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Crime, Deviance, and the Social Discovery of Moral Panic

in Eighteenth Century London, 1712-1790

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis utilises the theoretical device of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, instigated by Stanley Cohen and developed by Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, to explore the discovery of, and social response to, crime and deviance in eighteenth-century London. The thesis argues that London and its media in the eighteenth-century can be identified as the initiating historical site for what might now be termed public order moral panics. The scholarly foundation for this hypothesis is provided by two extensively researched chapters which evaluate and contextualise the historiography of public opinion and media alongside the unique character and power located within the burgeoning metropolis. This foundation is followed by a trio of supportive case studies, which examine and inform on novel historical episodes of social deviance and criminality. These episodes are selected to replicate a sequence of observable folk devils within Cohen's original typology – youth violence, substance abuse, and predatory sex offending. Which are transposed historically as the Mohocks in 1712, Madam Geneva between 1720-1751, and the London Monster in 1790. Taken together, these three episodes provide historical lineage of moral panic which traverses much of the eighteenth-century, allowing for social change, and points of convergence and divergence, to be observed. Furthermore, these discrete episodes of moral panic are used to reveal the social problems of the eighteenth-century capital that informed the control narratives that followed. Consequently this thesis makes an important contribution to the understanding of both moral panic theory, and the historiography of crime and deviance, and posits that the current discourse on folk devils and moral panics can be extended via the exploration of the moral crises of earlier centuries.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Christopher Thomas Hamerton

declare that the thesis entitled:

Crime, Deviance, and the Social Discovery of Moral Panic in Eighteenth Century London, 1712-1790

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as a result of my own original research. I confirm that:

this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

where I have consulted the published work of others; this is always clearly attributed;

where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

where the thesis is based on work done by myself and jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself; none of this work has been published before submission

Signed:

Dated:

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Abbreviations

BNA – British Newspaper Archive, British Library

LMA – London Metropolitan Archives, City of London

NA – National Archives

RCP – Royal College of Physicians

SPCK – Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge

SRM – Societies for the Reformation of Manners

Introduction

Background and principle aims of the thesis

The terms 'folk devil' and 'moral panic' appeared together for the first time in 1972 as the title of the sociologist Stanley Cohen's seminal book *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, which was based on the Mods and Rockers gang phenomenon of the early 1960s.[1] Cohen's ground-breaking study examined the disproportionately hostile media and public reaction to this perceived 'youth problem' and its elevation over time to being symptomatic of a society in social and moral decline. The faceless folk devils of Cohen's study are the juvenile gang members, their actions perceived as deviant, criminal and threatening - and the moral panic ensues due to media distortion, exaggeration, and sensationalism. This growing hysteria fuelled by social commentators and politicians, whom he labels 'moral entrepreneurs,' is enthusiastically adopted as a symbolic hobby horse by an enraged public, an inexorable progression which he termed the *processual* model. In essence a 'top down' process, which bestows hysteria. Three distinct phases of moral panic can be distilled from Cohen's model: taking stock, a period of discovery signified by media exaggeration; prediction, when concerns over morality are expressed and garnered; and, symbolisation, whereby a particular individual, group, or behaviour is crystallised as a social problem.

Two decades later, with the theory well established and given additional cultural weight and reach by Stuart Hall's influential collective work on deviancy amplification in the late 1970s,[2] Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda extended Cohen's theory to what they termed a *grassroots* model of moral panic.[3] This was advanced via a series of ambitious and persuasive socio-historical case-studies spanning the Renaissance witch craze in early-modern Europe, to the American drug panic of the 1980s, thus reinforcing moral panic theory's potential as an important

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[1] S. Cohen (1972) *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, London: MacGibbon & Kee.
[2] S. Hall, et al. (1978) *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, London: Macmillan.
[3] E. Goode and N. Ben-Yehuda (1994) *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, Oxford: Blackwell.

research tool for historiography. With their grassroots model, the social problem is discovered by, and thus originates from, the general public, who then utilise the media as a conduit to express genuinely held concern about perceived serious social threat.

Since its inception in the early 1970s Cohen's terminology and processual concept of moral panic in particular has permeated every field of the humanities and social sciences. Consequently the theory has been actively embraced by historians,[4] primarily through application to discrete case studies of mass social deviance, to examine a growing range of subject matter across a widening range of cultures and periods. As such, moral panic theory can be viewed as something of a theoretical and methodological rarity - as a viable and widely used multidisciplinary and comparative research device.

This thesis *aims to utilise the device of moral panic theory to explore the discovery of, and social response to, crime and deviance in eighteenth-century London.* A formative period in terms of the public sphere, but also one that has been frequently overlooked by academics seeking to apply, or more usually deploy, the theory. The thesis further *argues, within the British context, that London and its media in the eighteenth-century can be identified as the historical catalyst for what might now be termed 'public order' moral panics.* The scholarly foundation for this is provided by two extensively researched literature review chapters which evaluate the historiography of public opinion and media, and the unique character and distinctiveness of the burgeoning metropolis. The need for such contextualisation is essential in order to locate 'the specific historical and cultural context in which the phenomenon developed.'[5]

These are followed and supplemented by three substantive case study chapters which *aim to examine and inform on discrete historical episodes of social deviance.* Each of these episodes is selected to replicate a 'folk devil' analogous to Cohen's original typology – youth violence, substance abuse, and predatory sex

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[4] Principally social, cultural, and political historians examining crime, deviance, morality, and media, with the vast majority of scholarly outputs focusing on the late-nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. However, there are exceptions, notably: David Lemmings and Peter King who have applied the concept to eighteenth-century case-studies.

[5] S. Cohen (2002) *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers,* 3rd Edition, London: Routledge, p. 149.

offending.[6] Common themes for subsequent panics, which are also readily identifiable within the work of Goode and Ben-Yehuda.[7] The three comparative episodes under scrutiny are the Mohocks 1712 as youth violence, Madam Geneva 1720-1751 (the 'gin craze') as substance abuse, and the London Monster 1790 as predatory sex offending – providing a historical sequence which traverses much of the eighteenth-century, allowing for similarity and divergence (social change) to be observed. In this sense, the thesis sets out to build on the existing historical knowledge of these rarely researched episodes in order to answer the question, *to what extent are the Mohocks, Madam Geneva, and London Monster episodes recognisable as, or representative of, novel moral panics in eighteenth-century London?* In order to answer this question the thesis seeks to demonstrate that these three discrete episodes of deviance *are* recognisable as, and representative of, novel moral panics in eighteenth-century London, whilst reinforcing the conception that the capital at this juncture *can* be identified as the catalyst of the theory.

Perceptions within previous research

When considering the application of moral panic theory to eighteenth-century historical models the reaction to initial research is that very few such examinations have been attempted.[8] For the majority of social historians of crime and deviance Cohen's processual model and its derivatives appear to become attractive from the early Victorian period in the 1830s, when the institutions of the present day are more readily identifiable and their functions reasonably familiar; here the application of the theory is frequently seen as a simple matter of deployment.[9]

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[6] In Cohen's final and third revision of his theory in 2002, he argues that these architypes have endured, discussing them in contemporary terms, as: *Young, Working-class, Violent Males*; *Wrong Drugs: Used by Wrong People at Wrong Places*; and, *Child Abuse, Satanic Rituals and Paedophile Registers*, pp. viii – xvi.

[7] In *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, they apply 'grass roots' to a wide range of instances of youth violence, substance abuse and predatory sex offending, notably, mods, rockers and muggers, prohibition and drug abuse, and an interpretation of the sex laws of the 1930s and 1950s.

[8] Currently there are no early-modern historians possessing a primary research focus on the concept, and to date only a single edited volume on the specific subject in the early modern period exists; D. Lemmings and C. Walker (2009) *Moral Panics, the Media and the Law in Early Modern England*, London: Palgrave Macmillan. This book contains eleven substantive chapters, five of which are applicable to moral panic in the eighteenth-century offering examinations of Catholic recursants, forgers, gamblers, the London Monster case, and the British Jacobins, respectively.

[9] For example, see the work of J. Rowbotham et al. *(2013)* Crime News in Modern Britain: Press Reporting and Responsibility, 1820-2010*, London: Palgrave Macmillan; and J. Rowbotham* and K. Stevenson, which includes the editorship of two interdisciplinary volumes exploring public responses

To an extent the circumvention is understandable, with historiographic use of the theory in rudimentary form requiring a level of societal and cultural development which enables the panic to form and undergo processing. Such structure can clearly support: *identification and discovery* via general public literacy[10] a groundswell of public voices recorded and reported by a developed media;[11] disseminated *reaction* via established commentators, politicians and leaders alongside official scrutiny provided by a developed Judiciary,[12] Legislature,[13] and Executive[14] and; a record of the episode's *diminishment*, its duration and legacy in terms of social change. Thus, whilst many eighteenth-century practices and institutions seem readily recognisable, in fact most are still with us in familiar form, the majority were still in early development and functioning in a different way to their present day equivalents. However, later historical models within modernity require less justification and analysis in terms of both their visible, and invisible, social infrastructure.

to crime and deviance in terms of morality and hysteria the Victorian era – (2003) *Behaving Badly: Social Panic and Moral Outrage - Victorian and Modern Parallels: Visible Crime, Social Panics and Legal Responses - Victorian and Modern Parallels*, Aldershot: Ashgate, and; (2005) *Criminal Conversations : Victorian Crimes, Social Panic, and Moral Outrage*, Columbus: The Ohio State University Press

[10] In terms of common literacy, see: R. K. Webb (1955) The *British Working Class* Reader 1790-1848, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd; M. Sanderson 'Literacy and the Industrial Revolution' *Past and Present*, 1972, 56, pp. 75-104; J. Walvin (1984) *English Urban Life 1776-1851*, London: Hutchinson, and; A. Tomkins (2006) *The Experience of Urban Poverty, 1723-82*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[11] For example, in terms of news media, in 1720 there were 12 newspapers in London and 24 in the provinces mainly printed weekly and staffed by amateur reporters. In contrast, by 1820 there were 52 London papers and around 120 provincial titles available on a daily basis with editing, reporting and distribution undertaken by professionals. See, J. Black (2001) *The English Press 1621-1861*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing.

[12] Court reporting, though a relatively common practice by lawyers and judges in the early modern era, was mainly reserved for personal diaries with public dissemination by unofficial reporters of 'famous' trials. The Old Bailey Proceedings from 1674 provide a fascinating insight into contemporary criminal process, but were produced sporadically and with a commercial audience in mind until 1778 when the reports moved from salacious storytelling to a more formal narrative. The first official and systematic court reporting in England and Wales occurs after 1790 with the appointment of Joseph Gurney as Official Reporter in the Civil Courts. For a summary, see H. M. Scharf 'The Court Reporter' in *The Journal of Legal History*, 1989, 10(2), pp. 191-227.

[13] The British Parliament was formed at the beginning of the eighteenth-century following the Treaty of Union 1706 which initiated the Acts of Union between England and Scotland in 1707. Throughout the century power seeped from the Hanoverian monarchy to the Legislature, notably after the ascension of George I (1714-1727) in 1714 via the sustained efforts of Robert Walpole, his Prime Minister. Attempts to shift power back to the monarchy occurred, notably during the reign of George III (1760-1820), but were ultimately resisted. By the Acts of Union 1800 which merged Great Britain with the Kingdom of Ireland and thus created The United Kingdom, Parliamentary sovereignty was firmly established, but was in its infancy.

[14] For example, the now familiar Home Office was not formed until 1782, and possessed very limited powers in terms of law and order until its jurisdiction was extended to punishment and prisons in 1823, and policing in 1829. The first set of officially sanction national crime statistics were instigated in 1810, collating details of those committed for indictable offences back to 1804. See B. Godfrey, P. Lawrence, and C. Williams (2008) *History and Crime*, London: Sage, pp. 26-31.

In consideration of such infrastructure and despite problematisation, the selection of eighteenth-century London as a historical vehicle for this thesis is key. The city at this juncture presents a highly unequal and congested human environment in an almost constant state of flux, possessing anomic variables that Robert Merton would consider as fertile ground for social strain.[15] London was a Leviathan by any measurement, coming to terms with its own power, its social complexity, its media, and its morality. By 1700 the city had recently become the largest and most populous in Europe, and was by far the largest in Britain. Having risen from the ashes of the Great Fire of 1666, it had become a veritable hub of construction, communication, commerce, culture, and associated chaos by the dawn of the eighteenth century. Moreover, it was at the centre of what Jürgen Habermas came to identify as the 'public sphere.' For Habermas the city represented a unique amalgam of the literary, the commercial, the political, and the public, which led to the contemporary concept of influential public opinion communicated through responsive media.[16] Similarly, it is argued within this thesis that working poor and artisans of London, the so-called 'mob,' possessed their own communication forum to complement and counter this developing 'bourgeois' public sphere – that of the streets. With strong vital traditions of oral communication, advocacy and defiance communicated as solidarity and vigilantism, concepts highlighted within the work of Edward Thompson, George Rudé, and Peter Linebaugh.

Indeed, London witnessed a remarkable growth in media influence and availability at this juncture,[17] particularly through the medium of the newspaper in the century that followed the cessation of press licensing.[18] The city did not get its first daily newspaper until 1702, but by the last decade of the eighteenth-century could boast well over twenty dailies and a weekly readership approaching 400,000.[19] A further important feature of this media explosion was the increasing social

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[15] R. K. Merton 'Social Structure and Anomie' *American Sociological Review,* (1932), 3 (5): pp. 672–682.

[16] J. Habermas (1962) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*, (1989 translation), Cambridge: Polity Press. See also, C. Calhoun (ed.) (1993) *Habermas and the Public Sphere.* Massachusetts: MIT Press

[17] Many newspapers were funded by advertisements and were consequently publicly displayed and therefore readily accessible, see J. Black (2011) *The English Press in the Eighteenth-Century*, London: Routledge, p. 301.

[18] This was due to the lapsing of the draconian *Licensing of the Press Act 1662* in 1695, when Parliament refused to renew what was a deeply unpopular statute.

[19] H. Barker (1999) *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1695-1855*, London: Routledge, p. 23.

diversity of readership and the circular process of reporting; whereby proprietors relied to a large extent on the general public to supply newsworthy stories and gossip for publication, an erstwhile and genuine social media! In this extraordinary 'hot-house' environment the public appetite for articles advancing scandal and fostering fear proved voracious and enduring. A further purpose of this study, as evidenced by the thematic selection of the case studies in particular, will be the examination a number of structural tensions that pervaded life in eighteenth-century London, some of which have been the subject of prior research into its social history, notably within the discourse on crime, deviance and what passed as policing.[20] In particular, the challenge to established hierarchies, and mounting public anxiety over the failure of government to grasp the nettle of the problems facing urban society, allied to fears of the impact of a diverse and increasing population on law, public order, and indeed, morality – characteristic challenges brought about by rapid social change.

Perhaps the most significant contribution within this wider subject area in recent years is that of Nicholas Rogers, in particular his excellent *Mayhem: Post-War Crime and Violence in Britain, 1748-53* of 2013,[21] which to a large degree builds on his previous study from 1990, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt.*[22] Rogers's primary focus in *Mayhem* is the political culture that surrounded an apparent crime wave which developed in the middle of the eighteenth century linked to the mass demobilisation of servicemen in the aftermath of the War of the Austrian Succession in the autumn of 1748.[23] His treatment encompasses a wide range of deviant and criminal practices attributed to this group, including rioting, gang violence, and smuggling, with links drawn to political

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[20] E. P. Thompson (1963) *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Victor Gollancz; G. Rudé (1964) *The Crowd in History. A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730–1848*, New York: Wiley; D. Hay et al. (eds.) (1975) *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England,* London: Allen Lane; C. Emsley (1983) *Policing and* its Context 1750-1870, London: Macmillan; P. Linebaugh (1991) *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London: Penguin; J. M. Beattie (2001) *Policing and Punishment in London, 1660-1750*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; A. T. Harris (2004) *Policing the City: Crime and Legal Authority in London, 1780-1840*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, C. Emsley (2007) *Crime, Police, & Penal Policy 1750-1940*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[21] N. Rogers (2013) *Mayhem: Post-War Crime and Violence in Britain, 1748-53*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
[22] N. Rogers (1990) *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
[23] Estimates range from between forty and eighty thousand men, J. M. Beattie (1986) suggest seventy-nine thousand, *op. cit*., p. 193.

activism (Jacobitism) and binge drinking (gin). This focus on mid-century crisis challenges the notion of relative stability overseen by successive Whig governments, highlights conflict over consensus, and offers valuable considerations of immorality, public panic, and government policy, particular in terms of the move towards secularisation and the role of religious reformers (who Rogers refers to as 'crusaders') in attempting to stem this tide. However, despite possessing all of the theoretical ingredients to engage with the emergence of moral panic theory Rogers's work centres on primary historiography, only mentioning the concept in a single paragraph in the book's conclusion: 'What made the crime wave especially disturbing was the vulnerability of the wealthy and, indeed, of men and women high in the echelons of polite society. The newspapers certainly stressed this and helped produce something of a moral panic in London.'[24] This light approach reflects a willingness to cite moral panic theory without the need to engage fully with its parameters, merits, or limitations as a theoretical construct, although it should be made clear that this important study does not make claims to do so.

The publication of *Mayhem* in 2013 was straddled by two contributions by Richard Ward which explored similar themes of crime wave, public policy, and developing press response. The first of these was 'Print Culture, Moral Panic, and the Administration of the Law: The London Crime Wave of 1744'[25] in 2012, an article which examines response to street robbery in the latter half of 1744 via reference to the activities of the 'Black Boy Alley Gang' in Farringdon, London, offering a more systematic approach to moral panic theory than Rogers alongside mid-century subject matter. According to Ward, six stages are necessary for moral panic, attributing this 'model' to the prominent crime historian Peter King but failing to evaluate or attribute their clear lineage to the processual model within Cohen's original thesis.[26] Ward also states during his analysis that moral panics are reliant on 'real crime' a position at odds with a number of initiating theorists, including Cohen,

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[24] N. Rogers (2013) *op. cit.*, p. 213. This reference is accompanied by a footnote which reads: 'On moral panics, see Stanley Cohen, Folk Devils and Moral Panics: the Creation of the Mods and Rockers (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972) and Erich Goode and Nathan Ben Yeheuden [sic], Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).'

[25] R. M. Ward 'Print Culture, Moral Panic, and the Administration of the Law: The London Crime Wave of 1744' *Crime, Histoire & Societes / Crime, History & Societies*, 2012, 16(1), pp. 5-24.

[26] The sole reference to Cohen is contained within a single footnote (n. 14, p. 7) which states: 'King's model is built upon earlier influential studies including Cohen (1972) and Hall (1978)' – the latter, in fact, using *deviancy amplification* as its primary theoretical construct rather than *moral panic*.

and Goode and Ben-Yehuda, who posit that perceived deviance or even the threat of deviance is often enough to initiate the process.[27] Though Ward's historiography is compelling his theoretical examination is less convincing and raises a number of important questions requiring further research, some of which are directly acknowledged in his conclusion (and to an extent addressed by the present thesis by adopting a century long approach), he states:

> Two further strands of research are therefore required. Firstly, further testing and refinement of the moral panic model is needed. Only by finding cases which do not fit the model can we hope to identify its limits. Are moral panics dependent on a powerful press? Does the model fit for anxieties about crime and disorder late seventeenth and early eighteenth century when some of the key genres of crime literature surveyed here – such as the newspapers, *Proceedings*, and *Ordinary's Accounts* – were still in their infancy? Is the model applicable only to London and its environs…?'[28]

Ward followed up his examination of the Black Boy Alley Gang with *Print Culture, Crime and Justice in 18th-Century London* in 2014, a book which explores the consumption of crime literature.[29] Here, his primary focus is on the impact of crime in the mid-eighteenth century, rather than the century wide scope suggested by the title, and as such his work both complements and develops that undertaken by Rogers in *Mayhem*. However, in this extended piece, moral panic theory appears very much on the periphery with its theoretical application once again based on the interpretation of King (and to a lesser extent David Lemmings), and its processual architect Stanley Cohen failing to warrant a footnote or reference. Similarly, the possibility of identifying moral panic from below, notably the grassroots model of Goode and Ben-Yehuda, is hamstrung by a methodology which concentrates on middling and elite class consumption of written material and excludes artisan literacy, the rich oral tradition of the alehouse, the utility of the coffeehouse, and the stimulation of street culture. As such, Ward's fine historiography in *Print Culture* can be seen to extend knowledge of the London public's response to crime waves

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[27] See, Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 1-15, and Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 4-12.
[28] R. M. Ward (2012), *op. cit.* p. 22.
[29] R. M. Ward (2014) *Print Culture, Crime and Justice in 18th-Century London*, London: Bloomsbury.

rather than further develop the historical application of moral panic theory to eighteenth century models.

In terms of the present study, despite all three of the selected case studies possessing significant historical relevance and distinctiveness in terms of public outcry, only the London Monster has provided the subject matter for specific historiographical analysis in terms of moral panic to date. This, within a chapter focusing on press reaction by Cindy McCreery in 2009,[30] building on the firm foundation provided by Jan Bondeson in his thorough overview *The London Monster: Terror on the Streets in 1790*, which had appeared a decade earlier.[31] For the majority of social historians of eighteenth-century crime and deviance the Mohocks, Madame Geneva, and Monster episodes might be most appropriately described as footnote subjects, occasionally referenced but rarely researched in depth. Generally, there is also a tendency amongst social scientists utilising historical illustrations in their comparative research on moral panic theory to rely solely on historians to supply their historical information. This does not establish a methodological problem *per se*, but it cultivates a secondary rather than a primary process, which limits analysis. As a consequence of this, it can be argued that no informed conclusion can been drawn as to the wider historical significance of these three cases, particularly as episodes of moral panic. *Thus, as a broad objective or aspiration, this thesis aims to go some way towards addressing this impasse.*

Overall, the paucity of historiographical research into early modern moral panic is somewhat surprising, as in recent decades the theory has become the focus of some important debate amongst historians and social scientists reflecting on historical models. However, when it is utilised the theory has often been applied as a peripheral term without the necessary detailed analysis. As a consequence it can be argued that the concept is in danger of being both overused and undermined, or as Peter King has reasoned, assigned by some as a polemic rather than applied as a tool of analysis.[32] King's argument is important in consideration of moral panic

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[30] See C. McCreery 'A Moral Panic in Eighteenth-Century London? The 'Monster' and the Press' in D. Lemmings and C. Walker (eds.) (2011) *Moral Panics, the Media and the Law in Early Modern England*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 195-220.

