the journey the feel of a holiday jaunt or excursion. Traveling “by water to Vauxhall” or even simply crossing the gangplank to Castle Garden at the southern tip of Manhattan in the 1840s created a sense of passing out of the city and out of the everyday.⁵²

But these places did not aim to create an accurate representation of the countryside. It is sometimes suggested that this or that pleasure garden's doom was sealed by the unstoppable growth of the city, which supposedly made it harder to pretend that the resort lay in the country. Yet, as John Dixon Hunt points out in Chapter 1, many visitors knew the countryside all too well, found it boring, and wanted something different. They agreed with the character Olivia from Sedley's *The Mulberry-Garden* (1675), who remarked to her sister Victoria that the walks in the garden were "much better than the long Walk at home: for in my opinion Half a score young men, and fine Ladies Well drest, are a greater Ornament to a Garden, than a Wilderness of Sycamores, Orange, and Lemmon Trees; and the rustling of rich Vests and Silk Pettycoats, better Musick than the purling of Streams, Chirping of Birds, or any of our Country Entertainments."⁵³ It is clear that pleasure gardens are a distinct type of entertainment resort, with much to teach us about class, gender, the self, and the relationship between town and country. But the "gardenhood" (to use a word coined by Horace Walpole) of these resorts has often been ignored. Such resorts were not mentioned in nineteenth-century garden encyclopedias or histories of gardening by John Claudius Loudon or Alicia Amherst.⁵⁴ Practitioners of "the new garden history" who profess to see gardens as a function of "changing patterns of social organization" are happy to leave out pleasure gardens.⁵⁵

Pleasure garden design between 1660 and 1860 seems to have moved through three phases. The first, a market garden *ornée*, lasted from 1660 to around 1730. Its layout consisted of one or more squares with grass walks edged by shrubbery, containing beds for flowers and fruit, the produce of which might be consumed in the garden itself or sold in the city's markets. Evelyn's *Fumifugium* describes a garden of this kind, which he saw as affording recreation for city-dwellers as well as being a means of perfuming the air before it flowed into the city. "All low-ground circumjacent to the City," he wrote, should

be cast and contriv'd into square plots, or Fields of twenty, thirty, and forty *Akers*, or more, separated from each others by Fences of double *Palisades*, or *Contr'spaliers*, which should enclose a Plantation of an hundred and fifty, or more, feet deep, about each Field; not much unlike to what His *Majesty* has already begun by the wall from Old *Spring-garden* to *St. James's* in that *Park*; and is somewhat

resembled in the new *Spring-garden* at *Lambeth*. That these *Palisad's* be elegantly planted, diligently kept and supply'd, with such *Shrubs*, as yield the most fragrant and oderiferous *Flowers* . . . *Sweet-brier*, all the *Periclymena's* and *Woodbinds*; the Common *white* and *yellow Jessamine*, both the *Syringa's* or *Pipe trees*. . . . That the *Spaces*, or *Area* between these *Palisads*, and *Fences*, be employ'd in *Beds* and *Bordures* of *Pinks*, *Carnations*, *Clove*, *Stock-gilly-flower*, *Primroses*, *Auriculas*, *Violets*.

Evelyn goes on to note that beans, peas, and other vegetables “marketable at *London*” could also be grown within “these Closures.”⁵⁶ His account tallies closely with French physician Balthasar Monconys’s account of Vauxhall in 1663.⁵⁷ Though the largest pleasure gardens had wide sand walks, most had narrower grass walks. Without lighting and without much musical or theatrical programming, parties probably did not stay more than a couple of hours. Scattered arbors (often made of old carriages) provided limited, somewhat ramshackle seating. Sadly, no images survive of this first phase, apart from the odd map.⁵⁸

The second phase is that most commonly associated with the pleasure garden and was closely modeled on Jonathan Tyers’s Vauxhall improvements of the 1730s and 1740s. Walks were now categorized into main *allées*—wide, graveled, processional routes—and subsidiary walks (Figure I.4). Walks and spaces for performance were framed with isolated lime or elm trees at regular intervals. At Vauxhall the original plots seem to have been filled in with such trees, except for one corner, the so-called “Rural Downs.” Bushes and low trellises beneath these trees kept visitors from straying off the walks, although some of these bosky blocks were “wildernesses,” riddled with curving, irregular paths of the sort found in 1720s designs by Charles Bridgeman. In the 1740s Tyers introduced three new ranges of supper boxes, arranged in curving lines so as to facilitate the mutual admiration of supper parties and those promenading. These boxes, the orchestral pavilion, and other follies mingled Gothic, Turkish, *chinoiserie*, and other styles, while massive false perspectives were placed at the end of walks to create an impression of distance or to translate the viewer to locales associated with Antiquity or the Grand Tour.

There is evidence to suggest that these features were part of a carefully worked-out scheme. Tyers’s private family garden at his Surrey estate of Denbies had an unusually sophisticated design, which took death as its



Figure I.4. John S. Muller after Samuel Wale, *Vauxhall Gardens* (1751), colored engraving. Guildhall Library, City of London.

theme. It included a monument to Robert James Petre, Eighth Baron Petre, a noted garden designer and patron of the American John Bartram.⁵⁹ The thousands of trees and shrubs Bartram supplied made Petre’s Essex estate (Thorndon Hall) a bridgehead for the exotic American plants. Although the new “shrubberies” (the word itself was novel), which appeared in noble pleasure grounds around mid-century tended to have serpentine rather than straight walks, it is surely reasonable to propose that Tyers may have consulted Petre about his commercial garden.⁶⁰ The apsidal shape of the supper boxes at Vauxhall has been linked with the exedras or theater-like spaces Evelyn and other seventeenth-century English Grand Tourists would have admired at Marlia, Mondragone, Florence’s Boboli, and other Italian gardens. These same gardens also had mechanical special effects similar to the famous tin cascade Tyers introduced at Vauxhall in 1752.⁶¹

Vauxhall’s design also indicates French influences, particularly in its walks. The phrase “pleasure garden” derived originally from the *jardin de plaisir*, in translations of French gardening books such as John James’s of Dézallier d’Argenville (1728). In James’s translation “pleasure gardens” were



Figure I.5. John S. Muller after Samuel Wale, *The Triumphal Arches, Mr. Handel's Statue &c. in the South Walk of Vauxhall Gardens* (after 1751), etching and engraving, hand colored. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection B1977.14.18703.

described as “those that we take care to keep with the greatest Delicacy and Neatness, and where we expect to find Regularity, good Order, and whatever may most please the Eye, as Parterres, Groves, and Grass-Plots, set off with Portico's, and Cabinets of Arbor-work, Figures, Fountains, Cascades, &c.”⁶² D'Argenville devoted considerable attention to walks and to discussing what types of trees had the right attributes for planting on them: tall, smooth trunks; high, spreading crowns; roots that won't trip promenaders. Smooth trunks and high crowns had the benefit (for Tyers) of making it easy to attach lanterns, effectively using the trees as lampposts.

The final phase of pleasure garden design began around 1820 and continued until the gardens disappeared. Yet as Vauxhall remained stuck in the second phase, we must look to Surrey Zoological Gardens (Figure I.5), to Cremorne, and to American pleasure gardens for examples. Insofar as these resorts are far less documented, evidence is in short supply. It is clear nonetheless that this phase placed a great emphasis on displays of bedding

plants, which were probably “plunged” into beds. An unusually early example of such design, Brighton’s Promenade Grove (1793–1802) had rows of elms planted on either side of a path but also had colorful bedding plants and shrubs.⁶³ Along with exotic trees in pots, the emphasis seems to have been on creating bright patches of color that could be changed relatively easily. Were the technology available then, Victorian impresarios might well have availed themselves of plastic plants, much as a smaller shopping mall might do today, to embellish a concourse or glazed piazza. As shrubberies and trees were cleared to make room for “monster” wooden dancing platforms, covered performance spaces, or wooden floors on which movable tables and chairs could be set, much “gardenhood” was lost.

In the “history of gard’ning” which formed the opening chapter of Stephen Switzer’s *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718), John Evelyn was hailed as the font of English garden theory. “If he was not the greatest Master in Practice, ’tis to him is due the Theoretical [*sic*] part of Gardning.”⁶⁴ Considering that Switzer saw the Restoration as the period in which “those preliminary Foundations of Gard’ning were laid,” it is both striking and unhappily proleptic that less than sixty years later he should have already been able to distinguish “practice” from “Theoretical” gardening.⁶⁵ The latter has not been kind to pleasure gardens, nor has Horace Walpole. Walpole’s *History of the Modern Taste in Gardening* (1780) contrasted the French style, which he associated with formality, monotony, and symmetry, with the “modern” English style discovered by the designer William Kent, who (in Walpole’s memorable phrase) “leaped the fence, and saw that all nature was a garden.”⁶⁶ Or rather *rediscovered*, as Walpole held that the English style had always been there, slumbering unnoticed since the days of Henry II.⁶⁷