[31] J. Bondeson (2000) *The London Monster: Terror on the Streets in 1790*, London: Tempus.

[32] P. King 'Moral panics and violent street crime 1750-2000: a comparative perspective' in B. Godfrey et al. (eds.) (2003) *Comparative Histories of Crime*, Cullompton: Willan, p. 53.

historiography, as it observes a tendency amongst scholars, particularly within the humanities (alongside increasing numbers of politicians and journalists), to delegate speculative responsibility for the term to the social scientists who first developed the theory. In worse cases its use is as a noun. In this sense there is a misunderstanding, that if a public panic emerges that concerns itself with morality, it must therefore represent an episode of moral panic - a distortion that often bypasses necessary social actors, emotions and processes.

That is not to say that the employment of moral panic theory as an interdisciplinary or indeed multidisciplinary research device lacks flexibility, or requires rigid adherence to a set of directions or stages, simply that the variables identified by Cohen and / or Goode and Ben-Yehuda should be considered when examining a behaviour or episode that appears to have been greatly exaggerated in terms of its societal threat or status as social problem. Recourse to Cohen is helpful at this point, here reflecting on three decades of research based upon his processual model:

> Calling something a 'moral panic' does not imply that this something does not exist or happened at all and that reaction is based on fantasy, hysteria, delusion and illusion or being duped by the powerful. Two related assumptions, though, require attention – that the attribution of the moral panic label means that the 'thing's' extent and significance has been exaggerated (a) in itself (compared with other more reliable, valid and objective sources) and / or (b) compared with other, more serious problems. This labelling derives from a wilful refusal by liberals, radicals and leftists [and their historical forebears] to take public anxieties seriously…to downgrade traditional values and moral concerns.[33]

This contemplative approach is adopted in the present thesis, in an attempt to deliver a dissertation that applies social theory to a historical period in an 'authentic' manner. It is intended that authenticity can be strengthened by allowing actors and observers to 'speak for themselves' via the use of primary sources whenever possible, to avoid a convenient interpretation which ensures fit. A necessarily

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[33] S. Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, p. viii.

objective view of crime and deviance is utilised throughout. This objective approach is evident within the majority of distinguished contemporary studies within the subject area, which seek to understand complex group, as well as individual, fears, pressures and burdens.[34] Similarly, a degree of detachment allows crime, deviance, and morality to be observed as contested and transient concepts. What is deemed to be criminal differs from society to society, from era to era, is subject to social change and dependent on both contemporary agents and agencies of definition. Thus, there is a need to see beyond the narrow view of criminal offence as behaviour forbidden by criminal law, a social construct. Evaluation of this social construct should of course take account of how laws are made and why they are broken, but the fundamental factor in terms of socio-historical research is the background, reaction, and social experience of these processes,[35] as Muir and Ruggerio have argued: 'The value of criminal records for history is not so much what they uncover about a particular crime as what they reveal about otherwise invisible or opaque realms of human experience.'[36]

When exploring the background to historical crime and any societal reaction to it, there is also a need to consider who or what is to adjudicate the harm threshold or indicate the level of moral outrage which forms the consensus required to identify offending behaviour. This indicates that what is considered to be harm and morally repugnant is dependent on both prevailing social norms and cultural change. This is certainly the case when you bring *deviance* into the frame, as the term covers fringe behaviour in terms of appearance, attitude, belief, identity and manner, those who Howard Becker labelled 'outsiders' - the people on the periphery, the unusual, the erstwhile folk devils.[37] Media influence in modern society plays a pivotal role in

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[34] *Inter alia* E. P. Thompson (1963) *op. cit.*, (1975) *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act*, London: Allen Lane; G. Rudé (1964) *op. cit.*, (1971) *Hanoverian London, 1714-1808*, London: Secker & Warburg; D. Hay et al. (eds.) (1975) *op. cit.*; C. Emsley (1983, 2007) *op. cit.*, (1987) Crime and Society in England 1750-1900, London: Pearson; J. A. Sharpe (1984) *Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750*, London: Pearson; P. Linebaugh (1991) *op. cit.*; V. A. C. Gatrell *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1770-1868*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; J. M. Beattie (2001) *op. cit.*; A. T. Harris (2004) *op. cit.* P. King (2006) *Crime and Law in England, 1750-1840*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[35] E. H. Sutherland and D. R. Cressey (1955) *The Principles of Criminology*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, p. 3.
[36] E. Muir and G. Ruggerio (1991) *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe: Selections from Quaderni Storici*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p. vii.
[37] H. Becker (1963) *Outsiders; Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, London, Free Press of Glencoe, pp. 2-5.

locating and leading perceptions of deviance, sometimes descending into (literal) witch hunts and moral panics whilst reporting on emotional cases and controversial behaviour. This allows us to view the historically accepted concept of crime as something of a paradox, in that what at first sight appears to be a stable and rigid set of rules is subject to constant change in terms of group adherence and morality.

The socio-historical locus of moral panic theory

Stanley Cohen's now classic theory of 'Folk Devils and Moral Panics' has permeated all areas of social science and the humanities, and is now as likely to be used by a student of history,[38] literature or politics, as the sociologists and criminologists for whom it was originally intended.[39] In terms of criminal justice theory, Cohen's work, which originally formed the basis of his famous 'Mods and Rockers' PhD thesis in 1969[40] runs parallel with the growth of party political interest in the 'crime problem' and the perceived need for rapid response to public outcry - social reaction to social problem.

The theory itself has been widely used to highlight how public policy, particularly legislative action and criminal justice policy, is often instigated as a result or consequence of a dramatic event, or series of events, that captures the public imagination. The 'folk devil' in Cohen's title is the generic criminal or deviant – the

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[38] Arnold Hunt, Curator of Modern Historical Manuscripts (from 1600) at the British Library, in his article 'Moral Panic and Moral Language in the Media' *The British Journal of Sociology*, 1997, 48(4), pp. 629-648, reflects 'I first encountered the term 'moral panic' at a seminar in early modern history in 1991. As I later discovered, it had been around for nearly twenty years and had already become firmly established in the literature of sociology and criminology.' The enthusiastic use and application of the theory to historical case studies is now well established as a historiographical device, see for example: J. R. Dalby 'Such a Mass of Disgusting and Revolting Cases: Moral Panic and the 'Discovery' of Sexual Deviance in Post-Emancipation Jamaica (1835-1855)' in *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post Slave Studies*,2015, 36(1), pp. 136-159; W. W. Pue 'Moral Panic at the English Bar: Paternal vs. Commercial Ideologies of Legal Practice in the 1860s' *Law and Social Inquiry*, 1990, 15(1), pp. 49-118; G. K. Belmer 'Grave Doubts: Victorian Medicine, Moral Panic, and the Signs of Death' *Journal of British Studies,* 2003, 42(2), pp. 206-235; D. Rapp 'Sex in the Cinema: Moral Panic, and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918' *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 2002, 34(3), pp.422-451; D. Ferriter 'Unrelenting Deference? Official Resistance to Catholic Moral Panic in the Mid-twentieth century' *History Ireland*, 2010, 18(1), pp.41-44; E. Avdela 'Corrupting and Uncontrollable Activities: Moral Panic about Youth in Post-Civil-War Greece, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2008, 43(1), pp. 25-44.

[39] Cohen's (1972) original 'processual model' and the later 'grassroots' version formulated by Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) are used for the hypothesis of this dissertation. The theory itself has been transposed and reinvented a number of times over the past 44 years, with important interpretations by: McRobbie (1994); McRobbie and Thornton (1995); Hunt (1997); Thompson (1998); Ungar (2001); Hier (2003, 2008); Critcher (2008); Garland (2008); Rohloff (2008); Young (2009); Rohloff and Wright (2010).

[40] Subsequently published as *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (1972) *op. cit.*

out of control youth, the dangerous immigrant, the street robber, the substance abuser, the sex offender, the extremist, the terrorist.[41] Such folk devils represent an apparent threat to the moral fabric of civil society and provide an embodiment of social decline. Once a folk devil has been brought to the attention of the public, most often by a media tuned to the prevailing ideological climate, the negatives are accentuated and a 'trial by media' may commence. In these circumstances, resulting public hysteria is harnessed and massaged by the media, amidst calls from the great and the good to man the cultural and moral barricades.

Often, the initial reaction on the part of the media, police and politicians can be identified as exaggerated, and the moral panic is forgotten quickly. However, when moral panic occurs during times of rapid social change, particularly when society has not had time to adapt to such change, the hostile reaction becomes galvanised and can influence both policy and law.[42] As Cohen points out, moral panic can be related to a 'disaster' analogy with three principle stages apparent: *Taking stock* – a crucial phase when the public's imagination or attention is harnessed. There is likely to be exaggeration of the deviant behaviour or numbers involved accompanied by dramatic headlines and sensationalist reporting. Phase two is *Prediction* – here the offensive behaviour is identified as the 'tip of the iceberg' with the moral future seen as bleak. The final phase is *Symbolisation* – with a link to deviance drawn via a particular identifying factor, such as clothing or the membership of a particular religious or social group.[43]

The crux of Cohen's original study was the disproportional reaction from a hostile media and public to a perceived 'social problem,' here unruly youth, and its elevation over time to being symptomatic of a society in social and moral decline. The folk devils of Cohen's study are these perpetual juvenile gang members, and the moral panic ensues due to media distortion, exaggeration, and sensationalism. This growing hysteria fuelled by social commentators and politicians is enthusiastically adopted as a hobby horse by an enraged public.[44] These wide variables allow

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[41] Categories that appear easily transposable culturally and historically.
[42] F. Füredi (1994) 'A Plague of Moral Panics' *Living Marxism*, 73, November, p. 20.
[43] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*
[44] Cohen (1972) *op. cit.*

Cohen's theory to be applied to historical periods in order to test and contrast socio-historical conditions.

Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda in *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*,[45] extend Cohen's theory to a so called 'grassroots model' which originates from the general public rather than the media and expresses genuinely held concerns about a perceived serious social threat. Five central characteristics, linked to Cohen's original version, can be distilled from their extended thesis: *concern* about the threat; *hostility* to the objects of the panic; widespread *consensus* of reality; *disproportionality* of reaction, and; *unpredictability* in terms of scale, duration, and intensity.[46] Since the 1970s Cohen's terminology and concept has permeated social history, and has been utilised by modern historians to examine a growing range of subject matter across a widening range of historical periods and cultures.[47]

This is very much the case with Goode and Ben-Yehuda who use the theory to test a series of socio-historical case studies spanning the Renaissance witch craze in Europe between 1520 to 1650 to recent reactions to illicit drug use in the United States and Israel during the early 1980s,[48] as they argue:

> The strictly rationalist perspective, radical relativism, and the assumption that elites dominate social institutions to the extent that they can control or dictate human consciousness and behaviour – led to the writing of this book. We see these perspectives as incapable of understanding some of the more fascinating and revealing episodes of collective action in human history…these episodes have been referred to as *moral panics*.[49]

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[45] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*

[46] *Ibid.,* p. 127.

[47] See for instance: S. Barnett (2003) *The Enlightenment and Religion: Myths of Modernity*, Manchester; J. Rowbotham and K. Stevenson (eds.) (2003) *Behaving Badly: Social Panic and Moral Outrage: Victorian and Modern Parallels*, Aldershot, and; E. Avdela (2008) 'Corrupting and uncontrollable Activities: Moral Panic about Youth in Post Civil War Greece' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43(1), January.

[48] The scope of Goode and Ben-Yehuda's historical analysis is impressive, with case studies on the Renaissance witch craze 1520 to 1650, The Canudos Massacre in Brazil 1893-1897, The Prohibition Movement 1900-1920, The Boys of Boise case 1955-1957, the Orleans Slavery Panic 1969-1970, the Israeli Drug Panic of 1982, and the American Drug Panic 1986-1989.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

In terms of historical focus, Goode and Ben-Yehuda emphasise the importance of the locus of moral panic. Suggesting that often the fear and anxiety attributed to each episode is represented by the specific actions of the antagonists, which are interpreted through sentiments and beliefs felt by both individuals and the collective community, ultimately as a barometer of acceptable morality. Questions are also raised which are particularly pertinent for historiography when analysing moral panics in terms of grassroots: does the panic have a societal impact, leaving an institutional legacy in the form of reforms, laws, or social movements, and if so what is the purpose or composition of that legacy? Has the moral panic altered the normative structure of the society, and if so what is the nature of that change.[50]

Much of the impetus behind the formulation of Stanley Cohen's theory of moral panic was provided by his collaborator and colleague in the late 1960s, Jock Young. Young's chapter in Cohen's edited volume, *Images of Deviance*[51] considered the ways in which the media reacted to instances of perceived deviance; seeing it as acting in such a way as to amplify and harness deviant behaviour. In this chapter Young coined the term 'moral panic' and a primed a number of key themes that would provide the foundation for Cohen's influential thesis: 'The media can quickly and effectively fan public indignation and engineer what one might call 'a moral panic' about a certain type of deviancy.'[52] This suggests that the existence of a developed media is crucial for the incubation of a moral panic, a variable which considerably limits its historiographic interpretation. The media are seen to stimulate initial interest in the social problem, awaken public anxiety, and intensify public fear.

Thus, the historical study of instances of moral panic must take into consideration specific historical and cultural contexts, the motives behind deviant behaviours, and the reasons for societal response. Cohen, following Young's lead, developed the model of moral panic theory that would become the staple for a generation of academics that followed. Here, it is necessary to examine his oft quoted synopsis of the theory as a point of reference:

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[50] *Ibid.*, p. 225.
[51] S. Cohen (ed.) (1971) *Images of Deviance*, London: Penguin.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, a person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself.'[53]

Thus, for Cohen moral panics are identified as discrete social processes, individual episodes,[54] though these processes may crystallise or incorporate long-term or ongoing public anxieties. A key part of this thesis is that individual cases normally appear in response to concerns already held by the public at large, in other words as the focal point or sum of fears – epitomised by the folk devil. Cohen provides a series of three primary stages that will become apparent in the course of a moral panic, which are again key to historical analysis. The first stage is the *identification and discovery* of a particular type of behaviour or the behaviour of a particular individual or group that is perceived as a threat to social order. Secondly, the *reaction* to the undesirable behaviour is seized by society's leaders, those termed moral crusaders and entrepreneurs,[55] with the reaction sustained and manipulated by the media, and subject to official scrutiny, manifested in political debate and public policy. Thirdly, the behaviour or individual case *diminishes*, occasionally leaving behind a legacy of collective memory or significant social or socio-legal change.

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[53] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.,* p.1.
[54] Leading Cohen's initiating version of moral panic theory to become known as the 'processual model.'
[55] This term, associated with concepts of altruism and 'public service' was first used by Becker in *Outsiders*, *op. cit.* Emsley provides an excellent summary of its application 'Moral entrepreneurs make a career out of identifying and raising alarm about a problem, proposing specific remedies and offering themselves as the individuals to introduce and carry through the remedies' – Emsley (2007) op. cit., p. 10.

Like Young, Cohen was keen to highlight the crucial role played by the media in the moral panic procession, and in particular the media's ability to amplify deviance. In doing so he refers to the pioneering work of Leslie Wilkins[56] which places stress on the concept that societal reaction to perceived deviance may in fact *increase* the social problem, stimulating the apparently undesirable deviant behaviour, rather than *decrease* or eliminate it. The main tool used by the media in the amplification process is stereotyping, with strong descriptions and often powerful imagery of deviants and offenders utilised in order to test the public's tolerance for the behaviour under scrutiny. Cohen further points out that in a segregated urban society, moreover modern society, the tolerance level of the public is set very low, and in many cases it is set at nil.

The principle behind Wilkins' theory of 'deviancy amplification' that had appealed to Cohen was the exploration of tolerance and intolerance towards deviance in society, and how such themes were reinforced by institutions. Wilkins argued that societies adopting a reactive intolerant approach to minor deviancy tended to define more behaviours as illegal, and instigate formal action against such offenders.[57] This punitive model resulted in the alienation of those deemed to be deviant, increased crime from deviant groups and greater levels of intolerance towards deviant behaviour from society at large. Young, in the 1971 study that proved highly influential for Cohen, had utilised Wilkins' model to research marijuana users in the Notting Hill area of London, finding that this new but relatively innocuous activity was undergoing a transformation into a social problem by over policing, increased media coverage, and consequent public anxiety.[58]

Young's work in turn, was expanded by a cohort of cultural theorists headed by Stuart Hall who would use it as a foundation for their highly influential study *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order,*[59] a book which widened the scope of moral panic theory considerably. The foundation of the study is based on an examination of the disproportionality of official reaction to social

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[56] L. T. Wilkins (1964) *Social Deviance: Social Policy, Action, and Research*, London: Tavistock.
[57] *Ibid.* p. 54.
[58] J. Young (1971) *The Drugtakers: the Social Meaning of Drug Use*, London: Judson, McGibbon and Kee.
[59] Hall et al. (1978) *op. cit.* The group comprised of Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts.

threat. It is argued that the elite in society; the experts, the senior police officers, the politicians, the judiciary, and the newspaper editors tend to perceive social threats in identical terms. As Hall et al. state 'when the media representations universally stress 'sudden and dramatic' increases (in numbers involved or events) and 'novelty', above and beyond that which a sober, realistic appraisal could sustain, then we believe it is appropriate to speak of the beginnings of a moral panic.'[60] Throughout *Policing the Crisis*, Hall et al. consider how moral panics progress and gain momentum, arguing that the collaboration of the media with powerful individuals, here stated as politicians and moral crusaders, is key to sustaining moral panic − steering the social problems that they themselves perceive to be the most serious through public discourse, and into social policy and law.

In this sense the public reaction to deviancy can be seen as a *spiral,* commencing with deviant, not necessarily criminal, behaviour that is seen to be morally unacceptable by a large section of the population, and consequently attracts press attention. This spiral then draws in similar or fringe behaviour that appears to be of the same *genre,* and these in turn are picked up by the press and reported in the same vein as the original threat, which has the effect of confirmation and possible censure. Such media confirmation leads an attentive public to believe that the threat is widespread and that the deviant behaviour is both commonplace and increasing. Thus, the wider public becomes stimulated by the threat, and anxious for further news and information about the impending crisis.

Increased public anxiety leads to calls for political intervention and policy change to combat the perceived threat and for the judiciary to provide punitive sentences to any offenders apprehended. The spiral itself is one of reinforcement and amplification, acting to sustain the existing status quo. The authors also locate moral panic theory and the notion of a deviancy spiral as a valuable vehicle for historical research, stating that: "our intention is certainly to situate the 'moral panic' as one of the forms of appearance of a more deep-seated historical crisis, and thereby to give it greater historical and theoretical specificity…attempting to redefine it as one of the key ideological forms in which a historical crisis experienced and fought

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[60] *Ibid*. p. 16.

out."[61] This is done via the device of a processual model of moral panic supported by a collectivist critique with its historiographical roots provided by Thompson, and Rudé,[62] whereby moral panic is seen as a diversion, often steering public eyes away from authentic social threats and towards manufactured folk devils old and new.

Definitions, methodology, and thesis structure

In consideration of the foregoing, the present thesis develops to explore whether the processual theory of moral panic designed by Cohen and modified by Goode and Ben-Yehuda into a grassroots model, can be accurately applied to analyse the folk devils of eighteenth-century London. In order to do this it is necessary to focus on the key moral debates advanced by the social commentators of the period, what would now be termed the mass media. Cohen makes a strong case for the longevity of the existence of the mass media as guardians of morality, stating 'The student of moral enterprise cannot but pay particular attention to the role of the mass media in defining and shaping social problems. The media have long operated as agents of moral indignation in their own right.'[63] Media also provides the central tenet of the grassroots model, and indeed all other authentic versions of moral panic theory[64] - acting at turns, as an alarm call or call to arms, conduit, guide, and cash cow. Consequently, it must also be considered at the core of this thesis.

Here, the term *media* is applied within the early modern context and is used to signify and describe contemporary mass communication technologies. These ranged from oral culture (songs, storytelling, public-reading, balladeering, poetry, and plays), to printed literature (books, almanacs, handbills, ballads, chapbooks, pamphlets), the press (newspapers, periodicals, and magazines), and visual imagery (paintings, posters, and prints), technologies that would all enjoy mass production and consumption in the eighteenth century. In terms of constructing the core methodology of this thesis, much use was made of the voluminous eighteenth-century newspaper archive of the British Library, and its satellite libraries. This as a

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[61] *Ibid.* p. 218.
[62] Thompson (1963) *op. cit*; Rudé (1964) *op. cit*.
[63] Cohen (2002) *op. cit*., p. 7.
[64] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit*., pp. 124-143.

whole, exists as an incredibly rich resource for social historians of crime, deviance, morality and the public sphere, but remains seldom used and largely untouched.[65]

Chapter 1 *The shaping of opinion: Literacy, media, and folk devils in eighteenth-century London*, investigates the key theme of mass media, charting the birth of what Habermas referred to as the public sphere, a development which ushered in a period of intense public opinion and moral consciousness, and subsequent moral entrepreneurship. Key to this analysis is the historical context of public literacy, alongside consideration of media availability and access for the poor and illiterate. A large number of rare primary sources were consulted in this regard including sixteenth and seventeenth-century religious tracts, ballads, engravings, treatises, and almanacs alongside various eighteenth-century forms and satires that they inspired. The struggle and discourse over oral culture and literacy is discussed, again with reference to contemporary literature, as is the growing significance of visual imagery to the formation of a public consensus of morality. Central to this move towards consensus was the technological progress and economic competition that saw graphic prints - polemical, satirical and moralising - come within the conventional gaze of all Londoners for the first time in history. Hogarth and Gillray, operating as bookends to the century, are of high importance to the progression of moralising imagery, and their work is analysed in this regard. The move towards a truly mass media at this point also came with the establishment of a receptive popular press via expansion of the newspaper industry, at the start of the century. Its output is examined and analysed first hand in this chapter and used throughout the remainder of the thesis, particularly within the three case-studies, which were all effectively played out in Grub street and Fleet street. The rapid development of news media is covered through examination of the changes that saw what might be described as the popular press transformed into the watchman press as the century evolved. Finally, in terms of media focus, I consider the folk origins of the 'folk devils' selected by the mass media to serve as the sum of London's fears, the nub of resultant panics, paying heed to the cultural references that assisted in shaping them.