Roping in willing or unwilling accomplices such as John Milton and Alexander Pope, Walpole established a teleological historiography of gardens that progressed from a “bad” absolutist restraint and formality to a “good” and “natural” informality that has since come to be associated with “Capability” Brown and Humphry Repton. Although Alicia Amherst noted in 1895 how often “so called reforms, undertaken with the aim of increased simplicity, resulted in greater stiffness and formality,” the majority of British as well as foreign scholars accepted the teleology of “formal” and “informal.”⁶⁸ What with their seemingly “old-fashioned” or “French” emphasis on straight graveled walks, pleasure gardens had no place in a narrative of English informality.

The English landscape style heavily influenced the parks “movement” of the next century, particularly in the United States. As Heath Schenker has shown, the ostensibly “natural” Greensward plan adopted in New York’s Central Park (1858) embodied a Republican elite’s claim to represent “a true American aristocracy.”⁶⁹ The decision to lay out these great American public parks in the English landscape style may seem a natural or an obvious choice. By revealing the hidden history of the pleasure garden in antebellum America, Naomi Stubbs and Lake Douglas’s chapters show that there was an alternative model—the pleasure garden—that had been developed in the years between 1800 and 1840. Many associated it with an easy-going sociability they found preferable to the staid, elitist, and supposedly “improving” landscape style. In the case of Central Park this pleasure garden model was considered, only to be rejected as so much “claptrap and gewgaw.”⁷⁰ In 1832 the United States Congress rejected a proposal to turn the Washington Mall into a pleasure garden, for which the would-be lessee wished to charge admission.⁷¹

In a sense the formal/informal opposition resulted from a partial misreading of Walpole, who noted in his *History* that the history of gardening was marked more by the odd flash of genius than by “progressive improvement,” and who could express regret at seeing the drive for “nature” leaving a house “gazing by itself in the middle of a park.”⁷² His letters reveal a Walpole who took great delight in visiting pleasure gardens and who permitted his own taste to be influenced by what he saw in them. He could find himself preferring his tree trunks with lamps attached (as at Vauxhall), rather than *au naturel*. As Hunt’s essay indicates, such views make it difficult to situate Vauxhall and its imitators within familiar narratives of garden history as progress from French formality to English landscape “naturalism.” Though foreign visitors ceaselessly commented on the “English” mingling and freedom they saw in such resorts, pleasure garden layouts can seem “foreign.” A garden history more attentive to expectations, experience, and reception is, Hunt’s chapter suggests, one in which pleasure gardens have much to teach us, one less likely to fall victim to the neat theory-driven distinctions to which “Vegetative Philosophy” (to use Switzer’s phrase) has been prone.⁷³

To view gardens as stages on which hospitality was performed reminds us that, English national stereotypes notwithstanding, gardens were not exclusively devoted to solitary indulgence of melancholy in a rural retreat

from the cares of the city. For visitors from the country a pleasure garden was one of the main, if not the main, “sight” in “town.” Though song after song told of how the pleasure gardens’ trees “Waft us, in fancy, far from town,” it was only “in fancy.” Pleasure gardens packaged the most exciting aspects of city living—encounters with the elite and other people one did not know, the latest music and fashions—as a countrified fantasy. Nobody, least of all “Rude Colin,” the stereotypical pleasure garden visitor up from the sticks, took it for real countryside.

As with the boulevards in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Paris, the graveled walks of the suburban pleasure garden created a new kind of movement, which could not be indulged in either in city or in countryside. “Walks in Gardens, like Streets in a Town, serve to communicate between Place and Place,” d’Argenville wrote, “they make one of the principal Beauties of Gardens.”⁷⁴ Modeled on the temporary structures such as those designed by Inigo Jones to line the route by which James I performed his royal entry to London in 1604, the arches installed at Vauxhall in 1732 (Figure I.6) made a royal act of procession into “an amusement for the crowd.”⁷⁵ Unwritten rules seem to have choreographed how visitors proceeded around several of the larger pleasure gardens. Smaller pleasure gardens and the smaller walks of Birmingham’s Vauxhall and Liverpool’s Ranelagh were more suited to strolling or rambling than to the processing that went on in London’s Vauxhall and Ranelagh.⁷⁶ Between 1670 and 1676 the ramparts of Paris had been transformed into *les beaux boulevards*—avenues for promenading that were closed to carts and other commercial traffic. The boulevards consisted of a wide, graveled central *allée* for coaches with a narrower, shaded *contre-allée* on either side, for pedestrians. When minimum street widths were laid down in Paris in 1787, the boulevards’ planting was explicitly cited.⁷⁷

Though the grid-like layout of Vauxhall might remind us of the city block, in an important sense Enlightenment city planning involved accommodating a pursuit until then restricted to royal and elite gardens: walking for pleasure. The French seventeenth-century visitor Misson observed how the circular area for coaches in seventeenth-century Hyde Park (“the Tour”) was used by the elite in much the same way as the Cours la Reine in Paris was. “When they have turn’d for some time round one way,” he noted, “they face about and turn t’other. So rowls [*sic*] the world.”⁷⁸ This type of circulation was only possible for those wealthy enough to keep a carriage, and a fine one at that. At Ranelagh similar circulation (also with a



Figure I.6. *Summer Fashions for 1844* by B. Read and Co. [Surrey Zoological Gardens] (1844), colored engraving. Guildhall Library, City of London.

signal to indicate when to change direction) was possible on foot, allowing one to inspect the company and be inspected much more closely.

Pleasure gardens took promenaders out of their coaches and gave them opportunities to learn new types of walking, new ways to “go nowhere,” as Peter Borsay puts it. Songs describing Vauxhall show an almost Impressionist eye for how fixed objects can seem to rearrange themselves as the lovers walk, creating an endless variety:

In the gay square, how oft have we
 Observ'd the diff'rent objects play?
 A statue, tent, alcove or tree,
 Now seem to join, now break away.

But step, and we the picture change,
 For other objects group'd we view:

Wond'ring, from shade to shade we range,
 Ever delightful, ever new.⁷⁹

Walking in town was, by contrast, a dangerous chore best left to those of a menial condition who never had time to walk for pleasure.⁸⁰ Of course, city streets would eventually become places for such walking, even for the solitary walk of the *flâneur* but only after they had been redesigned to function more like gardens.⁸¹

Finding “Something Else”

The pleasure garden first appeared on the fringes of a royal park (St. James') and its layout borrowed heavily from French-style *cours*, which had formed a “land of promenade” (“*païs des promenades*”) in seventeenth-century Paris.⁸² But it also took elements from market gardens and from private pleasure grounds, and the absence of royal guards and the petty rules of decorum and precedence fostered a more easygoing mood. The admission fee was not the only criterion for admission to the “charms of dishabille,” however, and “dishabille” had its own formalities. It is surely possible to recognize the importance of the classless trope as a source of pleasure gardens' thrill and of patriotic pride at their success without ourselves falling victim to this myth's seductive charms. If this book leads scholars to adopt a more considered approach to “classless” pleasure gardens, it will have achieved one of its aims.

Pleasure gardens offered a wide range of visual and musical sensations. Rather than being distractions, the subjects, lyrics, and other cues constantly referred the viewer and listener back to the crowd. The crowd afforded the thrill of the expected unexpected. If you wanted to slip the bounds of sexual decorum, you knew when and where to find willing accomplices inside the pleasure garden. For most visitors, however, it was enough just to know they were there. Pleasure gardens thus remind us that urban green space does not have to be about retreat or escape from the city. On the contrary, pleasure gardens satisfied a distinctly urban hunger for novelty, fashion, and sensory stimulation. Though the layout and vision of “nature” found in public parks fit the stories we like to tell about garden history better than pleasure gardens do, those parks were a later development, one many erstwhile patrons of the pleasure garden found dull.

This essay earlier quoted two fictional visitors' impressions on entering a London pleasure garden: Victoria and Olivia, from Sedley's play *The Mulberry-Garden* (1675). The "Bowery boy" hero and heroine of Benjamin Baker's play *A Glance at New York* (1848), Mose and Lize, are comparatively déclassé. Though separated by two centuries and several thousand miles, their arrival in New York's Vauxhall inspires the same sense of wonder and delight:

Mose: Say, Lizzy, ain't this high?