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[65] Principally the *Burney Collection*, the *Colindale* Collection and *The Banks Scrapbooks* within the British Newspapers Archive (BNA) at the British Library.

Further deference is paid to the foundations of moral panic theory in the chapter that follows. This concentrates on social locus of the potential hysteria, in this case eighteenth-century London. Historiography is used to examine the character and nature of the city in order to reveal informing variables and institutions - such as size, diversity, built environment, commerce, social strain, and deviance and crime. Furthermore, in terms of the latter, how transgression was controlled via the apparatus of social control and censure. Here, current terminology such as 'police' and 'criminal justice' are avoided, but when used they respectively denote the policing response (essentially, the magistracy, constabulary and night watch) and the criminal justice process (essentially, physical punishment, transportation or gaol) that existed at the time. Alongside voluminous printed materials (newspapers, books, directories, pamphlets, and Wild and Sheppard miscellanea), notable archival sources consulted when researching this area included the maps of John Rocque, the Old Bailey Proceedings (digitised), the Parliamentary archives, the Wheatly prints, and a content analysis of John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*.

Chapter 2 *This great and monstrous thing; Into the streets of eighteenth-century London*, reflects on the unique character of London in the eighteenth-century as a hub of intense social change and consequently a fertile environment for moral panic. Extending the participatory concept of the public sphere to the rank and file that filled its streets. The topography, demography, and economics of the great city and its port are discussed in terms of the contemporary documentation of King, Rocque, and Defoe – in all, London emerges as Leviathan. The reconstruction of the city in the aftermath of the Great Fire is discussed, a process which it is argued, created an unpredictable place of extreme contrasts. A densely populated metropolis, where rich and poor lived, worked, played and abhorred in close proximity. The chapter develops to consider street life and the thronging crowds readily identified and much maligned by residents and visitors alike. The dangerous nature of the city streets is also explored, alongside the public appetite for participation in the punishment of offenders. An elemental role in a criminal justice landscape seemingly bereft of control, order or consistency. The chapter continues with an important section which considers crime and deviance in terms of actors, symbolism, censure, and reaction. Here, John Gay's popular satire based on social reality the *Beggar's Opera,* 1728, is used as a metaphor for the endemic corruption

of law and order in eighteenth-century London, a *motif* for the public opinion of the time. It is revealed that within the *Beggars Opera* the folk devil highwayman is revealed as folk hero, with the officially sanctioned thief-taker exposed as corrupt and calculating, the folk devil. This paradox is utilised to illustrate and explore the concept of public opinion from below, the London streets as the court of the mob, ever disenfranchised or stifled in terms of opinion on morality but also, ever knowing, ever watchful.

Having established the media and social host necessary to moral panic theory, this thesis moves on to an examination of three substantive case studies. Each of these is scrutinised to map the validity and duration of perceived threat, and consider whether the ensuing reaction can be identified as being press or public led, flagged as a vehicle of personal or political gain, or viewed as a chimera to be dismissed as transient whimsy. Close attention is paid throughout to the agendas of public figures and pressure groups alongside the enlarged role of the press as arbiter of government policy and potential agitator, in terms of allegations of complacency and impotence in the face of escalating public deviance - or at least the public perception of it. The official response of the legislature, the courts, and the burgeoning criminal justice system is also considered when appropriate.

The choice of the case-studies to support this thesis was made complex by a number of worthy episodes occurring in the long eighteenth-century that deserve investigation as potential moral panics.[66] The three that were chosen were selected for possessing outwardly analogous characteristics to the law and order moral panics first exposed by Cohen in the late 1960s, with a focus on violence, drugs, and sex. These archetypal folk devils have returned many times since, allowing for the prospect that they may have occurred many times in the past. Analogy in this sense providing a comparator to explore response. There were also *prima facie* similarities, particularly in terms of mode of discovery and duration that would require further research to verify. Thus, a broad initial aim of this thesis was to provide an enhanced understanding of the important but under-researched Mohock,

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[66] Foremost amongst these; the Gordon rioters, the British Jacobins, and the Ratcliffe Highway murders.

Madame Geneva, and London Monster episodes initiated by a close reading of primary sources.

Chapter 3 *Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name? Panic on the streets, 1712*, provides the first of the case-study chapters, focusing on the Mohocks episode which gripped London in the spring of 1712. The history of rake culture and gang violence is explored, before analysis of the Mohocks case through an examination of primary sources encompassing handbills, broadsides, newspapers, illustrations, and John Gay's short farce *The Mohocks*, 1712, along with surviving official records of criminal justice, here the Sessions Papers, Books and Rolls of the Middlesex Justices, Repertories of Aldermen, and Gaol Delivery Books held at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). The Mohocks reign of terror is thought to have commenced in February 1712 when a large gang of young gentlemen participated in the 'scowering' of Holborn and Covent Garden – *scowering* being the name given to a prolonged unprovoked attack on the public and property in the name of genteel sport. These random attacks could be extremely violent with contemporary reports of both male and female victims being whipped, clubbed, or stabbed regardless of age or social status causing public anxiety. As the Mohock panic proliferated and intensified, observers, including Swift, Steele, and Addison, backed by opportunist politicians provided polemics, and greatly exaggerated accounts of events. These embellished accounts developed in tandem with widespread media coverage and growing public outcry, bordering on vigilantism. Prior scholarship on the Mohocks episode has mainly centred on the case as a signifier of violent rake culture, or indeed the contested existence of a discrete gang bearing the name. By contrast, this chapter examines public and press reaction to the various crimes and excesses attributed to the group, in order to evaluate and investigate the episode as a potential early moral panic.

Chapter 4 *Kill-grief and Comfort: Madam Geneva and the London gin panic, 1720-1751*, focuses on historical substance abuse as potential moral panic through exploration of the so called gin craze which gripped London, and in spells its press, from the 1720s to the 1750s. To the population of the capital, in the late seventeenth century, Geneva, or gin as it became known, was embraced as an exotic 'foreign' luxury, to many a medicinal tonic welcomed by the renowned nation of drinkers.

However, following an supremely successful public policy initiative by the government to stimulate Britain's corn market via increased distillation and the encouragement of consumption of the spirit, it became apparent that the drink had been transformed from former indulgence into cheap social ill, with a powerful reform movement campaigning for legislative intervention and prohibition, which would eventually include Fielding and Hogarth. This chapter includes an examination of the revenue imperative and the human cost of the gin craze, which at its height is perhaps best depicted in Hogarth's shocking painting *Gin Lane,* 1751. A strategic moralising image of the time, identified by many as illustrative of mid-century London in moral decline. The impact of this painting as metaphor, icon, and social denunciation is analysed alongside other key materials, including the Petitions of the Middlesex Justices held at the LMA, the Court Minute Books of the London Company of Distillers, held at the Guildhall Library, and several 'Death of Madame Geneva' satires held at the British Museum. Of particular interest within this chapter is the use of reactive and incremental legislation to assuage moral concern, with a series of increasingly punitive statutes passed to regulate and attempt to control consumption in between 1729 and 1751 without apparent success. It is argued that the urban poor did not share the government's view as to the serious nature of this particular outcry, and that it was only diminished by a combination of moral entrepreneurship, fear of crime, and recession.

Chapter 5 *Morality amid monstrosity: The London Monster panic, 1790*, this final case-study examines the case of a perennial folk devil, the predatory sex attacker. Between the spring of 1788 and summer of 1790 fifty seven complaints were made to London Magistrates by women alleging that they had been molested and stabbed by an individual stranger in public. This chapter contends that the effect of these apparently random violent assaults was to draw parallels to earlier folk devils (including earlier the Mohocks and Whipping Tom cases) which suggests that they were by now established as cultural symbols of panic, watchwords for disruption for the people of London. In turn, the attacks were seized upon by moral entrepreneurs, public figures and the media as an appropriate new focus for condemnation. Press and public anxiety was thus shifted from enduring concern over the gathering mob in the aftermath of the Gordon Riots and the escalating situation in France, to public galvanisation in the search for the 'Monster' as this

new menace was christened. Alongside the multitude of press and pamphlets that covered this case, supporting research includes the content of the remarkable Banks Scrapbook of London ephemera at the British Library, the notes of the Monster trial Judge, William Mainwaring held at the National Archive, trial transcripts from the Old Bailey (digitised), and the reading of a series of print satires at the British Museum. As the phenomenon took hold of public consciousness it became ingrained in London's collective psyche; newspapers, pamphlets, ballads and posters communicated the growing hysteria to eager consumers. This chapter re-examines the case and researches it as an example of a media led campaign to agitate, or at the very least stimulate moral panic amongst the populace of London. It is argued that the Monster case was more than a processual press led panic, with its roots firmly grounded in morality and public activism. This novel focus allows for a number of current parallels to be explored, in terms of public fear, police incompetence, press frenzy and the galvanised need for conviction amid what we would now term trial by media.

Chapter 1

The shaping of opinion: Literacy, media, and folk devils in eighteenth-century London

To us, who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are supplied from day to day with materials for conversation, it is difficult to conceive how man can consist without a news-paper, or to what entertainment companies can assemble, in those wide regions of the earth that have neither Chronicles nor Magazines, neither Gazettes nor Advertisers, neither Journals nor Evening-Posts…Journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning.

Samuel Johnson, 1758.[1]

Eighteenth-century London as public sphere

Observable moral panic and the creation of contemporary folk devils requires the harnessing of public opinion by what might be termed 'media'. Media is seen to be necessary and causal in all moral panics, communication providing the impetus to wider discovery and resultant hysteria. Whilst an accepted term in current sociological discourse, and an essential apparatus in the deployment of the theory, media as a concept is rightly contested by historians in terms of historical representation, relevance and significance. Thus, when considering early modern models of moral panic it is necessary to understand the type of media in existence and evaluate both its use and application in terms of literate, oral, and visual models. A need to ascertain which methods of mass communication are observable? Of central importance to this understanding in terms of eighteenth-century London, is the work of Jürgen Habermas on the development of public opinion via public

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[1] S. Johnson, *Idler,* 7, 27 May 1758.

sphere as the catalyst of the burgeoning concept of mass media. Habermas in the first part of his *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*[2] uses this period of early modern England as a model to chart the development of the post Renaissance public sphere and consequently public opinion. During this period, he argues, England can be viewed as the driving force towards the creation of the public sphere in Europe, with London as its epicentre. According to Habermas the original impetus behind what we now regard as the public sphere was mercantile, with the need for accurate market information and reliable intelligence required and requested by entrepreneurs and merchants looking to develop business opportunities domestically and internationally - the newly fashionable coffee houses, Masonic lodges, alehouses and public spaces of London often providing situs. Such conversations, away from official gaze, included matters of politics, philosophy, culture and matters of society alongside venture capitalism. This was founded on an earlier tradition of novel reading amongst the middling sort, which encompassed and encouraged both sense and sensibility; enabling subjective discussions based upon moral reflection and satire of the self. Above all else, an awareness of the world at large.[3]

Moreover, Libertarian momentum was provided via the available, energetic and influential literature of a procession of Enlightenment thinkers, primarily Hobbes and Locke in England, with continental flavour provided by Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Kant. For Habermas the development of the public sphere in early eighteenth century Europe saw the withering away of status loaded representational culture, symbolised by absolute monarchy and the suppression of subjects.[4] This was replaced by a movement towards the creation of public opinion, albeit initially bourgeois public opinion, tolerating a more critically conscious view of the workings of the State, ushering in as Cowan has suggested, a golden age of uncorrupted public

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[2] J. Habermas (1992) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Borgeoius Society,* London: Polity. Translated from the original German (1962) *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft.*
[3] See, D. Randall 'Ethos, Poetics, and the Literary Public Sphere' in *Modern Language Quarterly,* (2008), 69(2), pp. 221–243.
[4] Habermas uses the example of King Louis XIV's Palace of Versailles, built by in 1682, as a tangible example of representational culture – a super-human edifice designed to overwhelm visitors and cow the French populace in equal measure. Attempts to uphold representational culture in France throughout the eighteenth century are seen as a causative factor in the French Revolution.

opinion.[5]   Thus, with the establishment of a public sphere allowing public opinion and the right to criticise, a key tenet of moral panic theory as a device for historiography is established; the capacity of *identification and discovery*. Bringing about a participatory forum, and allowing for the creation of moral crusaders and moral entrepreneurs.

Literacy, oral culture, idea transmission

Within this golden age, which describes a move away from oral and folk tradition towards the literary, the role and development of literacy and media is clearly fundamental in augmenting and strengthening the public voice, and consequently processing *identification, discovery,* and *reaction.* Essentially England at the turn of the eighteenth-century had witnessed an unprecedented increase in print, the ability to read and purchase it, as Fox argues:

> Throughout this period, the governors of Church and State repeatedly warned 'the vulgar' against busying their heads with talk of politics, for such things were above them and none of their concern. By the end of the seventeenth century such warnings were being drowned out by a chorus of people reading aloud, asking for news, and expressing opinion.[6]

In fact the Church and State in early modern England may have unwittingly initiated the pathway to popular literacy with Henry VIII's Sovereign endorsement as the word of God of Miles Coverdale's translation and printing of the Bible in 1535,[7] and its subsequent reprinting as the official English Bible to be held in all parishes as a legal requirement by 1538. This was followed by a series of officially approved religious tracts; including John Foxe's widely read rage against the viciousness of

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[5] B. Cowan 'What was Masculine about the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England' *History Workshop Journal*, (2001), 51(1), pp. 127-157.
[6] A. Fox (2000) *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700*, Oxford; Oxford University Press, page 405.
[7] David Cressy estimates that by 1600 the upper classes in England were virtually fully literate, and were joined by the mercantile and retail classes in this ability by the 1790s. He argues that London was a particular case in point, enjoying considerably higher levels of popular literacy than in the provinces, a disparity that encompassed gender as well as class, stating that 'the women of Mrs Aphra Behn's London were as literate as men in the countryside'. See, D. Cressy 'Literacy in context: meaning and measurement in early modern England' in J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.) (1993) *Consumption and the World of Goods*, London: Routledge, pp. 306-315.

Catholicism, *The Book of Martyrs*, 1563.[8] There were also moralistic calls to action towards a more culturally ingrained folk devil from an earlier creed, with a number of popular polemics on witches and witchcraft appearing towards the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth.[9] Similarly, books on prophecy and horoscopic astrology drew a large and loyal readership well into the eighteenth century, with *The Starry Messenger* 1645 and *Christian Astrology* 1647 by William Lilly,[10] *The British Merlin*[11] by Cardanus Rider, and *The Merlinus Almanac* by 'court physician' and 'astrological reformer' John Partridge, in wide circulation having been reprinted in their thousands.

The popularity of these treatises on the occult and the astrological almanacs in particular provides an interesting juxtaposition between late seventeenth century Protestant authoritarianism to early eighteenth century Liberal enlightenment, which is well captured in an exchange between the aging astrologer John Partridge and the satirist Jonathan Swift. Swift, in a parody of Partridge's speculative and typically erroneous 'death predictions' of notables in the coming year from his *Merlinus Almanac* of 1708, produced and distributed a letter containing a eulogy under the pseudonym of Isaac Bickerstaff, astrologer, predicting that Partridge would himself die on the 29 March 1708, the eulogy read:

Here five foot deep lyes on his back
A cobbler, starmonger, and quack…
Who to the stars in pure good-will,
Does to his best look upward still.
Weep all you customers that use
His pills, his almanacks or shoes.[12]

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[8] John Foxe (1563) *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, London: John Day. For context see T. Watt (1991) *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[9] These included printed ballads and engravings alongside authoritative books and trial narratives on the subject, such as: Reginald Scot (1584) *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, London: Richard Coates; Anon (1593) *The Most Strange and Admirable Discoverie of the Three Witches of Warboys*, London: Printed by the Widdowe Orwin; George Gifford (1593); *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes*, London: Percy Society; Anon (1612) *The Witches of Northamptonshire*, London: Thos. Purfoot; and, John Cotta (1616) *The Triall of Witchcraft*, London: George Purslowe.

[10] William Lilly (1601-1681) a protégé of Elias Ashmole and pioneer of 'Christian astrology' whose astrological texts were the first to be published in English rather than Latin. At the height of his popularity, Lilly was selling in excess of 30,000 astrological almanacs per annum, see B. Capp (1979) *Astrology and the Popular Press: English Almanacs 1500*-1800, *London: Faber & Faber.*

[11] 'Cardanus Rider' is thought to be a pseudonym for Richard Saunders, a seventeenth century astrologer and physician, his popular *British Merlin* was published in almanac form between 1656 and 1830.

[12] Jonathan Swift (1708) *Letter and Eulogy for John Partridge by Isaac Bickerstaff*, see C. Fox (2003) *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swift's savage satire was immediately seized upon and subsequently reprinted in a variety of forms to assist in the defamation of Partridge, and in a wider sense to communicate a growing discontent with both the limited nature and often implicit quackery of much of what passed for popular print culture at the time.

As the eighteenth century progressed London became a literary centre, with book publication in the city quadrupling between 1700 and 1790.[13]   Indeed, Weatherill, through a series of detailed inventories, charts literacy growth and social class between 1675 and 1725. Her findings *inter alia* show that within this fifty year period fifty percent of merchant classes owned books, thirty seven percent of shopkeepers, fifteen percent of weavers, and nine percent of carpenters, indicative of artisan as well as professional class possession. The figures for book ownership by county, are similarly striking, and demonstrate that by 1725 fifty two percent of national book ownership was concentrated in London, a meteoric rise from eighteen percent in 1675.[14] Middling class access to an increasing variety of literature was also augmented by the creation of private lending, or circulating, libraries in the Capital offering book loans at competitive rates. Prominent amongst these were The London Library, John Bell's British Library, Hookham's Library, and Ryves's quarterly circulating library. These establishments were seen as an exceptional modern amenity for London, particularly by voracious middle class readers, and the developing professional writing class, with consumers often borrowing by the foot or the basketful. The holdings of these enterprises were impressive, with Bell's catalogue increasing from ten thousand books in 1771 to more than one hundred and fifty thousand in 1793,[15] ensuring that his clientele had access to their favourite authors, the latest editions, and fashionable opinion.

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[13] See, C. McIntosh (1998) *The Evolution of English Prose, 1700-1800: Style, Politeness, and Print Culture,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, page 36.

[14] L. Weatherill (1988) *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain 1660-176,* London: Routledge. In terms of book ownership by social class in England between 1675-1725 Weatherill lists the following trades and professions as holding ownership of books by volume: Merchants 50%, Drapers and mercers 43%, Shopkeepers 37%, Tailors 22%, Innkeepers 19%, Mariners 18% , Butchers 16%, Shoemakers 16%, Weavers 15%, Blacksmiths 10%, and Carpenters 9%, page 188. The summary of national book ownership in 1725 shows London leading the way with 52%, East Kent 28%, the North West 15%, Cumbria 15%, and the North-West Midlands 9%, p.49.

[15] See, J. White (2012) *London in the Eighteen Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing,* London: The Bodley Head, pp. 257-258.

However, the ability to participate in such urbane entertainment was not universal, with around half of the British population illiterate and still reliant on oral culture at the beginning of the eighteenth-century.[16] John Rule estimates that around a third of labouring males and one sixth of females were literate in the final three decades of the seventeenth century,[17] a figure supported by Fox.[18] Social context is provided by Wrightson: 'In 1580 illiteracy was a characteristic of the vast majority of the common people of England. By 1680 it was a special characteristic of the poor.'[19] This paints a rather bleak picture, with life chances in terms of education very much dependent on individual trade and geography, which remained constant amongst the labouring poor until the latter quarter of the eighteenth century.[20] Many within the poorer classes got by via a combination of oral culture and basic functional literacy, with the latter often used to anonymously share and air grievances,[21] as Rule goes on to argue: 'Eighteenth century England was a society in whose popular culture literate and oral means of creating and transmitting ideas coexisted.'[22] Indeed, for the majority of the working poor, literacy was likely to hold a lower practical and occupational value than numerical competence.[23]

Any functional education made available for the poor in the early decades of the eighteenth century would normally come at the hands of the local clergy as Bible study, or via the past pupils of clerics, and was thus at best rudimentary. A more formal provision, though once again highly dependent on occupation and location, came with the formation of the 'charity school movement' under the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (SPCK) between 1710 and 1730. The movement was founded on the principle of providing moral and spiritual guidance with a modicum of education to divert the children of the working poor from sin long

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[16] F. O'Gorman (2009) The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832, London: Arnold, p. 129.

[17] J. Rule (1992) *Albion's People: English Society 1714-1815*, London: Longman, p. 139.

[18] A. Fox (2000) *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 18-19.

[19] K. Wrightson (1988) English Society 1580-1680, London: Hutchinson, p. 220.

[20] See D. Vincent (1989) *Literacy and Popular Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 12-13.

[21] See E. P. Thompson 'The Crime of Anonymity' in D. Hay et al. (eds.) (1975) *op. cit.*, pp. 255-344.

[22] J. Rule (1992) op. cit., p. 140.