Lize: Well, it ain't nothing else.⁸³



Figure I.7. After J. Louth, *Miss Mary Taylor & Mr. F. S. Chanfrau in the New Piece, called A Glance at New York* (c. 1835). Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Notes

Introduction

1. Thomas Myers Garrett, “A History of Pleasure Gardens in New York City, 1700–1865,” Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1978, 11. In the seventeenth century “Spring Garden” (the name of the first pleasure garden in London, described below) seems to have been used in a similar fashion, to refer to pleasure gardens in general. For an example of this usage, taken from Celia Fiennes’s account of a 1698 visit to Newcastle, see Alicia Amherst, *A History of Gardening in England* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895), 214.

2. Warwick Wroth, *The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1896).

3. For a discussion of how many parties might visit a relatively well-known pleasure ground such as Hackfall, see Edward Harwood, “Rhetoric, Authenticity, and Reception: The Eighteenth-Century Landscape Garden, the Modern Theme Park, and Their Audiences,” in *Theme Park Landscapes: Antecedents and Variations*, ed. Terence Young and Robert Riley (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 57–58.

4. Madame de Scudéry’s account of the visit of a group of courtiers to another, grander royal garden (Versailles) noted how “in praising Versailles they came naturally to speak of the King.” Cited in John Dixon Hunt, “‘Lordship of the Feet’: Towards a Poetics of Movement in the Garden,” in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2003), 201.

5. Though Frederick, Prince of Wales, did have his own pavilion for entertaining within Vauxhall, and the Duchy of Cornwall was ground-landlord, the Prince was not a host but a distinguished visitor. Such royal patronage continued at Vauxhall in the nineteenth century, but the “Royal” added to the title in 1822 was nothing more than a marketing exercise. Suzannah Fleming, “Frederick as Apollo at Vauxhall: A ‘Patriot Project?’” *Londoner Gardener* 13 (2007–8): 46–66.

6. William Knowler, ed., *The Earl of Strafforde’s Letters and Dispatches*, 2 vols. (London: William Bowyer, 1739), 1:262.

7. Garrett, “Pleasure Gardens in New York,” 4.

8. Confusingly, Therese O’Malley’s recent work does not discuss pleasure gardens under “pleasure garden” but under “public garden/public ground.” She notes “the two senses of the phrase . . . one indicating an improved site open to the citizenry, the other referring to a commercial establishment designed for entertainment.” Therese O’Malley, *Keywords in American Landscape Design* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2011), 547. Compare James Stevens Curl, *A Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 586–87; James Fleming, Hugh Honour, and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, 5th ed. (London: Penguin, 1998), 441.

9. Although it does little to categorize the leading traits of each type of resort, James Stevens Curl’s *Spas, Wells, and Pleasure-Gardens of London* (London: Historical Publications, 2010) is useful, as is his somewhat more analytical “Spas and Pleasure Grounds of London, from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century,” *Garden History* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 27–68.

10. John Dixon Hunt, “Approaches (New and Old) to Garden History,” in *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 77–90.

11. John Evelyn, *Fumifugium, or the Inconveniencie of the Aer and Smoak of London Dissipated* (London: Gabriel Bedel and Thomas Collins, 1661), 24–25.

12. Lawrence Gowing, “Hogarth, Hayman and the Vauxhall Decorations,” *Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 4–19; Brian Allen, “Francis Hayman and the Supper-Box Paintings for Vauxhall Gardens,” in *The Rococo in England*, ed. Michael Snodin (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986), 113–33; David Solkin, *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992).

13. The paintings are little more than noted in David Coke and Alan Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2011), 119–20.

14. Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715–1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

15. Gary S. Cross and John K. Walton, *The Playful Crowd: Pleasure Places in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 31.

16. Jonathan Conlin, “Vauxhall on the Boulevard: Pleasure Gardens in London and Paris, 1764–1784,” *Urban History* 35, no. 1 (2008): 24–47; Wolfgang Cillensen, *Exotismus und Kommerz: Bäder- und Vergnügungswesen im Paris des späten 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2000); Charles Gruber, “Les ‘Vauxhalls’ Parisiens au XVIIIe siècle,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art Français* 65 (1971): 125–43. See also Michael R. Lynn, “Sparks for Sale: The Culture and Commerce of Fireworks in Early Modern France,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 30, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 86–87.

17. R. J. Arnold is currently researching these resorts at Birkbeck, University of London. I am grateful to him for this information.

18. Archives générales du royaume, Bruxelles: Conseil privé, Periode autrichienne. A 124, Requêtes à Joseph II, File 1346. I am grateful to Professor Derek Beales for this reference.