[23] C. McIntosh (1998) *The Evolution of English Prose, 1700-1800: Style, Politeness, and Print Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 23-26.

enough to see them into an apprenticeship or in service.[24] In fact, charity schools were viewed by a number of influential social commentators as meddlesome. Significant amongst these was Bernard Mandeville, who in his pamphlet *The Grumbling Hive or Knaves Turn'd Honest*[25] rallied against the concept of education for the masses via the metaphor of Britain as a beehive. In Mandeville's hive workers seeking knowledge are depicted as distracted dangerous lone bees (self-serving individualists), holding the ability to disrupt the efficient working of the colony by holding ideas above their station. The final paragraph of the couplet, which precedes a moralising conclusion, captures his dismissive stance towards plebian education well, it reads:

So few in the vast Hive remain;
The Hundredth part they can't maintain
Against th'Insults of numerous Foes;
Whom yet they valiantly oppose;
Till some well-fenced Retreat is found;
And here they die, or stand their Ground,
No Hireling in their Armies known;
But bravely fighting for their own;
Their Courage and Integrity
At last were crown'd with Victory.
They triumph'd not without their Cost,
For many Thousand Bees were lost.
Hard'ned with Toils, and Exercise
They counted Ease it self a Vice;
Which so improv'd their Temperance,
That to avoid Extravagance,
They flew into a hollow tree,
Blest with content and Honesty.[26]

Mandeville's scorn was in turn attacked by supporters of the charity schools movement, foremost amongst them William Hendley, who argued in his pamphlet, *Defense of the Charity Schools* (1725)[27] that it was both desirable and possible to curb the atavistic criminalistic urges of the poor by exposing them to Christian

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[24] See M. G. Jones (1938) *The Charity School Movement: A Study of Eighteenth-century Puritanism in Action*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[25] Published in 1714, and regularly reprinted until 1790 under its short title *The Festival of Bees*.
[26] Bernard Mandeville (1714) *The Fable of the Bees*, London: J. Roberts.
[27] Full title: William Hendley (1725) *A defence of the charity-schools. Wherein the many false, scandalous and malicious objections of those advocates for ignorance and irreligion, the author of The fable of the bees, and Cato's letter in the British Journal, June 15. 1723. are fully and distinctly answer'd; ... To which is added by way of appendix, the presentment of the Grand Jury of the British Journal, ... 1723.* London: W. Hendley.

scripture. Such education would improve both morality and manners, and transpose such subjects into a disciplined and docile workforce.[28] Hendley's view was at best partisan and optimistic, with many of those subjected to the charity school system, or exposed to attempted amateur religious instruction generally, sharing Mandeville's assertion that education held the potential to distract the poor from their daily toil. Consequently, with many pupils contemptuous of the chore of reading as an intruding force in a busy working day, most of the moral education provided by the Charity Schools Movement (CSM) was directed towards a captive audience of unfortunate children; those who found themselves at the mercy of the workhouse.[29]

However, James Walvin has argued convincingly that the importance of literacy in early modern England is often overvalued by historians, given that non-literates are likely to have been kept abreast of important experiences and affairs by the passing on of folklore, through the word of mouth of literate family members and peers. This was augmented by the tradition of amateur and professional reading aloud in public,[30] normally in the local tavern, which he identifies as a potential hive of information, gossip and rumour.[31] Shoemaker affirms that this was very much the case in London:

> Virtually all Londoners born after the Restoration could read or knew someone who could. Since reading was typically a sociable rather than a solitary experience, whether in coffeehouses, alehouses or at home, and hawkers frequently sung ballads on the streets, few Londoners were untouched by the written word.[32]

Amongst the artisans, journeymen and shopkeepers literacy rates were significantly higher, at around eighty per cent into the final two decades of the seventeenth century, a figure once again seen as consistent throughout the century

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[28] See, L. Schneider (ed.) (1987) *Paradox and Society: The Work of Bernard Mandeville*, New York: Gruyter, pp. 145-147.

[29] E. P. Thompson (1991) *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp. 377-378.

[30] In terms of professional readers, ballad singers could be engaged in ale houses and coffee houses to provide a vocal version of the latest popular news.

[31] Walvin (1984) *op. cit.*, page 93. See also M. Hailwood (2014) *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England*, Martlesham: Boydell Press.

[32] R. Shoemaker (2004) *The London Mob: Violence and Disorder in Eighteenth-Century England*, London: Hambledon Continuum, p. 242.

that followed. A primary reason for this was exposure to the apprenticeship system, whereby alongside their trade craft, apprentices were taught how to undertake basic accounts, keep records, and compile books of prices. A further vehicle for formative education was the nascent trade-union system at the beginning of the eighteenth-century, with members sharing responsibility and guidance for record keeping in terms of membership, grievances, petitions and disputes. Indeed, even as early as the 1720s literacy amongst union members had already reached the point where the journeymen tailors of London and the Devonshire serge weavers were able to formally submit petitions to Parliament.[33] Such significant popular development was not passed over by the flourishing press pack, as Rule contends: 'Apprentices were probably among the significant consumers of the popular literature of chapbooks, broad-sheets and the Newgate 'confessions' of condemned malefactors.'[34] By the end of the eighteenth century around sixty seven percent of English men and fifty percent of women could read,[35] with figures significantly higher in London, and those that could not read having regular access to those who could.[36] For members of the lower orders, readily available reading material printed in English and access to readers within their social circle had brought about an appetite for information, the importance of being aware of what was happening beyond your community, and the ability to form an opinion based upon it.[37]

The significance of imagery to consensus of morality

Furthermore, alongside oral culture, the expansion of print and printing technology brought with it visual depiction as well as the written word; this ranged from crude single sheet drawings and caricatures of notables, to highly detailed topical cartoons and illustrations, many available for purchase as prints. The momentum of the Enlightenment and the establishment of hostilities in Tory versus Whig politics had fueled a revival of satire in England in the first decade of the eighteenth-century. The written outputs of the famous members of the satirists *Scriblerus Club*,[38] were

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[33] In 1720 and 1725, respectively.
[34] Rule (1992) *op. cit.*, p. 141.
[35] C. McIntosh (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 171. See also R. S. Schofield 'Dimensions of illiteracy, 1750-1850' *Explorations in Economic History*, (1973), 10, pp. 437- 454.
[36] Shoemaker (2007) *op cit.,* p. 242.
[37] McIntosh (1998) *op. cit.*, p. 24.
[38] Including Jonathan Swift, John Gay, Alexander Pope, John Arbuthnot, Thomas Parnell, and Henry St John. The aim of the club was to satirise abuses of literature and learning. Later, Henry Fielding

soon given pictorial impact by groundbreaking satirical artists and cartoonists, foremost amongst them as cultural bookends to the century, William Hogarth and James Gillray. The news, social criticism, and moral subjectivity communicated by these men in their work, possessed far greater reach than the written word, and could effectively be 'read,' that is to say be understood, by both the literate and illiterate members of London society.

By the time Hogarth, who had trained as a printer-engraver, was self-producing popular prints for sale from his engravings in the early 1720s, the techniques he was using had been in place for over a century.[39] Hogarth possessed a critical eye for detail and ensured that every aspect of his work, which contained highly complex compositions, characters, and their messages, was faithfully depicted and clearly reproduced. Once established, what set Hogarth apart was that he was producing prints in great numbers and pricing them competitively to be available to the aspirant working class, as well as his core market with the middling classes. Similarly, his prints were purchased and displayed by the proprietors of coffeehouses, alehouses, and shops in large numbers to serve as conversation pieces for customers.[40]

Like his literary contemporaries, Hogarth's satirical edge could be cutting, and his work can be best described in classical terms as *Juvenalian* in contrast to the majority of artist-satirists who preceded him, who had favoured a safer, *Horatian* methodology.[41] Hogarth refused to play it safe, and his earliest circulated satirical work Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme, released in 1721, was a brutal and complex depiction of the various personalities and causative factors of the disastrous South Sea Bubble Crash in 1720. Other early moral targets over the following decade included the London lottery, freemasonry, and the various vanities

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would adopt the pseudonym *Scriblerus Secundus* when writing incognito. See, A. Marshall (2013) *The Practice of Satire in England, 1658-1770*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

[39] See, A. Griffiths (1996), *Landmarks in Print Collecting: connoisseurs and donors at the British Museum since 1753,* London: British Museum Press.

[40] B. Fort and A. Rosenthal (eds.) (2001) *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 224-225.

[41] *Juvenalian* satire, or hard satire is characterised by merciless or savage ridicule, whereas the *Horatian* model is softer and more light-hearted, focussing on absurdity and imprudence. Many eighteenth century writers, such as Swift (traditionally Juvenalian), Defoe, and Pope (traditionally Horatian) could flit between the two disciplines depending on subject matter and audience. See H. D. Weinbrot (2007) *Eighteenth-Century Satire: Essays on Text and Context from Dryden to Peter Pindar*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 136.

of the London theatre.[42] His lifelong fascination with depicting London life, high and low, was forged during the late 1720s, a period which included a group of paintings life modelled by characters drawn from London's criminal underworld produced as an accompaniment to John Gay's satirical ballad opera, *The Beggar's Opera*, 1728.

Hogarth's reputation as London's graphic storyteller was strengthened further in the 1730s with a further series of nine satirical engravings for general sale, including depictions of the 'Grub Street' (i.e. gutter) press in The Distrest Poet, 1736, and a snapshot of four aspects of social life in *The Four Times of the Day,* 1738.[43] However, it was through the medium of painting during this era that Hogarth produced what would become his most powerful moralising works. This came via a series of 'sequence' paintings, showing the pitiless 'progress' or moreover, downfall,[44] of various stock subjects that were instantly recognisable to his fellow Londoners. With the city itself a central, frequently menacing or passively callous, character in every frame.

The first of these was a metaphor of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, entitled *The Harlot's Progress*, a sequence of six large canvases, finished in 1731 and sold as engravings in 1732. The sequence shows the downfall of a young country girl, Mary Hackabout, who following her arrival in London is procured into prostitution, and after experiencing the various classes of that occupation, is jailed in the London Bridewell, suffers the agony of syphilis, and dies aged 23, leaving an infant son destitute. Following the critical and commercial success of *The Harlot's Progress*, Hogarth produced an eight canvas series entitled *The Rake's Progress*, finished in 1733 and sold as engravings in 1734. Building on the didactic theme of their predecessor the paintings depict the life of the incorrigible Tom Rakewell, a gentrified dandy and heir to a hard-earned fortune who arrives in London, keen to

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[42]*The Lottery; The Mystery of Masonry brought to Light by the Gormogon; A Just View of the British Stage; and, Masquerades and Operas.* Hogarth produced and released all of these works during 1724.

[43] These nine engravings were: *A Midnight Modern Conversation* (1733); *Southwark Fair* (1733); *The Sleeping Congregation* (1736); *Before* and *After* (1736); *Scholars at a Lecture* (1736); *The Company of Undertakers (Consultation of Quacks)* (1736); *The Distrest Poet* (1736); *Strolling Actresses Dressing in a Barn* (1738); and, *The Four Times of the Day* (1738).

[44] Kurz argues persuasively that Hogarth's concept of morality in his series groups was influenced by earlier Italian narratives in painting which centred on the 'fruitful moment' a moment of choice that becomes the moment of truth, see H. Kurz 'Italian Models of Hogarth's Picture Stories' *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* (1952), 15 (3/4), pp. 136-168.

experience all of the worldly delights that the growing metropolis has on offer. As the series progresses, Hogarth places Rakewell in various social settings where he is relieved of his morals and money. These include an entourage, a brothel, and a gambling den, before spiraling into debt, taking him first to the Fleet Prison, where he loses his tenuous grip on reality, and finally on to Bedlam (fig. 1.). In his depictions of such recognisable archetypes, the whore and the rake, Hogarth is drawing London's collective eye toward the potential demons that walk amongst them. Moral message comes expressly from recognition on sight, a more personal, universal and powerful method than mediated or edited literature. The artist is showing the viewer the folk devils on the horizon, affixing labels to draw moral attention.[45]

The engravings produced from the Harlot's and the Rake's Progress sold in their thousands, and led to four more satirical series groups.[46] Hogarth's success in marketing morality drew imitators and heir-apparents. Significant amongst them, was James Gillray a practiced exponent of the *Juvenalian* arts and admirer of Hogarth, now seen as his natural successor.[47] Gillray would gain fame as a social and political caricaturist in the final twenty years of the eighteenth-century, generating a truly prolific output between 1792 and 1809.[48] Like Hogarth, Gillray's illustrations, which consisted primarily of etched cartoons, struck a moral chord with the London public. A situation exploited by his canny publisher, Hannah Humphrey, who drew large crowds and created a popular weekly attraction by displaying his latest cartoons in the window of her print shops on the Strand and in Old Bond Street and that of her brother, William, in Gerrard Street (fig. 2.).[49]

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[45] Cohen uses image as a component in his thesis, recognising it as having a reinforcing effect in terms of oral and print narratives (2002) *op. cit*., pp. 39-42. His position is strengthened by David Matza, in *Delinquency and Drift* (1964), London: John Wiley, who persuasively argues that an effect of imagery, is to crystallise public perception of delinquency and deviance.

[46] These comprised: *Marriage à-la-mode*, six canvasses (1745); *Industry and Idleness*, twelve canvasses (1747); *Beer Street and Gin Lane*, two canvasses (1751), and; *The Four Stages of Cruelty*, four canvasses (1751).

[47] C. Banerji and D. Donald (eds.) (2009) *Gillray Observed: The Earliest Account of his Caricatures in London und Paris*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[48] It is estimated that Gillray may have produced at least topical 1000 cartoons in the period 1790-1800, and perhaps as many as 1500, by any standard a prolific output over a ten year period approaching two to three prints per week, see, R. T. Godfrey and M. Hallett (2001) *James Gillray: The Art of Caricature*, London: Tate Publishing.

[49] A common sales practice amongst print shops at the time which allowed a cross-section of the passing public to view and react to the latest image, an otherwise expensive media at the time.

Those who saw him work were astonished by the frenetic passion and speed in his process, expressed by his eventual successor as London's visual critic, George Cruikshank: 'His natural temperament was excitable. Sometimes he would at once etch a subject [directly] on the prepared copper plate. Unable even to submit to the process of drawing it upon paper. When etching he worked furiously.'[50] Cruikshank describes an expertly receptive and finely tuned visual media, operating in the latter decades of the eighteenth-century. A form of visual media able to react to public opinion and any changes to it, technology has been harnessed to quickly satisfy demand. Though unaligned, and seemingly unenamoured by party politics himself, Gillray's political satire was as unrelenting as it was fierce, encompassing vulgarity and wit.[51] His fundamental power was vested in the view that no individual was beyond the lens of satire, or within his caricatures, the pomposity busting power of his English everyman, John Bull. A symbolic motif for the British public, as to what constituted common-sense decency, and ascendant morality.

From popular press to watchman press

However, the single most significant development in garnering and expressing public opinion allied to increasing public literacy throughout eighteenth century England should undoubtedly be seen as the development of a prolific popular press. An overarching mass media enabling mass communication, which would radiate from London as the century progressed. The catalyst for its development, was the cessation of press licensing in 1695 following the refusal of Parliament to renew the draconian Licensing of the Press Act 1662, which was aimed at 'preventing the frequent abuses in printing seditious treasonable and unlicensed Bookes and Pamphlets and for regulating of Printing and Printing Presses.'[52] At the time of enactment, press freedom in Britain had been the subject of debate for half a century,

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Several contemporary prints jostling crowds of eager spectators pressed up against print shop windows exist dating from the 1760s, with both of the Humphreys' shops frequently appearing. This has recent historical parallel in the faces that pressed up against television shop windows in the 1950s and 1960s to catch sight of events depicted by moving image, perhaps the Mods and Rockers at Clacton in 1964, courtesy of the expensive visual media of the time.

[50] D. Hill (1966) *Fashionable Contrasts: Caricatures by James Gillray*, London: Phaidon Press, p. 16.
[51] As a compendium, see, T. Wright and R.H. Evans (1851) *A Historical and Descriptive Account of the Caricatures of James Gillray,* London: Henry G Bohn.
[52] The Licensing of the Press Act [1662], (14 Car. II. c. 33). *An Act for preventing the frequent Abuses in printing seditious treasonable and unlicensed Bookes and Pamphlets and for regulating of Printing and Printing Presses.*

with John Milton's pamphlet *Areopagita,* written at the time of the civil war, providing polemic, impetus and maxim: 'when as debtors and delinquents may walk abroad without a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible jailer in their title.'[53] The 1662 statute exacerbated this discontent, enabling a lucrative industry to develop around press censorship, with licenses issued by government appointed officials and all ownership of printing presses requiring the approval of the Stationers' Company, an exclusive guild of the City of London.

These restrictions ensured that the capital was restricted to a single state approved 'newspaper,' the *London Gazette*,[54] and that English authors could only publish via the implicit monopolies operated by the licensed publishers. This situation endured despite strong opposition led by John Locke,[55] and unfettered by the introduction of the Bill of Rights 1689. A status quo which existed until the end of the Parliamentary session in 1695 when the Licensing of the Press Act expired, and Parliament refused to renew. Thereafter, press censorship and regulation became a matter for the common law, in terms of libel, and statutory reform via the Statute of Anne, 1709.[56] The latter providing Britain's first law of copyright, which effectively brought about a radical power shift from publishers to authors. The product of this power shift in the last decade of the seventeenth-century, and the first of the eighteenth, was a veritable explosion of print media.[57]

Indeed, London at the beginning of the eighteenth century can be recognised as the birthplace of the modern news industry, in particular the concept of the daily newspaper. Starting with the *Daily Courant* introduced by Elizabeth Mallet in 1702, there were over a dozen daily newspaper choices for Londoners to wonder at, and swap, by the emergence of the Mohocks in 1712, and around fifty by the time of the London Monster case in the late 1780s. Within a decade of the establishment of the *Courant*, newspapers of varying quality were being printed daily, thrice a week, and weekly, with a weekly distribution estimation approaching two hundred thousand in

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[53] John Milton (1644) *Areopagitica; A speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing, to the Parlament of England*, London.

[54] Though referred to as a 'newspaper' the *London Gazette* at its inception in 1665 as the *Oxford Gazette* (due to a one year sojourn in that city to escape plague ridden London), was effectively a government journal of notices rather than 'news' circulated by subscription, and not available to a general readership. See, Black. (2001) *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

[55] See, R. *Deazley (2004) On the Origin of the Right to Copy, Oxford: Hart Publishing.*

[56] The Statute of Anne [1709], The Copyright Act [1710], 8 Ann. c. 21.

[57] See, Shoemaker (2009) *op. cit.,* p. 242.

London and in terms of readership, the ability to reach a third of the population on matters major and minor.[58] As Cesare de Saussare observed in 1725: 'A husband will warn the public not to lend or sale his wife anything on credit, a quack will advertise that he can cure all ailments…by reading these papers you know all of the gossip and of everything that has been said and done in this big town.'[59]

Alongside the established *Courant*, popular titles in a variety of formats offering various affiliations were available, and included: *The Review*, which boasted Daniel Defoe amongst its columnists; *The Tatler* started by the Whig politician Richard Steele, alongside its adversary; *The Examiner* a short-lived but influential Tory mouthpiece edited by Viscount Bolingbroke whose co-editors included Jonathan Swift and Matthew Prior;[60] *The Spectator*, under the ownership of poet-politician Joseph Addison, and; *The Public Advertiser* home of the scathingly satirical Junius Letters. Towards the end of the century *The Daily Universal Register* which became popular as *The Times*, appeared, as did *The Observer*, a Sunday paper, thus providing London, by 1791 with seven day news coverage.[61] The more robust of these newspapers garnered a loyal readership and survived the introduction of an opportunistic stamp tax on their brisk success, imposed in 1712. This combination of exciting new media, commercial incentive, socially motivated commentators and voracious readership proved irresistible.[62]

The staple of the London press was politics, gossip, and scandal, with a majority of titles being owned directly by wealthy politically motivated proprietors, or being heavily influenced by political sponsors. Such possession bred opportunism, with many owners keen to discredit and scandalise opponents, whilst claiming the moral high ground for themselves, as Samuel Johnson remarked:

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[58] Accurate records of newspaper circulation taken from Stamp Duty returns are available from 1835. Earlier records indicate that London's most popular daily newspaper, The Morning Post, founded in 1772 was selling around 4000 copies per day by 1800, Anon. (1838) *The Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.* Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, London.

[59] César-François De Saussure (1725) in R. Porter (2001) *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900*, London: Reaktion, p. 27.

[60] See, F. H. Ellis 'Arthur Mainwaring as Reader of Swift's 'Examiner' *The Yearbook of English Studies, Special Edition, Literature and Its Audience,* (1981), 11 (2), pp. 49-66.

[61] In terms of publishing longevity, *The Daily Courant* (1702 – 1735), *The Review* (1704 – 1713), *The Tatler* (1709 - present), *The Examiner* (1710 - 1714), *The Spectator*, (1711 - present), *The Public Advertiser* (1713-1795), *The Daily Universal Register* / The Times (1785 - present), *and The* Observer (1791 - present).

[62] D. Lemmings in D. Lemmings and C. Walker (2009), *op cit.,* p. 246.

'without a wish for truth, or thought of decency.'[63] This reputation for partisanship, sensationalism, cruel humour and above all else a propensity for fabrication and dishonesty amongst London newspapers, led to the insulting sobriquet of 'Grub Street Press.' The Grub Street slur referred to the lowest end of the press market by reference to an impoverished area of London with garrets aplenty, frequented by 'hacks.' These garrets of Grub Street were populated by sub-literary writers for hire, mercenaries, unfettered by scruples, poised to turn around copy on request. As such they became a recurring satirical target for the likes of Hogarth,[64] Defoe and Swift as the 'Republica Grubstreetaria'[65] its residents having been immortalised by Ned Ward in 1698:

> The condition of an Author, is much like that of a Strumpet,...and if the Reason by requir'd, Why we betake our selves to so Scandalous a Profession as Whoring or Pamphleteering, the same exusive [sic] Answer will serve us both, viz. That the unhappy circumstances of a Narrow Fortune, hath forc'd us to do that for our Subsistence, which we are much asham'd of.[66]

However, condescension was not universally endorsed by the wider London public, and the Grub Street style of news reporting acquired a growing audience. Aiding a commercially motivated shift from a belligerent political focus to a penchant for libel and salacious scandal amongst the popular press. This was fuelled to a large extent by the breaking of frequently unsubstantiated news stories by word of mouth. A necessity given the character of the early reporting process, in that whilst the printer-proprietors of the pamphlets and newspapers can be described as professionals, the vast majority of reporters that they employed were amateur and recruited from the general public.[67] These 'public reporters' provided everything

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[63] Samuel Johnson, *The London Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, Saturday January 1, 1757.

[64] In William Hogarth's engraving *The Distrest Poet*, 1736, an impoverished and uninspired hack is shown in a garret in a distressed state, a copy of the Grub Street Journal lying at his feet.

[65] See, Jonathan Swift, Letters to and From, *A Monsieur Monsieur Hunter, Gentilhomme Anglois, a Paris*, London, March 27, 1708. From *The Works of the Rev. Jonathan Swift*, Arranged by Thomas Sheridan (1801) Volume XI, London: J. Johnson et al.

[66] H. W. *Troyer (1968) Ned Ward of Grub Street: A Study of Sub-Literary London in the Eighteenth Century, London: Routledge, p. 3.*

[67] The involvement of the 'public reporter' has seen a resurgence over the last twenty years due to the proliferation in ownership of internet enabled 'smart phone' devices and the public use of 'social media' to disseminate instant, uncensored information. The eighteenth century use of public reporters, provided unrestricted copy in a similar vein, and is of particular interest when considering Goode and Ben- Yehuda's grass roots (public generated hysteria) model of moral panic theory.

from eye witness accounts and stories, to reports, unnamed letters, and the endorsement of advertising 'puffs.' Here the Grub Street writers excelled, with the juicy gossip and dreadful detail from the streets of London, supplied by an increasingly enthusiastic proletarian reporter corps, and transformed into copy and print for purchase within an incredibly lean timescale. This system ensured that the press were both particularly responsive and particularly reactive to local interest stories involving perceived immorality, deviance, and crime.

Pre-Grub Street, stories of this nature, at turns mawkish and violent, had been a traditional staple of English popular culture for at least a century, best encapsulated in print within the lurid short stories of murder and lawlessness in Gilbert Mabbott's newsbook *The Perfect Diurnall*, which first appeared in the 1640s.[68] Newspaper crime reporting of a similar vein, soon proved to be a highly popular attraction for the buying public, with the reportage of individual cases often following a tried and tested pattern which had the potential to run over several editions. A typical editorial narrative would comprise the inclusion of gruesome detail to stimulate public curiosity, coupled with locality warnings for the wider public as potential victims, and threats of punishment for the offenders at large. As an example of such copy: 'Howard, the villain who was lately tried for intending to murder Mr. Mullay, and who has been sentenced to transportation for life, was an active conspirator in one of those gangs of swindlers, under the denomination of London money lenders, against whose artifices we have taken every opportunity of putting our readers on their guard.'[69] This enabled the press to adopt and develop a public guardian role, with a good deal of advertising space in early newspapers given over to prosecuting bodies seeking information or offering reward for the apprehension of criminals.[70]

Significantly, much press comment centered on the public censure and punishment of offenders, much as it does today, often decrying leniency or rallying the public to offensive action at the pillory. Press involvement in the appraisal of sentencing extended fully to capital punishment via a widespread 'gallows literature' in handbills, chapbooks, and newspapers, at turns celebrating the condemned

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[68] See, J. Raymond (1996) *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks 1641-1649*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 56.
[69] 'The Transportation of Howard the Villain' *Courier*, 12 March 1784.
[70] Black (2001), *op. cit.*, pp. 54-60.

individual's life, or indeed death whether untimely or fully justified, as Shoemaker argues: 'Print had the power both to accentuate and to undermine the intended public impact of official punishments, both during the event and long afterwards.'[71] Here we can identify a growth of public appetite for dramatic stories of crime and punishment, officialdom attuned to this appetite in terms of opportunities for social control, and perhaps for the first time a mass media that can attempt to commercially serve and satiate both.[72] Even if by doing so, the truth became distorted or indeed the particulars invented. Press misrepresentation at this juncture, was compounded by a style of reporting that tended to focus wholly on the individual pathology and indeed physiology of offenders, whilst ignoring social circumstances. Such individualisation provided persuasive early models of both criminality and crime control,[73] which steered the public towards a law and order perspective on crime and a liking for punitive solutions – the watchman press. The historical involvement of the press as arbiters of punishment has endured from this position, and moreover as the principal source of crime consciousness and arguably crime appetite.

In eighteenth-century London this consciousness was augmented by the vivid biographical broadsheets, ballads and chapbooks of notorious criminals of the day, supplemented by newspaper reports of their crimes and punishments. In turn, these sources which had originally been based on the monthly *Bulletin of Executions* compiled by the Custodian of Newgate Prison, were formed into collections for sale during the 1750s, and crystallised in a substantial compendium as the ubiquitous *Newgate Calendar* in 1773.[74] This book was seen by many as a guide against immorality and idleness, forming a moral trinity alongside the Bible and Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress* in a great many homes, its jarring rallying call against the progress and consequence of vice, vividly illustrated here in Hibbert's description of the original frontispiece to the book:

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[71] Shoemaker (2004) *op. cit.,* p. 260.
[72] J. Young 'Moral Panic: Its Origins in Resistance, Ressentiment and the Translation of Fantasy into Reality' *British Journal of Criminology*, (2009), 49, pp. 4-16.
[73] See, L. Wacquant 'Deadly symbiosis: When ghetto and prison meet and mesh' *Punishment & Society*, (2001), 3(1), pp. 95-133.
[74] The highly descriptive full title of the original volume being: *The Newgate Calendar; comprising interesting memoirs of the most notorious characters who have been convicted of outrages on the laws of England since the commencement of the eighteenth century; with anecdotes and last exclamations of sufferers.* An updated new edition of the book in four volumes appeared in 1824, which was updated further and relaunched as *The New Newgate Calendar* in 1826.

> To emphasize this professed purpose of their undertaking, a characteristic frontispiece to one late eighteenth-century edition showed an 'anxious mother', sitting in her parlour in front of statues of Justice, Wisdom, Temperance, and Fortitude, pointing through the window to a corpse hanging from a gibbet as, with a 'Parent's Care', she hands the book to her little son, 'tenderly entreating him to regard the Instructions therein recorded'.[75]

The personality, nature, and topography of the great city provided ideal conditions for innovative varieties of crime, deviance, and vice to flourish, in many ways replicating the hothouse effect on exotic specimens of flora achieved by the processional patronage a series of Hanoverian monarchs further down the Thames at Kew.[76] Consequently, the moralistic sensationalism provided by *The Newgate Calendar* ensured that the London public's appetite for the brand of amplified crime reporting characterised by the Grub street press, and that its lasting popularity would endure.

Unearthing the origins of folk devils: Beyond the Newgate Calendar

As well as moral sensationalism, a further legacy of the *Calendar*, along with the London press and the razor-sharp graphic satirists of the eighteenth-century is that they provide explicit markers of the popular folk devils of their day. Cohen's 'folk devil' is a mutable and hybrid term that has been historically used to describe an individual, or a class of individuals, who can be identified as a threat to societal values and interests. As such, folk devils can be described as 'unambiguously unfavourable symbols'[77] which at times can lead to what Goode and Ben-Yehuda liken to demonology.[78] This identification carries moral weight and moreover embodies 'all that is wrong with society' at any given time. In modernity, the social discovery of the folk devil is often stylised by public response with protagonists providing a series of symbols for the watchman media, such as lifestyle choices that could be seen as 'deviant' or 'different' from the norm, and within historical context, words such as 'rake' or 'whore' or 'monster' which would come to symbolise a certain delinquent status - these acts of symbolisation are key variables in the

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[75] C. Hibbert, introduction to the (1991) edition, *The Newgate Calendar*, London: Sphere, page x.
[76] See, D. Blomfield (1994) *Kew Past*, London: Phillimore; and, E. Walford *(1883) "Kew" Greater London, London: Cassell.*
[77] R. H. Turner and S. J. Surace 'Zoot-suiters and Mexicans: Symbols in crowd behaviour' *American Journal of Sociology*, (1956), 62, July, pp. 16-20.
[78] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

creation of folk devils. Furthermore, the role and continued interest of the media is crucially important in the reporting, distortion, and exaggeration of events involving folk devils, frequently predicting new outbreaks of deviant behaviour and providing the public with a valuable forecast of future threat. These forecasts in turn produce societal reaction to the perceived threat brought by the folk devil, such as public fear and hysteria, greater public security and parish constabulary / watch vigilance and statutory prohibition, alongside public campaigns to raise awareness of apparent danger.

A fundamental tenet of the processual model of moral panic theory is that media involvement in the social discovery of folk devils and the societal reaction to such a discovery is likely to result in further acts of symbolic deviance, rather than less. Consequently, the general public and those with responsibility for public order will react to folk devils in terms of the images and symbols offered up by the media. Thus individual perception of the group under scrutiny is often an act of confirmation in terms of both perceived threat and deviancy. A further important consideration of this theory is the role played by both public consumption of news and social change. With the former, the emergence of folk devils in the media provides a news value, which is utilised as strategic copy to arouse public interest - the staple product of Grub Street. Social change also plays a fundamental role, in that societies undergoing rapid social change are prone to feelings of fear, uncertainty, and threat amongst their members.

During such periods, folk devils can emerge as both symbol and cause of social problems, providing a robust and enduring theoretical concept for understanding historical reaction to contemporary deviance. No persuasive or compelling typology exists that explicitly describes eighteenth-century 'folk devils,' even though strong typologies exist for the centuries that immediately follow it. Furthermore, the term itself is not specifically considered or explained in the original study by Cohen (or indeed by the majority of those who have used it since), who refers to folk devils simply as: 'The objects of moral panic'[79] elaborating that society's new folk devils are predictable on the moral horizon, whilst their forebears

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[79] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, p. viii.

act as warning signs of traditional danger.[80] The accepted definition is that of a person identified as a moral blight, or bad influence on society, and the word itself alludes to folklore, and is suggestive of traditional beliefs, norms, and community custom. Cohen's reference to the objects of traditional danger acting as warning signs suggests established socially sanctioned common knowledge (consensus) regarding the identity of the folk devils in our midst at any given time period. Thus, when considering the folk devils that existed in eighteenth century London one must subjectively select from those perceived as a significant threat to polite society and order at that time.[81]

For the law abiding across all social classes there were growing concerns over an increasingly apparent descent into immorality and lawlessness as the century developed. This was fuelled to a large extent by newspapers bearing stories of immorality and disorder in England and revolution overseas, which lead to doleful forecasting 'if poor people are suffered to make laws for themselves, we shall shortly have no government in this country.'[82] The high level of public anxiety was also fuelled by sensationalist reporting and a mix of loose fact and sordid fiction, which saw criminals vested with both unearthly power and abnormal stamina.[83] There were of course powerful cultural reference points from earlier centuries and established concepts of folk devils, particularly if we accept Cohen's view that society's new folk devils are predictable on the moral horizon, whilst their forebears act as warning signs of traditional danger. This view is supported by Watt, who argues that folkways and folklore permit societies 'to absorb new beliefs while retaining old ones to forge hybrid forms, to accommodate contradictions and

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[80] Here he lists a typology of new (and traditional) folk devils, relevant to British society at the beginning of the 21st century – *young working class violent males, drug takers, child sexual abusers, media effects, welfare cheats and single mothers, refugees and asylum seekers.*

[81] The list of folk devils used is subjective in terms of the direction of the dissertation. Other popular folk devils of the eighteenth century were 'foreigners' (particularly the French) and all manner of 'radicals' within the political sphere including Jacobite and Catholic sympathisers, see in particular C. Emsley (2000) *Britain and the French Revolution,* London: Longman; and, A. Burns and J. Innes (eds.) (2003) *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780-1850*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[82] J. Godber (ed.) (1970) 'Some Documents Relating to Riots [1796]' *Miscellanea, Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society*, 49, 1970.

[83] Such traits are observable in a series of satirical treatments, notably John Gay's *The Mohocks* (1712) and *The Beggars Opera* (1728); Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722); and, Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743).

ambiguities.'[84] Traditional danger in this instance extended to the supernatural, which situates Cohen's choice of the word *devil* as the appropriate compliment to *folk*. A position complimented by Goode and Ben-Yehuda's historiographic intimation of *demonology.*

According to Oldridge, by the early seventeenth century a (Protestant) conception of the Devil as a spiritual force had emerged in England, replacing earlier models which depicted the Devil in physical form, often as a wolf, a bear, a bat, or an owl.[85] Here, there is both theology and politics at play, with Protestant priests possessing a vested interest in the belief of demonic possession, and their ability to exorcise it. Thus, many popular folk devils of the mid-seventeenth century needed to appeal to both religious faith and political principles. This can be seen in the flood of anti-Catholic tracts from the middle decades of the seventeenth century, depicting both the pope as the Devil and his popish followers as possessed folk devils.[86] As Oldridge argues 'Popular images of Satan could be easily yoked to the cause of anti-popery, despite the differences between Protestant and folkloric ideas about the Devil. This process was encouraged by the need to communicate the anti-Catholic message to a semi-literate population, for whom pictures of Satan, often based on traditional images, could serve as an effective propaganda tool.'[87]

However, this idea of the Devil assuming human form and of individuals being possessed by evil spiritual forces was an established folk devil in England in the form of witches. Here too, the seventeenth century saw an ideological change linking witchcraft to immorality and diabolical power and thus diluting (somewhat) the traditional stereotype described by Gaskill 'English witches were usually elderly widows dependent on neighbourly charity, and thus were suspected of resenting those who refused them…accusations were not made randomly, but focused on specific misfortunes and suspects with whom victims had lately had dealings – often

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[84] T. Watt (1994) *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 126..

[85] See, Anon. (1641) *Satan Appears as a Bear in Most Fearful and Strange Newes from the Bishoppricke of Durham*, London, pp. 4-5.

[86] See for instance, L. Southerne (1642) *Fearful News from Coventry*, London, pp. 5-6.

[87] D. Oldridge (2000) 'Protestant Conceptions of the Devil in Early Stuart England' *History*, (2000), 85(278), p. 244.

women with an existing reputation for witchcraft or cunning magic.'[88] The stereotype of this time can be seen as very much a subjective amalgam of beliefs, comprising a mix of pseudo religion, Christian scripture, paganism, and folklore, and whilst contemporary witch hunts were often elite led, they required no invention of demonology for public consumption, the propaganda had been communicated.[89]

This had much to do with a quest for rationality, and whilst the law had intervened in passing the Witchcraft Act 1604, this statute, like its predecessors, was ambiguous and unwieldy in its charges, providing disordered categorisations of offences and offenders. However, the 1604 Act contained provisions that acted as a catalyst for significant social change and symbolisation; taking the offence from the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical court and placing it within the secular realm of the common law. This change meant that witchcraft was seen at law as a felony, allowing the accused the procedural protection of the criminal process.

According to Hall, the turning point in the historiography of European witchcraft came when scientific historians in the late seventeenth century were unable to rationalise its practice, thereby seeing it as a superstition which violated common sense,[90] a position advocated by Hallywell in 1681: 'the existence of Devils and evil Spirits, their Possessions of the Bodies of men, of Ghosts and Apparitions, and the feats and practices of Witches, shall be confuted with a loud laughter or a supercilious look, as if these things were only the delusions of a distempered imagination.'[91] Such appeals to rationality and common sense were well established by the early eighteenth century, and took tangible form in the Witchcraft Act 1735. This symbolic statute sought to bring to an end the perception of Witchcraft as a supernatural, demonic, or indeed criminal act, changing the status of witch from criminal to charlatan.

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[88] M. Gaskill (2002) Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 34. Here Gaskill draws on the influential work of Macfarlane and Thomas – A. Macfarlane (2012) *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study*, London: Waveland Press; and, K. Thomas (1991) *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, London: Penguin.
[89] See in particular, N. Cohn (1975) *Europe's Inner Demons: An Inquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt*, New York: Basic Books.
[90] D. D. Hall 'Witchcraft and the Limits of Interpretation' *The New England Quarterly*, (1985) 58(2), pp. 253-281.
[91] H. Hallywell (1681) *Melampronoea: Or a Discourse of the Polity and Kingdom of Darkness*, London: Printed for Walter Kessleby, p. 3.

However, the creation of this enlightened statute did not provide a convenient social panacea to fully eradicate the demonic magic of the previous century with a combination of religious sympathy and legal rationality. Gaskill argues that the English population of the early eighteenth century held a variety of opinions simultaneously on the social problem of witchcraft and the supernatural, neither believing nor disbelieving.[92] Indeed, many must have withheld strong socialised opinions through fear of being seen as ridiculous or godless, stimulating an impetus to recognise old demons and supplant their traits into new folk devils. Thus, the population of London, swelled with job-seeking rural youth, would likely retain a superstitious reaction to the types of deviance which could be perceived as devilment. An irrationality that in the right circumstances could circumvent education and transcend social class. Such public recognition and denouncement of deviance is key in terms of moral panic theory, with Goode and Ben-Yehuda suggesting that preternatural labels such as 'witch' 'devil' and 'demon' are a clear response to a counter-religion, counter-ideology or counter-culture - an offence to social order, an attack on the establishment. Indeed, whereas Cohen's processual model encourages a broad interpretation of folk devils; the grassroots model is more explicit, highlighting the volatile power of demonic belief, particularly with reference to early-modern Europe.[93]

Latent demonology is observable throughout the printed and visual discourse of eighteenth-century London, with a scratch on its social surface enough to reveal the infection of superstition beneath. This focus can be traced to what Fox terms the strong 'historical imagination' within the oral traditions of the English formed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Traditions that provided a proliferation of stories and songs ensuring that folklore and superstition intermingled and endured, he states 'with the dissemination of so much cultural product in these centuries, both oral and written forms coexisted and overlapped to an inextricable extent.'[94] This folklore continuum was enjoyed and reproduced by the elite as well as the poor, albeit as Porter argues 'culturally repackaged' as art and literature.[95] Even amongst

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[92] Gaskill (2000) *op. cit*., p. 103.
[93] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994), *op. cit*, pp. 144-148.
[94] Fox (2000) *op. cit*., p. 214.
[95] R. Porter 'Witchcraft and Magic' in B. Ankarloo and S. Clark (eds.) (1999) *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p. 245.

the hardened hacks and enlightened satirists of the eighteenth-century a base focus on good versus evil was often offered, with evil exemplified or explained by possession, an intrinsic canker able to rob an individual of their senses, and sense of morality. This is clearly evident in the output of the pulpit and an interrelated officialdom linked to canon law, but also, notably in broader media. It can be read and seen in the narratives of Defoe, Hogarth,[96] and Fielding[97] (a later moral amalgam with a passion for the demonic would appear in William Blake),[98] influential intellectuals who might all be described as more earthy than godly. The polymathic and often poly-sceptical Defoe, in particular, had much to say about manifestations of the devil in human form, earnestly writing *The Political History of the Devil, As Well Ancient as Modern* in 1726, in which, amongst much else, he identifies the notion of Devil's 'inferior agents' and the various methods he takes to 'converse with mankind,' his tools and his government on earth.[99] Discussing the growing problem of crime Defoe states that Satan 'injects powerful Incentives to other Crimes [than murder], provokes Avarice, by laying a great Quantity of Gold in your View, and no body present, giving you an Opportunity to steal it…perhaps, knowing your Circumstances.' He goes on to use the folk story of a poverty stricken tradesman encountering a small child carrying a bag of gold and wearing a diamond necklace in a wood to emphasise his point – the adorned weak child being the devil, and the evil amounting to the temptation of the poor, an exploitation of their perceived inherent weakness.[100]

Within the sociological discourse, this point of abstraction of folk devils is developed by Meades, who argues that the concept has an inherent duality; existing both as a 'stylistic representation' of a condition, episode, person or group, and as a form of clear human conduct.[101] This duality reinforces the character of folk devils

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[96] Such as the demise of the increasingly 'possessed' Tom Rakewell, in the *Rake's Progress*.

[97] See in particular Fielding's use of allegory in his novel *Jonathan Wild* (1743), and R. H. Hopkins 'Language and Comic Play in Fielding's Jonathan Wild' *Criticism*, (1966), 8, p. 214.

[98] S. C. Behrendt (1992) *Reading William Blake*. London: Macmillan Press.

[99] Daniel Defoe (1726) *The Political History of the Devil, As Well Ancient as Modern, in Two Parts*, London: T. Warner, pp. 25-29.

[100] *Ibid*. pp. 354-355. See also L. Roper 'Evil Imaginings and Fantasies': Child-Witches and the End of the Witch Craze' *Past & Present*, (2000), 167, pp. 107-139, which focuses on the accusation of a group of rural children said to be child-witches and possessed by the Devil in Augsburg, Germany in 1723, which suggests that Defoe's choice of folk story may have had a contemporary European flavour.

[101] J. Meades 'The Duality of the Devil: Realism, relationalism and representation' in C. Krinsky (ed.) (2013) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Moral Panics*, London: Routledge, pp. 134-135.

possessing both natural human traits alongside supernatural tendencies, be they superhuman, inhuman or subhuman. Cohen's own view in his thesis was that such duality is usual, with the associated fears and anxieties expressed by the public rational throughout, but often based on fantasy and misrepresentation. Thus, the folk devil is bestowed with supernatural life by the media for public consumption when they are first discovered, and unable to defend themselves, their human identity is lost, or seen as irrelevant. For Cohen '[the folk devils] are hardly going to appear as 'real, live people' at all. They will be seen through the eyes of the societal reaction and in this reaction they tend to appear as disembodied objects, moreover, ethereal subjects, to be categorised, processed, and judged.[102]

Concluding thoughts

It is argued that the media landscape of eighteenth-century London offers a fertile and appropriate transitional site for Habermas's concept of the bourgeois public sphere. A structural vehicle which led to the establishment of what might be described as a mediated public voice. For Habermas, the central focus is very much on the elite, charting the growth of political liberalism in a society moving inexorably towards industrial capitalism and consumerism. However, it is during its pre-industrial stage at the turn of the eighteenth-century that the public sphere in London emerges as vital, and reliant on all of its citizens as actors. This notion can be strengthened with reference to the work of Gerard Hauser who extended Habermas's cradle of public opinion to the discursive and vernacular, a space 'in which individuals and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment about them.'[103] The capital at this juncture can be identified as such a space. A receptive hub of social change and laissez-faire economics that quickly embraced new media to facilitate public consciousness and aid critical reflection. This was a society attempting to supplement the religious hegemony and narrow occultism of the previous century and move towards methods of discourse and models of social control befitting of a modern capital. A desire illustrated as metaphor in the remarkable exchange

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[102] Cohen (2002) *op cit*., p. 15.
[103] G. A. Hauser (1999) *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, p. 61.

between John Partridge and Jonathan Swift in 1708, with spirited travesty offered as an antidote for stale prophecy.[104]

What is clear from the detailed examination of contemporary sources in the foregoing is that a mass media structure capable of supporting both processual and grassroots moral panics not only existed, but propagated in a non-linear fashion. This built on oral and written traditions to encourage the use and ownership of books, all manner of print, including a varied newspaper industry and responsive press, and an unprecedented use of visual imagery.   Within London's literary culture, books were desired as commodities, and as such were read, owned, and lent by the literate and semi-literate alike.   Furthermore, the widespread illiteracy amongst the poor and labouring classes in London did little to hamper appetite for the consumption and digestion of news. With the opportunity to mediate provided, actively and passively, through the oral culture of peers and the proliferation of readers and gossip within shared public space - a society attuned to the word on the street and the chatter of the alehouse.