19. In 1766 Joseph II ordered that the “Bratter” [Prater] promenade was to be open to all, for walking, riding, and ball games. Géza Hajós, “Die Stadtparks der österreichischen Monarchie von 1765 bis 1867 im gesamteuropäischen Kontext,” in Hajós, ed, *Stadtparks in der österreichischen Monarchie, 1765–1918* (Vienna: Bohlau, 2007), 25, 28–33. Vauxhall and its Parisian imitators are referenced here (25) as “eine spezielle Form der öffentlichen Grüngestaltung,” but the distinction between commercially operated public gardens and public parks is overlooked.

20. Hans E. Pappenheim, “In den Zelten—durch die Zeiten: Kulturgeschichte am Tiergartenrand 1740–1960,” *Jahrbuch für brandenburgische Landesgeschichte* 14 (1963): 113.

21. Jonathan Conlin, “Vauxhall Revisited: The Afterlife of a London Pleasure Garden, 1770–1859,” *Journal of British Studies* 45 (2006): 735–38. Jacob Larwood, *The Story of the London Parks*, 2 vols. (London: John Camden Hotten, 1874), 2:18, 272.

22. Jacob Henry Burn, “Historical Collections Relative to Spring Garden at Charing Cross . . . and to Spring Garden, Lambeth . . . Since Called Vauxhall Gardens,” British Library, Cup.401.k.7–8; Oxford, Bodleian Library, G.A. Surrey c.21–5; “Vauxhall Miscellany,” Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, Conn. Jacob Henry Burn, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the London Traders, Tavern and Coffee-House Tokens Current in the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd ed. (London: Corporation of London, 1855). Warwick Wroth, “Tickets of Vauxhall Gardens,” *Numismatic Chronicle*, 3rd ser. (1898): 73–92.

23. The same year also saw the publication of H. A. Rogers, *Views of Some of the Most Celebrated By-Gone Pleasure Gardens of London* (privately printed, 1896; reprinted, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979).

24. James Granville Southworth, *Vauxhall Gardens: A Chapter in the Social History of England* (New York: Columbia, 1941); Lawrence Gowing, “Hogarth, Hayman and the Vauxhall Decorations,” *Burlington Magazine* 95 (January 1953): 4–19; W. S. Scott, *Green Retreats: The Story of Vauxhall Gardens, 1661–1859* (London: Odhams, 1955); Mollie Sands, *The Eighteenth-Century Pleasure Gardens of Marylebone* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987); Sarah Jane Downing, *The English Pleasure Garden, 1660–1860* (Oxford: Shire, 2009); Curl, *Spas, Wells, and Pleasure Gardens of London*; Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 94–98, 319–22.

25. Larwood, *Story of London Parks*, 2:18, 272.

26. Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, c. 1660–1770* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989). That Borsay’s 1981 Lancaster Ph.D. dissertation had been subtitled “Landscape and Leisure” instead of the subsequent book’s “Culture and Society” is itself indicative of shifts in academic discourse.

27. Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life*

in *London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Michael Talbot, ed., *The Business of Music* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002).

28. John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1997), 377–78.

29. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), 166.

30. John Brewer, Neil McKendrick, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa, 1982).

31. Habermas's refusal to give the "private domestic sphere" as much attention as the "formation of the public sphere" made his work a "lopsided account of cultural consumption and the making of a culture-consuming public." Ann Bermingham, "Introduction," in Anne Bermingham and John Brewer, eds., *The Consumption of Culture: Image, Object, Text* (London: Routledge, 1995), 1–22 (10).

32. Though he mentioned them only in passing, Lewis Mumford had defined the development of pleasure gardens in similar terms. Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1938), 112.

33. The 12,000 figure came from the account in the April 1749 issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

34. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, 28.

35. Tom Williamson, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 107.

36. L. D. Schwartz, *London in the Age of Industrialization: Entrepreneurs, Labour Force and Living Conditions, 1700–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); M. Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England 1680–1780* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Penelope J. Corfield, ed., *Language, History, and Class* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), chap. 5.

37. The 3,500 figure was first proposed by David Hunter. David Hunter, "Rode the 12,000? Counting Coaches, People, and Errors en Route to the Rehearsal of Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*," *London Journal* (forthcoming, November 2012). Even historians aware of the "mythology" of this episode seem surprisingly unwilling to question the 12,000 figure. See Coke and Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens*, 151.

38. Lockman, "The Charms of Dishabille," in Rogers, *Pleasure Gardens of London*, 47.

39. Such as "A German Prince" [Hermann, Fürst von Pückler-Muskau], *Tour in England, Ireland, and France* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lee and Blanchard, 1833), 157.

40. David Hunter, "The Real Audience at Vauxhall, 1729–59," unpublished paper delivered at "Vauxhall Revisited," Tate Britain, July 2008.

41. Hannah Greig, "'All Together and All Distinct': Social Exclusivity and the Pleasure Gardens of Eighteenth-Century London," *Journal of British Studies* 51 (January 2012): 50–75. I am grateful to Hannah Greig for permitting me to read a draft of

this article, itself based on a paper delivered to the 2008 “Vauxhall Revisited” conference, and for drawing the Mrs. Cary/Lady Bunbury episode (discussed below) to my attention.

42. Lady Sarah Lennox to Lady Susan O’Brien, 9 January 1766. Countess of Ilchester and Lord Stavordale, *The Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox 1745–1826*, 2 vols. (London: Murray, 1901–2), 1:177.

43. Conlin, “Vauxhall Revisited.”

44. Marvin Edward McAllister, *White People Do Not Know How to Behave at Entertainments Designed for Ladies and Gentlemen of Colour: William Brown’s African and American Theater* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 27, 29. I am grateful to Naomi Stubbs for this reference.

45. Craig Koslofsky, *Evening’s Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

46. Richard Quaintance, “Who’s Making the Scene? Real People in Eighteenth-Century Topographical Prints,” in *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550–1850*, ed. Gerald Maclean, Donna Landry, and Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 134–59.

47. Fanny Burney, *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*, 5 vols. (London: T. Cadell, 1782), vol. 2, chap. 12; William Harrison Ainsworth, *The Miser’s Daughter*, 3 vols., 2nd ed. (London, 1843), 2: 257–75; Georgette Heyer, *The Masqueraders* (London: William Heinemann, 1928).

48. Emma Griffin, *England’s Revelry: A History of Popular Sports and Pastimes, 1660–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4.

49. Griffin, *England’s Revelry*, 36.

50. Douglas A. Reid, “Weddings, Weekdays, Work and Leisure: The Decline of Saint Monday Revisited, 1791–1911,” *Past and Present* 153, no. 1 (1996): 135–63.

51. For a discussion of such campaigns, see M. J. D. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

52. For an image of Castle Garden (1848), see O’Malley, *Keywords*, 546.

53. Charles Sedley, *The Mulberry-Garden, a Comedy as It Is Acted by His Majesty’s Servants at the Theatre Royal* (London: H. Herringman, 1675), 9.

54. John Dixon Hunt’s *Vauxhall and London’s Garden Theatres* (London: ProQuest, 1985) was an important exception. See also John Dixon Hunt, “Theaters, Gardens and Garden Theaters” in John Dixon Hunt, *Gardens and the Picturesque: Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988).

55. Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, 1.

56. Evelyn, *Fumifugium*, 24.

57. [Balthasar] Monconys, *Journal des Voyages de Monsieur de Monconys*, 3 pts. (Lyon: Horace Boissat and George Remeus, 1665–66), pt. 2 (1666), 16–17.