As the eighteenth century developed, print culture was to be supplemented by new technologies and concomitant growth in the commercial graphic arts. With fine detail able to convey ever more complex composition, image, and message, a generation of critical illustrators headed by Hogarth appeared to turn a looking glass towards their complex society. Individuals willing to make controversial choices of subject matter, and able to take their moral cues from below as well as above. Perpetual moral prompts also came with the establishment of a popular press which thrived at the frontier of a free-market ethic. The less noble members of its corps, being disposed to transfer focus from politics and information towards hearsay and entertainment, as competition intensified and sales required. Initiating what can be termed the newspaper industry and opportunistic pragmatism when *causes célèbres* materialised. During such times press response can be interpreted by the historian as a virtual drum beat. From this rich blend emerged a public taste for images and stories representing the immoral, the corrupt, the deviant, and the criminal. Thus the adaptive press, in its watchman state, was able to crusade for moral condemnation, or

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[104] The style of Swift's satirical rail against the irrationality of Partridge can also be identified in his earlier *Meditation Upon a Broomstick* (1701), London: Printed for E. Curll.

act as an intermediary between the public and the establishment in order to raise the hue and cry during periods of heightened panic over law and order. Here they are able to take stock, predict, and symbolise.

It is also evident that eighteenth-century Londoners exhibited a passion for the exotic, the notorious and the macabre. A taste manifested, perhaps, mid-century in the *Newgate Calendar*, but built on a catalogue of reported cases which owed cultural lineage to the demonology that had captivated previous generations.[105] Here an essential root of moral panic theory as a constituent of the earlier *labeling* theory is revealed, with infamy and nonconformity appearing as a classification which can be applied as a negative label or stereotype by the condemning majority, or worn as a badge of honour by the deviant minority.[106] Cohen describes those labelled as the 'disembodied' a group possessing spiritual force, which when placed within the context of early modern England reveals a strong cultural proximity to the preternatural.[107] The disembodied objects identified by Cohen as folk devils, anonymous demons, were plentiful in the teeming hive that represented London at the start of the eighteenth-century. The capital possessed a grim appetite for discovering and moralising over both folk devils and folk heroes, and the former in particular could be readily found amongst the swelling mob on city streets. However, in order to identify them, to observe the individual faces in the crowd, as Rudé might suggest,[108] there is a need to examine and seek to understand the structure, strain and personality of the society that delivered them and the city that branded them.

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[105] See in particular, B. P. Levack (1995) *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, London: Longman; and the anthropological approach devised by Margaret A. Murray exhibited in her (1921) *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe: A Study in Anthropology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, and (1954) *The Divine King of England: A Study in Anthropology*, London: Faber & Faber.

[106] Becker (1963) *op. cit*. See also G. H. Mead *(1934) Mind, Self, and Society, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.*

[107] See for example, John Brown (1678) *A Compleat Treatise of Preternatural Tumours, Both General and Particular*, London: printed by S. R. for R. Clavel.

[108] G. Rudé (1964) *The Crowd in History. A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730–1848*, New York: Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 2

This great and monstrous thing, called London

Now hardly here and there a hackney-coach
Appearing, showed the ruddy morn's approach.
Now Betty from her master's bed had flown,
And softly stole to discompose her own.

The slipshod 'prentice from his master's door
Had pared the dirt, and sprinkled round the floor.
Now Moll had whirled her mop with dext'rous airs,
Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.

The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
The kennel-edge, where wheels had worn the place.
The small-coal man was heard with cadence deep;
Till drowned in shriller notes of chimney sweep.

Duns at his lordship's gate began to meet;
And brickdust Moll had screamed through half a street.
The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees.
The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands;
And schoolboys lag with satchels in their hands.

Jonathan Swift[1]

Swift's sanguine poem *A Description of the Morning* portrays early eighteenth century London as a chaotic, spirited, and stirring place. In a companion piece, written the year after, *A Description of a City Shower*,[2] he was less enamoured but just as fascinated by the city, the last three lines reading: 'Sweepings from Butchers Stalls, Dung, Guts, and Blood, Drown'd Puppies, stinking Sprats, all drench'd in Mud, Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops come tumbling down the Flood.'[3] The prose in

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[1] J. Swift (1709) *A Description of the Morning.*
[2] This poem would later provide Hogarth with the inspiration for his own view of everyday London street life, *Four Times a Day* (1738).
[3] J. Swift (1710) *A Description of a City Shower.*

both views the metropolis as a petulant waking giant with echoes of Mandeville's grumbling hive, and so it was. London was exceptional, in its size and diversity, a demotic hub of social change, Defoe's great and monstrous thing.[4] In two centuries the population of the city at least doubled, twice over! Wrigley, using a variety of contemporary sources in his calculations,[5] estimated that between 1600 and 1700 the population of central London increased from two hundred thousand to five hundred and seventy five thousand, and stood at six hundred and seventy five thousand in 1750 and nine hundred thousand in 1800, his final calculation being based upon the 1801 census.[6] Wrigley estimated the population of England at mid-century point, 1750, to be just over six million, suggesting that over ten percent of the country's inhabitants were living in its Capital city.

Gregory King, an economic statistician and London's first official demographer had put the population at five hundred and twenty seven thousand souls in the mid-1680s, an estimate analogous to Wrigley's starting point for 1700.[7] Consultation of John Rocque's incredibly detailed twenty-four sheet map of 1746[8] (fig. 3.) shows a large rectangular urban mass situated mainly to the north of the Thames with the highest bend of the river as its axis, to the south development is spreading at a pace opposite London Bridge and the Tower.[9] The certainty is that London by 1700 was arguably the greatest and definitely the biggest city in Europe in terms of inhabitants and geographical size,[10] having overtaken Naples and Paris fifty years earlier and Constantinople, Peking, and Cairo by 1750.[11] This growth was aided by the comparatively compact size of the British Isles and England

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[4] D. Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 1724-26, Vol. I, p. 325.

[5] Although at best, these provide estimates, based on data provided by parish records, such as baptismal, marriage and death records, bills of mortality, and burial records.

[6] E. A. Wrigley 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750,' *Past and Present*, 37(2), p. 44. See also E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield (1981) *The Population History of England 1541-1871,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[7] Gregory King (1696) *Natural and Political Observations & Conclusions upon the State & Condition of England,* London.

[8] John Rocque (1746) *A plan of the cities of London and Westminster, and borough of Southwark,* the topographical survey being carried out by Rocque and the engraving by John Pine, a close friend of Hogarth. The resulting state of the art map, a tour de force, took almost a decade to undertake and produce, with work commencing in 1737.

[9] *The Encyclopedia Britannica or A Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, Compiled upon a New Plan in Three Volumes, Volume II*, Edinburgh: Bell and Macfarquhar (1771), p. 1004.

[10] See, C. de Saussure (1725) *A Foreign View of England in the reigns of George I and George II : The letters of Monsieur Cesar de Saussure to his family*, translated and edited by Madame Van Muyden (1902), London. Murray , p. 36.

[11] A. L. Beier and R. Findlay (eds.) (1986) *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, London: Longman.

as a country within, allowing its Capital to become an accessible hub of commerce, culture, and everything else, dwarfing the second largest cities at the time, Bristol and Norwich, which boasted populations of around thirty thousand apiece.

Living cheek by jowl: Stratification, diversity and built environment in the city

In such a densely populated space Londoners regardless of class, lived their daily lives in close proximity to one another, albeit with an increasing number aspiring to segregation, as Joseph Addison wrote in 1712: 'The inhabitants of St James's notwithstanding they live under the same laws, and speak the same language, are a distinct people from those of Cheapside, who are likewise removed from those of the Temple on one side and those of Smithfield on the other, by several climates and degrees in their way of thinking and conversing together.'[12] Together with this increasing consciousness of social stratification, a further striking characteristic of London at the beginning of the eighteenth century was the relative youth of its population. This was primarily due to several decades of low fertility and high infant mortality rates amongst the established population,[13] allied to a large and steady flow of young male and female economic migrants who came to the capital seeking employment from the provinces. Wrigley suggests that the average age at arrival of these youthful newcomers was twenty years old,[14] with the majority seeking apprenticeship, offering their casual labour, aspiring to go to sea, or into domestic service.

As the century progressed they were joined by increasing numbers of migrants from further afield, with certain areas of the city becoming analogous to the diverse groups who populated them, notably the large Irish community of the 'Little Dublin' area in the St Giles district, the French Huguenots in Spitalfields, alongside central European Jews around Whitechapel, as Moore argues: 'As late as the 1770s, two out of three Londoners had been born elsewhere.'[15] This mix forced the

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[12] Joseph Addison (1712) 'Of Many Men he Saw the Manners,' *The Spectator*, No. 403, Thursday June 12, 1712, p. 583.
[13] The early to mid-century infant mortality figures for London are particularly remarkable, with more than one in five dying in infancy, the registers indicate 20.2 deaths per 100 live births by the age of 2 years recorded during 1730 to 1739, see The Proceedings of the Old Bailey (2016) *Op Cit*.
[14] E. A. Wrigley (1967) *Op. Cit*., p. 46.
[15] L. Moore (1997) *Op Cit*., p. 10.

inhabitants to confront and tolerate social, cultural, and moral contrast along both domestic and international lines.

London's immigrant communities boasted significant numbers, with financiers, merchants, craftsman, and artisans amongst them, but in the main providing an unskilled army of surplus labour for the capital which could be called upon when needed. The immigrant Irish provided the majority of outwardly Catholic households in Hanoverian London, which numbered fourteen thousand in 1780, though the likelihood is that a far higher number were undeclared.[16] London's Jews, mainly of Ashkenazi and Sephardic origin were estimated by the London magistrate, Patrick Colquhoun, to be approaching twenty thousand in number by 1797,[17] an exceptionally high figure which was disputed by a direct contemporary, the German, Frederick Augustus Wendeborn, whose own survey of London suggested eleven thousand - the likely figure being somewhere between the two at around fifteen thousand at the turn of the nineteenth century.[18]Supplementing these large enclaves, were other groups comprising the Huguenots, relatively small in number but well-known as craftspeople and thus highly visible, along with pockets of fellow Europeans, of mainly French, Portuguese, Dutch and German descent, blacks newly emigrant from America and the West Indies, and Indians, mainly seafarers of the East India Company. Rudé suggests that this intriguing latter group of immigrant Londoners aggregated around ten thousand by the 1780s, adding to a total immigrant group of perhaps forty thousand.[19]

This group as a whole provided diversity and fostered necessary skills and labour, but frequently faced opposition, resentment, and accusations of deviancy, particularly during lean economic times and periods of political unrest in the capital.[20] Such anti-immigrant hostility, the menace of the foreign, provides a recurrent narrative within moral panics, building further on the omnipresent social

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[16] 'Returns of Papists for 1780,' The House of Lords Record Office, London.

[17] P. Colquhoun (1797) *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis,* 5th Edition, London, p. 157.

[18] See, T. M. Endelman (1999) *The Jews of Georgian England 1714-1840: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society*, Ann Arbour: The University of Michigan Press, p. 172. For context and contrast see also: F. Felenstein (1995) *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes: A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830,* Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press.

[19] Which suggests a steady figure of between five to seven percent of overall population during the eighteenth century.

[20] G. Rudé (1971) *The History of London: Hanoverian London 1714-1808*, London: Secker & Warburg, p. 8.

time-bomb of the innately dangerous and base working class, to which they commonly belong.[21] Here, Cohen argues that immigrants have particular cultural capital as folk devils, existing on a blurred boundary between the literal and non-literal.[22] For Goode and Ben-Yehuda, immigration is a watchword for corruption, and the ability to corrupt the native population.[23]

Whilst outer London expanded along the banks of Thames and into the countryside to the south and north, the city of London itself was dense in terms of built environment. In the aftermath of the Great Fire of London in 1666 which had decimated over two thirds of its infrastructure, the centre had witnessed a building boom, with timber hastily replaced by stone, bricks and mortar, materials which enabled taller replacement dwellings to be built on the often narrow streets of the poorer districts. Moreover, with many builders doggedly following the pre-fire street plan, these loftier new-builds could have a darkening effect, adding to a feeling of claustrophobia, akin to a warren.

Of course, London also dealt in modern luxury and had been busy constructing its fashionable enclaves for the gentry, notably the Mayfair estate to the west, laid out in new squares along the grand classical lines specified by Sir Thomas Grosvenor on a one hundred acre green-field site between 1670 and 1750. Grosvenor's exclusive vision for Georgian London was rewarded with patronage of the London rich and the creation of a royally approved new parish St Georges, in 1724, extending to envelop Belgravia and enclosed by suitably grand and genteel borders to Oxford Street, Bond Street, Regent Street and Hyde Park. These borders half a century later would be aggrandised yet further by the architect John Nash under the patronage of the Prince Regent, the later King George IV.[24] Londoners were keen to embrace the modernity brought by such handsome classical architecture, with many left astonished and proud by the transformation, and optimistic for its aesthetic future, amongst them Defoe, who saw the new city as

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[21] V. E. Cree et al. (eds.) (2016) *Revisiting Moral Panics*, Bristol: Policy Press; S. Hier (ed.) (2012) *Moral Panic and the Politics of Anxiety*, London: Routledge; and, S. Hauptman (2013) *The Criminalization of Immigration*, El Paso, LFB Scholarly Publishing.

[22] Often referred to via analogy to an unstoppable force as Flood, Wave, Deluge, Influx, Tide, and Swamp. Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, p. xx.

[23] Goode and Ben-Yehuda *op. cit*, p. 5-10.

[24] M. Mansbridge (1991) *John Nash A complete catalogue*, London: Phaidon Press, p. 130.

'really a kind of prodigy'[25] a phoenix rising from the ashes. Though far short of Christopher Wren's transformative geometric plan for London devised in the wake of the great fire,[26] the new wide avenues, squares, pleasure gardens and public places made the place a city of sharp contrasts, light and dark, which for some, including the visiting German academic and publicist, Johann Archenholtz, [27]could be jarring:

> The east end, especially along the shores of the Thames, consists of old houses, the streets there are narrow, dark and ill-paved; inhabited by sailors and other workmen who are employed in the construction of ships and by a great part of the Jews. The contrast between this and the West End is astonishing: the houses here are mostly new and elegant; the squares are superb, the streets straight and open…If all London were as well built, there would be nothing in the world to compare with it.[28]

Finding suitable accommodation in such a bustling metropolis was an expensive priority for both rich and poor, west and east, and as the population swelled demand outstripped supply. Consequently, central London throughout much of the long eighteenth century resembled a building site, a situation which added a sense of excitement and progress, tempered by the inherent danger provided by the poor construction materials and methods favoured by lower-end builders, Samuel Johnson poetically described London as the city where 'falling houses thunder on your head.'[29] Johnson's sentiment was supported in a letter by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the Baroque architect and contemporary of Wren, who pronounced urban London, central and east, as a chaotic maze of streets where hastily constructed 'slapdash'[30] dwellings proliferated: 'we have noe City, nor Streets, nor Houses, but a chaos of Dirty Rotten sheds, always Tumbling or takeing fire, with

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[25] See D. Defoe *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 2 volumes, 1724-6, p. 331.
[26] See, *K.* Downes (1982) *The Architecture of Wren,* London: Harper Collins.
[27] *See,* Robert Shoemaker (May 2001) 'Male honour and the decline of public violence in eighteenth-century London,' *Social History* 26 (2), pp. 190–208.
[28] J. W. Archenholtz (1794) *A View of the British Constitution: And, of the manners and customs of the people of England. By M. Archenholtz. An officer in the Prussian service*, Edinburgh, p. 119.
[29] S. Johnson (1738) *London: A Poem in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal*, London: Printed for R. Doddesley, at Tulley's Head in Pall Mall.
[30] 'Quick and careless' a widely used derogatory term for the early-modern building trade, first attributed to John Dryden in his play of 1679 *The Kind Keeper: Or Mr Liberham* "Down I put the notes slap-dash."

Winding crooked passages (Scarse practicable) Lakes of Mud and Rills of Stinking Mire Running through them.'[31]

An appropriate illustration of the danger and squalor described by Johnson and Hawksmoor can be found in William Hogarth's *Gin Lane*, painted in 1751 (fig. 4.). The well-known principal focus of the scene is the shocking depravity and wretchedness of the gin addled human subjects in the foreground, however in the background one can see the gable of a slapdash tenement building beginning to topple over towards the teeming St Giles Street below, a crumbling metaphor for the precarious nature of London street life and a prospective executioner for the unwary and ignorant beneath it.[32] In practice, the constant building work allied to the moving of heavy horses, carts, men and materials ensured that in dry spells the city streets and houses were dusty, and after periods of rain the streets and cobbles were muddy and rutted. This left residents and visitors alike to contend with layers of grime in addition to avoiding the ubiquitous sooty smoke, and dodging the plentiful dung and urine, both human and animal. The 'sport' provided by such dodging resulted in an nomenclature for many of the narrow lanes which linked the slums of St Giles, Whitechapel and Clerkenwell, which in turn had found their way onto contemporary street maps by the early eighteenth century, amongst the most salubrious: Rotten Row; Ragged Row, Dark Entry, Foul Lane, Gutter Lane, Dirty Lane, and Pissing Alley.[33] The city was a raw place, able to embrace its ugliness, warts and all.

Hub of commerce, temptation and strain

Alongside demographic expansion London was growing exponentially as an economic centre, developing a rich consumers' market with manufacturing and distribution industries to service the population, whilst rapidly becoming the global hub for international trade and rivalling Amsterdam as the banking and insurance centre of Europe. Servicing the metropolis provided a multitude of employment openings and opportunities to make money, with the congested and unsuitable

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[31] Cited in K. Downes (1970) *Hawksmoor*, London: Thames and Hudson, pp. 241-2.
[32] For a contemporary view see, S. Felton (1785) *An Explanation of Several of Mr. Hogarth's Prints*, London: J. Walter, Charing Cross. For a subject analysis, see D. Bindman (1981) *Hogarth,* London: Thames and Hudson.
[33] See J. White (2012) *op cit.,* page 6.

narrow arterial streets teeming with goods and provisions – mercantile arteries from all over Britain and beyond sustaining the beating heart of the capital, as Defoe stated:

> this whole Kingdom, as well as the people, as the land, and even the sea, in every part of it, are employ'd to furnish something, and I may add the best of every thing, to supply the city of London with provisions; I mean by provisions, corn, flesh, fish, butter, cheese, salt, fewel, timber, &c. and cloths also; with every thing necessary for building, and furniture for their own use, or for trades.[34]

Defoe's corn was to be sold alongside the river at Bear Quay, Queenhithe and at the Corn Exchange,[35] the flesh went to Leadenhall and livestock to Smithfield, the fish and the fuel to Billingsgate. Cloths were destined to be sold in the secure environs of Blackwell Hall, essential animal fodder, principally hay, to the Haymarket, Borough, Smithfield and Whitechapel, and the multitude of fruit and vegetables to Borough Market once more,[36] Three Cranes Wharf, and Covent Garden. All of this daily business traffic transporting precious cargo and supplanted by an increasing multitude of private carriages, gigs and coaches for hire, numbering in excess of six thousand by 1739,[37] was conveyed into the centre of the city on unsuitable and neglected roads. An urban folly not lost on Defoe who opined: 'the land trade of England has been greatly obstructed by the exceeding badness of the roads.'[38]

This commercial hubbub supported a multitude of crafts and trades, ranging from the traditional trade associations and gilds bounded by the regulations and restrictive practices of the ancient city Companies[39] to a host of innovative occupations and services that began to appear in trade directories from the mid-eighteenth century. In terms of the traditional, Thomas Waller's respected *General*

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[34] D. Defoe *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume I, 1724-6, p. 12.
[35] From 1760.
[36] Until closure in 1755.
[37] G. Rudé (1971) op cit., p. 22.
[38] D. Defoe cited in, O. Spate 'The Growth of London' in H.C. Darby (ed.) (1936) *An Historical Geography of England before A.D. 1800: Fourteen Studies,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 541.
[39] Now referred to as 'The Livery Companies of the City of London,' see, Robert Seymour (1735) *'Twelve Principal Companies of the City of London,' Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Volume 2*. London: J. Read.

Description of All Trades[40] for London in 1747, was widely used to identify apprenticeship and commercial opportunities, as well as to locate specific goods and services. Waller's directory, rather conservatively, recognised one hundred and thirty five crafts and eighty occupations operating in London, and provided useful details on such matters as employee numbers, pay, hours and conditions of work, in conjunction with both start-up and apprenticeship costs. As London began to become recognised as the predominant commercial centre of Europe, a frontier city for capitalists, the constricting traditions and customs that had bound its artisans for centuries were being circumvented and began to wither away.

As Rudé contends the fiscal beneficiaries of this situation could be recognised amongst: 'the growing number of productive and servicing trades, which had developed on almost modern capitalist lines, recognizing no limit to the number of workpeople they employed and no economic laws other than those of supply and demand.'[41] Thus, a distinct economic characteristic in the manufacturing trade of the period, alongside the creep of mechanisation brought by the industrial revolution, was an internecine conflict between conservative and progressive entrepreneurs and tradespeople, particularly in the city of London. By the middle of the century the progressives were in the ascendency, with, for example, *The Westminster poll book* of 1749 providing a demographic snapshot in its recording of the three hundred and ninety-five trades and occupations which employed its nine and a half thousand voters. Moreover, *The London Directory* of 1791 listed a hundred more, recognising four hundred and ninety-two categories of merchants, manufacturers and traders amongst its listings.[42]

Much of this trade was employed or channelled directly through the port of London, and as early as 1700 upwards of twenty five percent of Londoners were employed by the shipping industry at the port.[43] The port, like the centre of the city,

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[40] T. Waller (1747) *The General Description of All Trades: Digested in Alphabetical Order by which Parents, Guardians, and Trustees, May, with Greater Ease and Certainty, Make Choice of Trades Agreeable to the Capacity, Education, Inclination, Strength, and Fortune of the Youth Under Their Care. ... To which is Prefixed, an Essay on Divinity, Law, and Physic*, London.

[41] G. Rudé (1971) *op cit.*, p. 25.

[42] *The London Directory for the Year 1791; Containing an Alphabetical Arrangement of the Names and Residences of the Merchants, Manufacturers and Principal Traders in the Metropolis and Its Environs,* London: Chatto & Windus (reprint).

[43] See, R. Davis (1962) *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, London: Macmillan, p. 390.

had been rebuilt after the Great fire, and consisted of twenty one 'legal' docks or quays on the north bank, abetted by a series of ad hoc 'sufferance wharves' on the Surrey bank which could be brought into play for certain cargoes during busy periods – which was habitually the case. All of which was marshalled and overseen by customs officials and their officers, posts that required a sharp eye with loading and unloading being undertaken continuously during daylight hours. The legal quays provided 'secure' land mooring for smaller vessels, whilst the larger cargo ships were required to moor at anchor in the Thames and unload their precious consignments into barges for transportation to the various quays, with anything landed at the sufferance wharves requiring transportation over London Bridge.

Additional, and generally more modern, supplementary infrastructure to the Port of London was provided further down the Thames, with Hermitage, Lime-Kiln, and Shadwell quays serving the north bank and Southwark and St Saviours, the Surrey bank, along with the state-of-the-art Leviathan, that was the Howland Great Dock (later renamed Greenland Dock)[44] further downstream at Rotherhide, a neighbour to the East India Company's exclusive dock at Blackwall. The docks themselves were fringed by the support system and paraphernalia of the shipping industry, with warehouses, shipyards, brokerage houses, chandleries and other establishments offering various services to seafarers well established.[45] This impressive, if somewhat convoluted structure, which had evolved piecemeal, was kept in place for the majority of the eighteenth century, only being seen as obsolete an in need of replacement at the turn of the nineteenth, when it was completely outgrown.[46]

A further significant feature of the London docklands of this era was its immediate proximity to the day to day life of the city. With an open port the vast majority of business that was undertaken on the Thames was undertaken in public view, plain sight, albeit under the tense and watchful gaze of the customs men and the mercantile classes, connecting the populace to the frantic and lucrative trade being undertaken on the river. Vessels large and small and those who crewed them could come right into the heart of the metropolitan area, with the main legal docks

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[44] Renamed to reflect its employment as the focal point for the whaling trade in 1763.

[45] F. Rule (2012) *London's Docklands:History of the Lost Quarter*, London: Ian Allen, pp. 170-173.

[46] J. White (2012) *op cit.,* p. 168.

for loading and unloading comprising of a fourteen hundred feet stretch of the embankment on the north bank between the Tower of London and London Bridge. Thus, ships were a familiar sight and very much part of an animated moveable skyline down at riverside – a forest of masts (fig. 5.). Similarly, most residential streets at the time whether in the west or the east were within a short walk of the water, many in sight of it,[47] which added another layer of colour to the street life of the city. Not that the city needed further colouring, as the metropolis of money and masses. Hurly-burly abounded as the norm away from the wealthy enclaves in the west, particularly in the side-streets and alleys that abutted the busy public thoroughfares such as the Strand, Fleet Street and Cheapside. Hustle and bustle was a particular feature of London, which captivated both high and low culture, a facet that at turns could be both playful and vicious.

Mobile vulgaris: the noise of thousands of tongues and feet

Many contemporary visitors to London commented on the ceaseless traffic and noise from the crowded streets with wealthy, middling and poor passing cheek by jowl on the notoriously narrow pavements. Movement was made more difficult by people stopping to converse, gaze into shop windows, chuckle at the latest illustration in the print shop, or simply loiter to alleviate boredom on the footway. Thus great care and dexterity was required to quickly manoeuvre around such obstacles avoiding the street gutters and ditches, a notorious repository for all manner of filth. As a pedestrian there was also a high likelihood of being accosted by beggars, hawkers, musicians, prostitutes, and pedlars of innumerable sorts, including fruit sellers, ballad sellers, shoe-blacks, knife grinders, milkmaids, hot cake sellers, baked-apple sellers and piemen. Selling on the street was customary, and the more established street traders worked from favoured stands, which proved for many another difficult obstacle to skirt around.

Avoidance was made more arduous by the sellers' raucous competing sales pitches which exploited the environmental acoustics of the confined streets.[48] The traders who bellowed them were such a constituent part of Hanoverian London that

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[47] Consultation of Rocque's map of 1746 shows the farthest of London's streets to be around a mile and a half away from the Thames.
[48] See, P. Earle (1994) *A City Full of People: Men and Women of London, 1650-1750*, London: Methuen, p. 244.

the classical portraitist and Royal Academician, Francis Wheatly,[49] painted a series of thirteen idealised portraits of street vendors under the title *The Cries of London* between 1792 and 1795. In terms of Wheatly's diminishing reputation as an artist at the time, his *Cries of London* series was seen as inconsequential to his peers, but they proved extremely popular and were sold as stipple engraved prints from 1797.[50] Now, they provide perhaps his most important and compelling work, a lasting connection to the wide variety of wares available with contemporaneous depictions of the feisty characters who sold them. A further reading of Wheatly reveals imagery of communication and interaction driven by a section of society steeped in oral culture. With street traders able to pass on news of gossip and current affairs along with their goods and services - on the thoroughfare and the doorstep. Their eyes and ears attuned to opportunity, trend and unfamiliarity, the ability to spread new discoveries to both their peers and their betters (fig. 6.).[51]

If *Cries of London* provides enduring visual imagery of the socio-economic feistiness of the population, a graphic summary of communication with the vivacity, edginess, and chaos of London street life in the eighteenth century. A written snapshot is perhaps best encapsulated within a detailed letter home by Geog Christoph Lichtenberg, a German satirist, who visited London in 1770, Lichtenberg wrote in wonderment:

> In the road itself chaise after chaise, coach after coach, cart after cart. Through all of this din and clamour, and the noise of thousands of tongues and feet, you hear the bells from church-steeples, postmen's bells, the street-organs, fiddles and tambourines of itinerant musicians, and the cries of the vendors of hot and cold food at the street corners. A rocket blazes up storeys high amidst a yelling crowd of beggars, sailors and urchins. Someone shouts 'Stop thief,' his handkerchief is gone. Everyone runs and presses forward, some less concerned to catch the thief than to steal a watch or a purse for

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[49] See, H. Chisholm (1911) (ed.) 'Francis Wheatley' in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 698.

[50] Francis Wheatly RA (1797) 'Cries of London' engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, London: Colnaghi & Co. of Pall Mall.

[51] Many of Wheatly's *Cries* depict verbal communication at the point of sale, showing traders in conversation with both servants and / or their employers (see fig. 6., for example). This is suggestive of the existence of 'bottom up' verbal interaction in London, which traversed social classes, providing a conduit for fears during times of moral panic. See, J. Barchas (2003) *Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

themselves. Before you are aware of it a young well-dressed girl has seized your hand. 'Come my lord, come along, let us drink a glass together,' or 'I'll go with you if you please.' An accident happens not forty paces away. 'God bless me,' calls one. 'Poor fellow,' cries another. A stoppage ensues and you look to your pockets. Everyone is intent on helping the victim. There is laughter again: someone has fallen into the gutter. 'Look there, damn me,' cries a third, and the crowd passes on. Next comes a yell from a hundred throats as if a fire had broken out, or a house were falling, or a patriot had looked out of the window. In Gottingen you can go anywhere and get within forty paces to see what is happening. Here, that is at night and in the City, you are lucky to escape with a whole skin down a side alley until the tumult is over. Even in the wilder streets all the world rushes headlong, as if summoned to the bedside of the dying. That is Cheapside and Fleet Street on a December evening.[52]

However, Lichtenberg's letter also describes a place where the boundaries between mischief, sharp practice, and petty crime had become somewhat blurred – an anarchic community, lacking in social control. For many Londoners, the busy streets were made for fun, sport, and spectacle, which might be official or unofficial, legal or illegal. Popular outdoor pursuits for the youthful rank and file of the time could embrace opportunities for recreation and wagers. Such opportunities might include, often impromptu, invitations to partake in gaming, lottery playing, cudgel play,[53] cock-fighting, rat-baiting,[54] bare-knuckle boxing, wrestling, and large-scale football matches. Sometimes these activities could lead to high-spirits and disorder, particularly when linked to alcohol and the officially sanctioned pageantry attached to certain public events, such as Lord Mayor's Day of the birthday of the King, when processions were overseen and kept orderly by the City Marshall.

A further, regular, official occasion that never failed to gather and galvanise a London crowd was the public punishment and censure of criminals, here the City

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[52] Geog Christoph Lichtenberg (1770) 'Letters to Gottingen' cited in M. L. Mare and W. H. Quarrell (trans.) (1938) *Lichtenberg's Visits to England, as Described in his Letters and Diaries*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, p. 56.

[53] 'Cudgel play' involved sword training with a wooden rod, see E. Castle (1893) *Schools and Masters of Fence,* London: George Bell.

[54] Setting a terrier on rats with bets on body count, see, H. Mayhew (1851) London labour and the London Poor, vol. 3, London: Griffen, Bohn and Company, p. 5.

Marshall was habitually absent. This was the case for both minor offenders who were branded in the hand, whipped at the cart's tail,[55] or admonished at the pillory,[56] and the wretched condemned individuals transported on open carts from Newgate Prison to the Tyburn gallows. Newgate to Tyburn was a relatively level two mile journey that would typically take thirty minutes at walking pace. However, an execution day was a 'Tyburn fair,' a holiday, and due to the baying crowds that accompanied the cart at such events, the ride commonly would take over three hours. It ended at the 'Tyburn tree' an infamous three spoked gallows that could accommodate twenty souls, Upwards of eleven hundred men and one hundred women made this final journey between 1700 and 1783,[57] providing a civic carnival of death for Londoners at least eight times a year.

Such regularity and normality of punishment in a society bereft of a professional police force indicates a keen awareness of criminality and its censure amongst the populace. As the century developed, violent street crime in particular was to be as identified by Londoners, their politicians and press, as a growing social problem. This was hardly surprising in a city of established and developing contrasts between rich and poor, the property haves and the property have nots – an early form of social strain was becoming apparent.[58] As Goldsmith wrote: 'penal laws which are in the hands of the rich are laid upon the poor…and as if our possessions were become dearer in proportion as they increased, as if the more enormous our wealth, the more extensive our fears, our possessions are paled up with more edicts every day, and hung around with gibbets to scare every invader.'[59] Goldsmith's phrasing is particularly telling in terms of the tenet of contemporary penology. In the absence of external policing stimuli, internal discipline became

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[55] For a contemporary account see: F. Grose (1811) *The Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, 'Persons guilty of petty larceny are frequently sentenced to be tied to the tail of a cart, and whipped by the common executioner, for a certain distance.'

[56] Which frequently led to 'state-sanctioned' serious injury or death.

[57] Condemned prisoners were also publically executed at Smithfield and Tower Hill. After 1783 the majority of executions in London were moved behind the walls of Newgate due to the fears of public disorder attached to the mobilisation of large crowds in central London. Members of the 'paying' public were still able to attend executions within Newgate provided they had purchased a ticket in advance. In terms of the evident gender disparity V.A.C. Gatrell *op. cit.*, p. 8 writes: 'of the 1232 people hanged at Tyburn in 1703-72, only 92 were women.'

[58] This concept of strain would later be developed by Robert Merton, and based on criminal behaviour linked to frustration of individuals confronted with a seemingly inescapable poverty trap (strain). Merton, R. (1938) Social Structure and Anomie,' *American Sociological Review*, 3, pp. 672-82.

[59] O. Goldsmith (1766) *The Vicar of Wakefield*, London: Collins. (1953 edition).

fundamental, with morality and norms enforced by visible and terrible reminders of punishment. Standing in the background as a tormenting moralising spectre for much of the eighteenth century was what would become known as the 'Bloody Code,' the reflective name for the raft of capital statutes focused primarily on property crime that increased from around fifty in 1700 to two hundred and twenty by the close of the century. This legislative shift towards death as deterrent had its foundations in class reinforcement and social control as well as crime prevention.[60]

For those who retained criminal intent, the narrow and frequently teeming streets of the capital were utilised as the 'vast wood or forest' described by Henry Fielding, as a place to hunt or hide.[61] For the remainder of London's population, whose habit was to talk, trade, play, see and be seen in public view, the street also became popular as the space used to demonstrate political solidarity and public force. This resulted in the use of the word 'mob' to identify those engaged in riotous, unruly or immoral behaviour – its very existence an example of the fearful discovery of folk devils during a period of rapid social change.[62] In many instances in eighteenth-century London, the primarily young and frequently newly arrived working class population were being readily identified as the source of a variety of ingrained social problems, an ungovernable mass, a *mobile vulgaris*.[63]

The morality of the mob: Consensus and symbolism in the *Beggar's Opera*

The satirist John Gay's best known play the *Beggar's Opera*, was written in 1728, as a caricature and lampoon of London's lawlessness. As such it captures an unusual mood, where perceptions of law and order and criminal justice are identified at turns, as ridiculous, interchangeable and emblematic. The play was a conceptual oddity at the time, as a three act satirical ballad opera set to music, very much a mix of folk and opera. It was also an oddity in terms of the plot and context, juxtaposing the accepted notions of moral and immoral, folk hero and folk devil. In terms of the historical application of moral panic theory and wider conceptions of criminal justice, it is used here to interpret contemporary views on deviance, decency,

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[60] See, J. Sharpe 'Crime, Order and Historical Change,' in J. Muncie and E. McLaughlin (2001) *The Problem of Crime*, London: Sage, p. 116.
[61] Henry Fielding (1766) *The Works of Henry Fielding*, vol. 11, London: A. Millar, p. 342.
[62] Social change is identified by Hall as a key trigger to the amplification of social deviancy and resultant public panic towards it, Hall et al. (1978), *op. cit.,* pp. 48-49.
[63] A vulgar crowd, the vernacular 'mob.'

consensus and symbolisation – explicitly within Gay's script, and in consideration of the position of the London public in their collective response to it.

The play opens with a sardonic monologue: 'Through all the Employments of Life Each Neighbour abuses his Brother; Whore and Rogue they call Husband and Wife: All Professions be-rogue one another: The Priest calls the Lawyer a Cheat, The Lawyer be-knaves the Divine: And the Statesman, because he's so great, Thinks his Trade as honest as mine.' The two principal characters are Peachum, who earns his living as a Thief Taker, a bounty hunter with a side line as a gangster, running the thieves he 'takes' when they cease to be productive (one of these unfortunates, Bob Booty, is a satire of the under fire Prime Minister, Robert Walpole),[64] and fencing the valuables he acquires; and a rakish highwayman, McHeath, who has married Peachum's daughter Polly in secret, and thus as a former client is likely to become a burden to Peachum, who wishes him caught and framed.

This happens in an outwardly respectable tavern populated by women of seemingly good manners (who are in fact pickpockets) and thieves run by Peachum, who have been instructed to 'take' McHeath, which they do. He is borne to Newgate Prison, under the care of the crooked gaoler, Lockit, who is also in the pay of Peachum. McHeath escapes from Newgate after charming Lockit's daughter, meanwhile the gaoler, Lockit, and the Thief Taker, Peachum, find McHeath's stash of valuables, thus signing his death warrant. After an interlude where McHeath's widespread fecundity is established, the play ends with the condemned anti-hero awaiting execution, when the Beggar (narrator) intervenes and states that for the sake of authentic morality all three devils, McHeath, Peachum, and Lockit should hang. As such morality doesn't exist on the streets of London, the Beggar confers a 'happy ending' for the audience by reprieving McHeath, the final narrated line of the play declaring: 'the lower People have their Vices in a Degree as well as the Rich, and are punished for them' – a historical footing for the hypothesis of the radical criminologist, Reiman, writing two centuries later who stated, 'the rich get richer and the poor get prison'[65] – here, in Gay's radical play before the London crowds the

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[64] See, J. Black (1984) *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole*, London: Macmillan, p. 171.
[65] J. Reiman (1995) *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Crime, and Criminal Justice*, New York: Allyn & Bacon, p. 132.

establishment's preferred folk devil had been transformed into the audience's preferred folk hero, of sorts.

The *Beggar's Opera* was an immediate hit with London audiences at the Playhouse Theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields, despite the initial anxious reluctance of the theatre's manager, John Rich, to stage it, where after its first performance it ran continuously for ninety nights, eventually becoming the most widely seen play in eighteenth-century London. A review of the first night in the anti-Walpole *Craftsman Journal* opined: 'This Week a Dramatick Entertainment has been exhibited at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, entitled The Beggar's Opera, which has met with a general Applause, insomuch that the Waggs say it has made Rich very Gay, and probably will make Gay very Rich.'[66] The idea for the play had come to Gay via his friends amongst the London literati, Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, who suggested the invention of a debunking 'Newgate pastoral' – a clarion call for humane Libertarianism.

The outstanding success of the production that followed was undoubtedly aided by its faithful interpretation of the contemporary London underworld. A world in which many holding positions of official power in 'criminal justice,' consequently holding the power of life and death, were dishonest, and corruption and fraud was rife. As such, the play spoke to the population of London, as they could recognise the language, understand the social settings, and identify real flesh and blood characters in Gay's caricatures. As such, the play was seen as mocking and powerful, by those on the receiving end of its satire – Gay had gone too far![67] Amongst them were individuals keen on attracting the ear of the censor, the Lord Chamberlain, arguing that the work was salacious, libelous, and potentially morally corrupting. The irony and apparent pompousness of this position, was not lost on the staff at *The Craftsman* who published the following satirical editorial in response, which drew on the Beggar's powerful, and by now, venerated, final sentence:

> Nay the very Title of this Piece and the principal Character, which is that of a
> Highwayman, sufficiently discover the mischievous Design of it; since by

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[66] Founded by two influential 'Patriot Whigs' William Pulteney and Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke in 1726.

[67] 'Gay's Beggars Opera in Lincoln's Inn Fields' *Craftsman*, 3 February, 1728.

this Character every Body will understand One, who makes it his Business arbitrarily to levy and collect Money on the People for his own Use, and of which he always dreads to give an Account – Is not this squinting with a vengeance, and wounding Persons in Authority through the Sides of a common Malefactor?[68]

The public reception of *The Beggar's Opera* illustrates the layered moral complexity of eighteenth-century London, in terms of social change, whilst emphasising the lack of effective social control or criminal justice. It also suggests that the Londoners, high and low born, were not passive in their identification of appropriate folk devils, or when called upon to interpret genuine and manufactured social problems. This perspective of a 'discerning public' is strengthened by reference to Rudé, a historian attuned to the importance of the common crowd, the rank and file, the method in the mob. Here, the significance of the crowd is indeed key in terms of charting the development of political and public response to perceived deviance, and Rudé concentrates on periods of intense strain resulting in popular uprisings in Britain and France between 1700 and 1850.[69] This encapsulates the spirit of tension, and provides a narrative to apparent turmoil, and allows the apparent mobocracy of the eighteenth century to be seen in terms of its transforming and reforming nature as well as its intrinsic ferocity. Here we can identify an early form of what Thompson termed 'moral economy' a signifier of drift between official versions or structures of 'morality' and a critical public perception of it.[70] The ability to experience and evaluate morality on face value.

Gay had based the play's central characters on two notorious individuals within the London underworld, well known in popular culture, who had both journeyed to the Tyburn gallows in the previous four years. Peachum was a caricature of Jonathan Wild, the so-called Thief-Taker General of London, a felonious grandee, who had been executed in May 1725, somewhat ironically for theft.[71] The character of Gay's highwayman dandy, McHeath, whilst something of an

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[68] 'Opinion' *Craftsman*, 17 February, 1728.

[69] Rudé (1964) (1971) *op. cit.*

[70] E. P. Thompson (1991) *Customs in Common*, New York: New Press.

[71] A convoluted and reviled post, as Emsley explains: 'In eighteenth-century England the thief-taker was perceived as necessary, but he was also despised and with some justification' (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 72.

amalgam of several 'popular rogues' of the time, was primarily focused on Jack Sheppard, an infamous thief, gaol-breaker, and former 'employee' of Wild, finally detained by the authorities long enough to be executed in November 1724. The judgement of the London public with regard to how these men lived their lives can be established in the hours that preceded their deaths. The working people of London, the 'crowds, upon crowds,' identified by Defoe, possessed their own communal public sphere to vent opinion on morality and honour and this was on the streets of their city.