58. For an example from 1681, see Coke and Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens*, Figs. 14–15.

59. Brian Allen, “Jonathan Tyers’ Other Garden,” *Journal of Garden History* 1, no. 3 (1981): 215–38.
60. Mark Laird, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds, 1720–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).
61. Hunt, *Vauxhall and London’s Garden Theatres*, 23, 25; Hunt, “Theatres, Gardens, and Garden Theaters,” 50.
62. “Alexander le Blond” [Antoine-Joseph Dézallier d’Argenville], *The Theory and Practice of Gardening*, trans. John James, 2nd ed. (London: Bernard Linton, 1728), 2. For an earlier use of “garden of pleasure,” see Andrew Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure* (London: for John Martyn, 1670), 1.
63. Sue Berry, “Pleasure Gardens in Georgian and Regency Seaside Resorts: Brighton, 1750–1840,” *Garden History* 28, no. 2 (Winter 2000): 226. A shrubbery was, admittedly, added to the remote corner of Vauxhall Gardens in 1786. Coke and Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens*, 241.
64. Stephen Switzer, *Ichnographia Rustica*, 3 vols. (London: D. Browne, 1718), 1:60.
65. Switzer, *Ichnographia Rustica*, 1:52.
66. Horace Walpole, *The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening* [1782] (New York: Ursus, 1995), 43.
67. Michael Leslie, “History and Historiography in the English Landscape Garden,” in *Perspectives on Garden History*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999) 103.
68. Alicia Amherst, *A History of Gardening in England* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895), 259.
69. Heath Schenker, “Pleasure Gardens, Theme Parks, and the Picturesque,” in Young and Riley, *Theme Park Landscapes*, 85; Schenker, *Melodramatic Landscapes* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999).
70. Anonymous 1856 correspondent to *Tribune* cited in Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 105.
71. O’Malley, *Keywords*, 546–47.
72. Walpole, *History of the Modern Taste*, 59, 50.
73. Switzer, *Ichnographia Rustica*, 1:65.
74. [D’Argenville], *Theory and Practice of Gardening*, 51. Writing in 1670, Mollet agreed that “the Garden-Alleys, which are the chiefest Ornaments of a Garden, and where *England* excelleth other Countrys, as well as by its art in Turffing.” André Mollet, *Garden of Pleasure* (London: John Martyn, 1670), 9.
75. Gregory Nosan, “Pavilions, Power, and Patriotism: Garden Architecture at Vauxhall,” in *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Cultural Encounters in Garden Art, 1550–1850*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 114. The arches are incorrectly dated to c. 1751 in Coke and Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens*, 212. A 1732 account refers to one of Vauxhall’s walks “wonderfully improv’d by the *Triumphant Arches* now rais’d.” *Universal Spectator*, 3 March 1732, 1.

76. See the images in Downing, *English Pleasure Garden*, 44–45. Here I am using the categories outlined by John Dixon Hunt in his essay “Lordship of the Feet,” 188.

77. Laurent Turcot, *Le Promeneur à Paris aux dixhuitième siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 153.

78. Christopher Morris, ed., *Illustrated Celia Fiennes* (London: Macdonald, 1982), 126n. See also Monconys, *Journal*, pt. 2, 21; Larwood, *Story of London Parks*, 1: 58–60.

79. A footnote in the original explains that the word *square* refers to “that part of the garden, where the company walk mostly, in which are the organ, the tent, the pavillions, Handel’s statue, &c. ‘To Molly,’” *Gentleman’s Magazine* 13 (August 1743): 439.

80. For a mock-heroic 1716 celebration of such pedestrianism, see Clare Brant and Susan Whyman, eds., *Walking the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London: John Gay’s Trivia* or, the Art of Walking the Streets (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

81. See Jonathan Conlin, “‘Mr. What-d’ye-call-him’: À la recherche du flâneur à Paris et à Londres au dixhuitième siècle,” in *Les Histoires de Paris*, ed. Thierry Belleguic and Laurent Turcot (Paris: Editions Hermann, 2011).

82. Charles Dufresnoy, cited in Turcot, *Le Promeneur à Paris*, 72.

83. Benjamin Baker, *A Glance at New York* (New York: Samuel French and Sons, 189?), II, sc. 5.

Chapter 1. Theaters of Hospitality

I am most grateful to Michael Leslie for a careful reading and commentary on a first draft of this chapter and for posing some challenging questions about my argument and for suggesting some fresh references.

1. *The Elements of Architecture*, opening of Part Two: here from *Reliquiae Wottonianae* (London: R. Marriot and G. Bedel, 1651), 271.

2. Or mocked, if grotesquely handled. See Pope’s lines perhaps on Cannons (“Timon’s Villa”) in his *Epistle to Burlington*; also see “Timon and the Duke of Chandos,” in the Twickenham edition of *Epistles to Several Persons*, ed. F. W. Bateson (London: Methuen, 1951), Appendix B, 170–74.

3. There is a particular heavy, jargon-filled discussion of this in Peter de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 72–103.

4. From “The Pleasures of the Imagination,” *Spectator*, 411, 21 June 1712.

5. All Walpole quotations, unless otherwise noted, are to *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis et al., 48 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1937–84), 13:103 and 9:42, respectively. I am grateful to my graduate students, Sarah Katz, in particular, and Charly Nelson for help with trawling these volumes for Walpole’s commentary on public gardens and their visitation.

6. *Walpole’s Correspondence*, 9:105–10.

7. There is some hesitation as to whether the Lambeth site was constituted of two gardens or one. Pepys seems to imply that he walked a short distance from one to the other, which would mean that his reference to “the Old Spring Garden” could not