Jack Sheppard,[72] born in Spitalfields in 1702, had been instrumental in the downfall of Jonathan Wild. As an apprentice-carpenter turned thief he first became involved with Wild's gang in late 1723, using the services of London's 'Thief-Taker General' to fence stolen goods through an accomplice. By this time, Wild, in order to supplement the already lucrative earnings attached to his role in law enforcement, had been both a creator and facilitator of criminal talent for at least a decade, often identifying prospects at a young age.[73]

In the first decade of the eighteenth-century London's increasing prosperity had brought a crime wave, and with it murmurings in the new popular press of the need for an official response to prevent the city being 'plundered wholesale.'[74] One element of this response was a renewed reliance on the agency of thief-taking, a system that had been in place in London since the reign of Elizabeth I.[75] The role was one based upon the deferral of officialdom in terms of government responsibility for keeping the peace, with referral in terms of specific instructions to apprehend, or 'take' when a problem offender was seen to be at large.[76] The job required an intimate knowledge of the London underworld, and moreover a foot in either camp to garner intelligence and organise reaction. Such familiarity and proximity ensured that many who took up the profession did so in order to further their own criminal

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[72] Also referred to as 'John' Sheppard.
[73] Anon. (1725) *The History of the Remarkable Lives and Actions of Jonathan Wild, Thief-Taker, Joseph Blake, alias Blueskin, Footpad, and John Sheppard, Housebreaker*, London, , p. 58
[74] See, G. Howson (1985) *Thief-Taker General: Jonathan Wild and the Emergence of Crime and Corruption as a Way of Life in Eighteenth-Century England*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, p. 4.
[75] See, L. Moore (1997) *op cit.,* p. 59
[76] See, C. Emsley (1996) *Crime and Society in England 1750-1900*, Second Edition, London: Longman, p. 220.

careers, whilst limiting the prospects of those around them. A common ploy being to lure a youth into committing a criminal offence in order to receive the universal £40 reward for impeaching them – a practice not lost on Gay when naming his ruthless Thief-Taker in his *Beggars Opera*, 'Peachum.' Wild's immediate predecessors in the role of principal thief-taker within the capital, the Recorder, Sir Salathial Lovell and the Under-Marshall of Newgate, Charles Hitchen, had both earned reputations for malevolence and avarice. Following Hitchen's suspension for corruption in 1713, Wild began to build a force of thief-taking agents to cover London.[77]

By the time Wild and Sheppard's paths had crossed in the early 1720s, the former was notorious as the chief architect of London's criminal underworld, overseeing a formidable body of operatives, runners, informants, and heavies, a group which Wild labelled his 'Corporation of Thieves.'[78] As his own burgeoning criminality grew in ambition Sheppard became an irritant to Wild, who issued instructions that he was to be taken and put on trial. This happened in February 1724 in an alehouse at Seven Dials, but Sheppard was free within hours after breaking out of his holding cell in the Roundhouse at St Giles, infuriating Wild. Sheppard was apprehended again in May, and detained at New Prison in Clerkenwell, but he once again escaped before trial, this time with his mistress Elizabeth Lyon, also known as 'Edgworth Bess,' a feat that attracted significant publicity. At this point a frustrated Wild, concerned about loss of both profit and reputation, approached Sheppard demanding his loyalty, but this was rejected by Sheppard in order to embark on a new venture as a highwayman in partnership with an accomplice, Joseph 'Blewskin' Blake, a notorious footpad, who lived by the maxim: 'We care not a straw, For reason and law, For conscience is all in all.'[79]

However, the two men were soon back working the London streets, which saw Sheppard once again apprehended and surrendered by members of Wild's gang in July 1724, being held in Newgate prison on this occasion. At his Old Bailey trial the following month, Sheppard was condemned to death, mainly on Wild's evidence;

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[77] 'Thief-Takers are our absolute masters,' *The British Journal*, 1 May, 1725, London.
[78] See, G. Howson (1985) *Ibid.* p. 238, and; J. Van der Kiste (2013) *Jonathan Wild: Conman and Cutpurse*, Stroud: Amberley, p. 3.
[79] 'The Thieves Ballad' cited in C. Hill (1996) *Liberty Against the Law*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, p. 230.

but on return to prison to await execution he escaped again, this time in leg-irons, disguised as a woman, and using the busy river traffic to avoid capture. Following news of this third escape from the seemingly unconquerable Newgate, Sheppard became a popular folk hero to the London public, whilst Wild's fearsome reputation was diminishing. Sheppard was caught on Finchley Common by a group sent by Wild in September 1724, returned to Newgate and accorded special measures by confinement in the prison's 'Castle' strong-room and fastened to staples on the floor. During this incarceration Sheppard's reputation amongst the public reached new heights, with his gaolers allowing those wealthy enough access to see their prisoner on payment, Defoe, one such visitor, attests to his mischievous nature at this point: 'I am the Sheppard, and all the Gaolers in the Town are my Flock, and I cannot stir into the Country, but they are all at my Heels *Baughing* after me.'[80] However, despite the special measures, Sheppard absconded once more, leaving the Newgate authorities to accuse their remarkable escapee of supernatural powers:

> His fetters are not to be found anywhere about the jayl, from whence 'tis concluded he has either thrown them down some Chimney, or carried them off on his Legs, the latter seems to be impractical, and would still register his Escaping in such manner the more astonishing; and the only Answer that is given to the whole, at Newgate is, That the Devil came in person and assisted him.[81]

Sheppard was at large for a fortnight before being rearrested and returned to the Castle at Newgate. Here he was stapled to the floor, placed under twenty-four hour observation and positioned under a three hundred pound weight[82] - this time the Devil couldn't help him. Whilst detained Sheppard's portrait was painted by James Thornhill, painter to the royal court, and a petition was raised to have his death sentence changed to transportation by a large group of supporters, comprising prominent members of London society, and described by Defoe as a 'Concourse of People of tolerable Fashion.'[83] On the day of Sheppard's execution, 16 November

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[80] D. Defoe (1724) *History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard containing a particular account of his many robberies and escapes ...*, London, p. 31.
[81] *Ibid.* p.46
[82] A practice known as 'pinning,' a punitive sanction used to immobilise, injure or kill by way of placing heavy 'slab' weights on the chest and abdomen of the prisoner.
[83] *Ibid.* p. 50.

1724, the City Marshall flanked by a phalanx of cavalrymen carrying lances, escorted the prisoner on his cart for the short journey from Newgate to Tyburn. Prior to the procession there had been fears about the spectacle descending into riot, with London's apprentices and manual workers being seen as particularly aggrieved about his execution as one of their own,[84] so soon after capture:

> His escape and his being so suddenly retaken made such a noise in the town, that it was thought all the common people would have gone made about him; there not being a porter to be had for love nor money, nor getting into an alehouse, for butchers, shoemakers and barbers, all engaged in controversies, and wagers, about Sheppard. Newgate night and day surrounded with the curious from St Giles and Rag-Fair, and Tyburn Road daily lined with women lest he be hanged Incog.[85]

The crowds that lined the streets to bid Sheppard farewell were estimated at two hundred thousand and the atmosphere was in fact one of joyful celebration, with commemorative handbills and pamphlets revelling in the deeds of 'Jack the lad' and John Applebee's official illustrated 'confessional' biography, a copy of which had been held up by Sheppard as he stood on the gallows, selling in its thousands.[86] Following execution Sheppard's body was cut down and taken by supporters in the crowd to prevent its dissection.

His former antagonist Wild was sentenced to death six months later in May 1725, after being betrayed by former associates and found guilty on several counts of theft (fig. 7.). His trial at the Old Bailey had coincided with that of the Lord Chancellor Thomas Parker for impeachment, in the House of Lords, Parker being found guilty of taking one hundred thousand pounds in bribes. These cases signalled a turning point in the popular view of authority, with Parker's confinement in the Tower of London and Wild's execution at Tyburn, where he had sent so many, seen

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[84] In terms of Sheppard being idealised as a young non-violent rascal, a cockney, a hedonist, a magician, and above all, an apprentice journeyman carpenter – the epitome of 'Jack the lad!'
[85] *Ibid.* p. 52.
[86] Anon. (1724) *A Narrative of all the Robberies, Escapes, &c. of John Sheppard, written by himself and printed by John Applebee of Blackfriars, dated 10 November 1724 in the Middle Stone Room at Newgate. The biography produced by Applebee, the 'official writer of such death biographies,' was said to contain Sheppard's 'confession' whilst detained in Newgate, and is thought to have been dictated to, and ghost-written by, Daniel Defoe, borrowing heavily on his History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard.*

by many Londoners as just deserts. The latter's procession drawing crowds as large as Sheppard's, but of a wholly different character, as Defoe reflected: '[with Wild, a pathetic character, lolling and stupefied after attempting suicide with laudanum in the hours before] wherever he came, there was nothing but hollowing and huzzas, as if it had been upon a triumph.'[87]

At the time of his execution Jack Sheppard was twenty-two years old, with a criminal career of little more than eighteen-months, however his legacy and reach extraordinary, well beyond his reincarnation as McHeath in Gay's clever play, that remained on the London stage for the following century.[88] Sheppard's life story was also, *inter alia*, parodied by Hogarth in his moral sequence *Industry and Idleness*, immortalised in the first, and all subsequent editions of *The Newgate Calendar*, and serialised as a pictorial novel by William Harrison Ainsworth with illustrations by Cruikshank in 1839.[89] His enduring legacy as folk hero was certainly not lost on the working-class children of London in 1843, as recorded by the *Royal Commission on the Employment of Children in Mines and Manufactures*:

> Some of the children have never heard the name of Her Majesty, nor such names as Wellington, Nelson, Buonaparte. But it is to be especially remarked, that among all those who have never heard such names as St Paul, Moses, Solomon, etc. there was a general knowledge of the character and course of life of Dick Turpin, the highwayman, and more particularly of Jack Sheppard, the robber and prison breaker.[90]

Peter Linebaugh in *The London Hanged* attaches particular importance to the life and death of Sheppard as a turning point for the social history of working class consciousness and the development of what might be construed as criminal justice in eighteenth-century London; his criminal disobedience perhaps an early example of strain theory.[91] He argues that the pioneering social history of Hobsbawm and Rudé

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[87] D. Defoe (1725) *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 29 May, 1725, London.
[88] The characterisation in Gay's play also held cross-cultural appeal, and it was revived in Germany by Bertolt Brecht two centuries later in 1928, as *The Threepenny Opera.*
[89] Peter Linebaugh in *The London Hanged*, (1991), *op cit.,* pp. 7-9, provides a comprehensive overview of the legacy of Jack Sheppard in popular culture.
[90] R. H. Horne (1843*) The Physical and Moral Condition of the Children and Young Persons Employed in Mines and Manufactures,* London: John W. Parker, p. 208.
[91] Merton (1932) *op. cit.*

allowed good and evil to blur, and introduced concepts such as 'social banditry' and the 'crowd' to replace earlier preoccupations with 'criminal classes' and the 'unruly mob.'[92] Consequently, the work that followed by Thompson, Mantoux, and George was able to focus on the cruelty and corruption of state response to criminality and the abuses of power and 'crimes' of obedience of its agents, alongside the socialisation and socio-economic circumstances of offenders.

Consequently, this body of work offers a robust historiographical rebuke to Foucault's sociological notion of 'the Great Confinement' in his *Madness in Civilisation*, which builds on his concept of carceral society first expressed in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault focuses on Europe commencing in the mid-seventeenth century, during which he argues all powerful governments instigated mass incarceration; the imposition of discipline towards those individuals and groups inhabiting the fringes of civil society. Linebaugh offers an opposing view and identifies a propensity within the working people of eighteenth-century London to resist incarceration and confinement, recognising a tendency for what he terms 'ex-carceration' - with the inverted history of Sheppard, the criminal folk hero, and Wild the thief-taker folk devil, central rather than peripheral:

> Ignored, not to say disdained, by academic historiography, he [Sheppard] has belonged clearly to an 'other history' of histories, pantomime and song. The oral history of Sheppard has *maintained* his memory with human contexts where books were scarce and working-class resources for an independent historiography were non-existent. Moreover, that memory was kept in contexts of social struggle in which a continuity, if not a development, with earlier moral and political conflicts was suggested…the life of this malefactor raises questions about the relationship between 'criminality' and the working-class movement. Likewise questions are raised about the relationship between the ruling-class plunder and depredations of the poor, because he lived at a time when imperialist conquest and domestic expropriations had few checks.[93]

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[92] E. Hobsbawm and G. Rudé (1969) *Captain Swing*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp. 13-15.

[93] P. Linebaugh (1991) *Op Cit*., p. 8.

The depredations highlighted by Linebaugh form the basis for what can be loosely referred to as the criminal justice process of eighteenth century England, with its overarching emphasis on the protection of personal property above all else. This emphasis can be readily identified within the conservative social commentary, philosophy, and punitive laws of the time, with several influential writers bemoaning the vacuum left in London following the death of Jonathan Wild and the demise of thief-taking, amongst them Cesar de Saussure and Philip Dormer Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield,[94] leaving the *Daily Journal* to argue: 'Tis remarkable that since the dissolution of Jonathan Wild, not one felon has been convicted capitally, which by some is attributed to a reform amongst the rogues and by others to the want of a proper person to detect them.'[95]

The contradiction of social control within the infancy of criminal justice

Despite the identified deficiency in the detection of rogues, the focus on bodily punishment built upon the Bloody Code would continue to provide the London pillory and gallows with backs and necks aplenty throughout the long eighteenth-century. A brutal state of affairs which continued until the passing of the Judgement of Death Act in 1823, when the court was permitted to apply judicial discretion in all criminal cases short of murder and treason.[96] However, even in the face of severe punitiveness as the primary form of social control there was clear resistance from the London public. Linebaugh's recognition of the tendency for working-class Londoners to resist and strive for ex-carceration, can be said, for a significant number at least, to have extended to contempt for the Bloody Code and the painful end that it represented. Emsley provides context in terms of official response to this defiance, which he terms 'judicial violence' as a brutal attempt to restore respect for law and order mid-century:

> If, for most of the eighteenth century, the Bloody Code was not actually increasing the numbers of those being executed, nevertheless there does appear to have been an increase in judicial violence. The Murder Act 1752 extended gibbeting and dissection as the judiciary began to introduce

[94] See, Moore (1997) *op cit.,* p. 264-266.
[95] 'The Dissolution of Jonathan Wild' *Daily Journal*, 5 July, 1725, London.
[96] See, J. Sharpe (2001), 'Crime, Order and Historical Change' in J. Muncie and E. McLaughlin (eds.) *The Problem of Crime, 2nd edition*, London: Sage, pp. 107–150,

private whipping. It seems probable that this was regarded by the plebeian crowds as a violation of accepted norms, as the law failing to reflect popular ideas of culpability and justice, and as evidence of a contempt for popular culture.[97]

As Fielding reasoned, by mid-century hanging had become a focus for public disdain, a diversion at best: 'Instead of making the gallows an object of terror, our executions continue to make it an object of contempt in the eyes of the malefactor; and we sacrifice the lives of men, not for the reformation but the diversion of the populace.'[98] The control tools at the disposal of the judiciary in pursuit of justice were narrow, encompassing a choice between the direct deterrent effect of punitive fines, transportation,[99] corporal, and capital punishment, or the prolonged agony associated with imprisonment. Fundamentally, a sentencing choice between the symbolic impact of public humiliation or the restriction of free will. The latter prospect for many, generating far greater fear than the transitional shock of assault on the body. The early ideology of imprisonment was to once again cultivate social control of the population through internalised dread of consequence. This would be achieved by the establishment of houses of pain of such repulsion that the populace would intrinsically police their personal moral behaviour, and thus avoid transgression into deviance or criminality.

According to Defoe there were twenty-two public gaols plus a large number of supplementary 'tolerated prisons' (primarily 'Bridewells, parish roundhouses and watch-houses)[100] in London by 1724.[101] Prisoners within these institutions ranged from debtors and petty criminals to dangerous offenders. As with thief-taking, responsibility for form and function was deferred by government, which ensured that the managing Prison Keepers who bought their lucrative office at a high price, were

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[97] C. Emsley (1996) *Crime and Society in England 1750-1900,* London: Longman, p. 260.

[98] Henry Fielding cited by R. McGowen ''Making examples' and the crisis of punishment in mid-eighteenth-century England' in D. Lemmings (ed.) (2005)*The British and their Laws in the Eighteenth Century*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, p.199.

[99] Transportation passage (a long sea voyage followed by forced labour) in the eighteenth century was state funded, and directed by two specific statutes which 'bookended' the century; The Transportation Act 1718 and The Transportation Act 1784, both sought to provide a second tier of severe punishment short of a death sentence for the judiciary, and a reduction in the prison population.

[100] Essentially these were lock-ups for the temporary holding of prisoners overnight, prior to coming up before the Magistracy the following day.

[101] D. Defoe (1724) *A Tour Through the Whole Island op cit.* p. 155.

keen on assertive remuneration, with repair, conditions, and the fees tariffs for prisoners overseen by London's Justices of the Peace under The Gaol Act 1698. By the eighteenth century London possessed a series of landmark compters[102] and gaols to hold its criminal offenders.[103] Conditions across these various institutions were universally squalid, and following official scrutiny into corruption and brutality at Newgate Prison in 1729 the sale of prison offices were suspended.

Newgate in particular was seen as a place of horror and terror, being described by Giacomo Casanova, who had been held there on a charge of bigamy, as an 'abode of misery and despair, a hell such as Dante might have conceived.'[104] Similarly, Daniel Defoe, who was imprisoned there for seditious libel in 1703[105] as 'that horrid place, my very blood chills at the mention of its name…the hellish noise, the roaring, swearing, and clamour, the stench and nastiness…an emblem of hell itself.'[106] The regime at Newgate was akin to a manmade version of perdition, a symbolic edifice, which Babington likened to an English Bastille.[107] On arrival at Newgate prisoners, male and female, would be immobilised with iron fetters before being allocated to one of the large mixed lower (underground) wards of undressed stone, the stone hall principally for debtors and the stone hold for felons. All strewn with straw with shallow open sewer channels cut in the floor, fleas jumping and lice scuttling and cracking underfoot 'such a noise as walking on shells which are strewn over garden walks.'[108] Here, in the candlelit gloom, they would be surrounded by the paraphernalia of discipline and misery with shackles on the walls and fetters on the

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[102] A compter was a 'counter,' being a prison attached to a court.

[103] Significant amongst these were the compters at Poultry, Borough, Giltspur Street, Wood Street and the Gatehouse Prison, Westminster, which acted as remand prisons for those awaiting trial; the Clink, Horsemonger Lane, Ludgate, and the Marshalsea were used for lower risk offenders; with the larger gaols of Newgate, New Prison, and Cold Bath Fields (along with supplementary prison hulks moored on the Thames) used to hold more serious offenders and likely absconders over longer periods of time.

[104] Cited in, P. Ackroyd (2000) *London the Biography*, London: Random House, p. 250.

[105] For publishing his pamphlet, a parody of Tory ministerial publication, which had the effect of 'fooling' the public – D. Defoe (1702) *The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters; Or, Proposals for the Establishment of the Church,* London. For context see, L. S. Horsley 'Contemporary Reactions to Defoe's Shortest Way with the Dissenters' *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900,* (1976) 16 (3): pp. 407–420.

[106] This phrase was adapted by Defoe for his novel *Moll Flanders*, originating from Thomas Delaune 'that horrid place which you describe when you mention hell' cited in P. R. Backscheider (1992) *Daniel Defoe: His Life*, New York: Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p.499.

[107] A. Babington (1971) *The English Bastille: A History of Newgate Gaol and Prison Conditions in Britain, 1188-1902*, London: Macdonald and Co.

[108] Cited in, A. Smith (1926) *A Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of the most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, Shoplifts, and Cheats of both Sexes, by Captain Alexander Smith*, edited by A. L. Hayward, London: George Routledge & Sons, p. viii.

floor to disable and chastise the disobedient. Newgate thus became a watch word for agony, an institutional folk devil in its own right.

As with prisons, policing the streets of the metropolis for much of the long eighteenth century was administered through delegation as a reactive amateur concern, rather than a proactive public service. Alongside the thief-takers, the hierarchy of what might be deemed 'policing' in London in 1700 emanated from the magistracy, unpaid justices of the peace (JPs), who would often come to the role with either an active interest in law and order, or merely a desire for the prestige of public office or personal gain.[109] Alongside their judicial office, the function of the magistrate was mainly administrative and occasionally active, in terms of raising hue and cry or forming a posse[110] of men to restore public order, apprehend a dangerous felon or retake an escaped convict. Consequently, there was a voluntary oath attached to office to take an operational role in keeping the peace, which was only taken by around three out of four at installation. The remainder who avoided the active service commitment were accused by Lord Cowper, England's first Lord High Chancellor between 1714-1718, of weakness in not 'giving themselves the trouble of doing the duty.'[111]

Under the direction of the magistracy were the parish constables,[112] an office traditionally pertaining to universal obligation which required 'buying out' to avoid, ostensibly a force appointed by the presiding magistrate from local parishioners. This rather vague ancient office usually running for one year conferred few powers beyond active citizenship, and was well summarised by Critchley as: 'not merely as an officer appointed for the preservation of the King's peace, nor as the mere officer of the parish, but as the direct representative of the old vill or township.'[113] Thus, the parish constable system that existed in London in the early eighteenth century was essentially to service an informative link between parishioners and their magistrate. In practice, this meant patrolling the local district ensuring that the lanterns required

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[109] These became known as 'trading justices.'
[110] From the Latin *posse comitatum* – power of the company. A typical posse would normally be formed of sheriffs, parish constables, and gaolers.
[111] Cited in J. M. Beattie (1986) *Crime and the Courts in England, 1660-1800*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 59.
[112] From the Latin c*omes stabuli*, or 'count of the stable,' an officer to keep order.
[113] T. A. Critchley (1967) *A History of Police in England and Wales*, London: Constable & Company, p. 17.

of dwelling houses were lit, that pathways were clear, locks were secure, and that any strangers within the vicinity were observed or asked of their intentions - an early form of preventative beat policing. As these duties were time-consuming they were often viewed as a distraction from earning, and the majority of men of means able to do so, paid the fee required to avoid serving their term. This included Defoe, who described the imposition of the office of constable in 1714 as: 'an unsupportable hardship; it takes up so much of a man's time that his own affairs are frequently neglected, too often to his ruin.'[114] Consequently many constables employed low-paid deputies to undertake these duties on their behalf, and as this cost was self-funded opted for the cheapest appointee within their means. This in turn brought about a geographical lottery, with significant divergence in quality between the parish watch, operating in affluent parishes in the city and those serving the poor, whose watchmen were often according to Fielding:

> Chosen out of those poor old decrepit people who are, from their want of strength, rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. These men, armed only with a pole, which some of them are scarcely able to lift, are to secure the persons and houses of his majesty's subjects from the attacks of gangs of young, bold, stout, desperate and well-armed villains.[115]

This pessimistic depiction of deputy-constables and parish watchmen as incompetent bumbles, often seen clutching lantern and pole, was an established cultural construct by the reign of Elizabethan I. With Shakespeare providing comic relief in the pompous caricatures of Dogberry, Verges, and Sexton in *Much Ado About Nothing* (1599), with the unfolding farce in Sicily purposely transposable to an English town.[116] Indeed, such ingrained cultural portrayals of inadequacy were likely to have been encouraged by the early police reformers, Fielding and

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[114] 'Parochial Tyranny' by Andrew Moreton (a pseudonym of Defoe, used for critical pamphlets), London, p. 17; cited in S. Webb and B. Webb (1906) *English Local Government From the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act, The Manor and the Borough,* Volume I, London: Longmans, Green & Co., pp. 62.

[115] H. Fielding (1751) *Amelia,* London: Penguin (1987 edition), pp. 15-16.

[116] J. W. Draper (1961) *Stratford to Dogberry: Studies in Shakespeare's Earlier Plays*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 273.

Colquhoun,[117] serving to speed calls for a public police force along the lines of the French model, as Emsley states: '[it is] clear that at least in some metropolitan parishes there were determined attempts to ensure that the night watch was competent and capable a hundred years before the Metropolitan Police took to the streets.'[118] This may well have been the case for some of London's wealthier residents after the Metropolitan Watch Act 1735, which levied a parish tax to pay for salaried watchmen in the more affluent parts of the city,[119] but this levy system did not operate consistently across the capital until 1800.

As an awareness of crime as a growing social problem in London began to percolate, it was recognised that the historical reliance on parish constables and the watch, essentially a local government function, was proving to be wholly inadequate to serve the capital. Attempts were made at reform, notably via the Westminster Watch Act 1774, which sought to regulate watch numbers, function and pay; and the formation of an armed blue-coated City Patrole in 1785, with the object of controlling anti-social behaviour. The preventative function of the Patrole augmented the detective disposition of the group of ex-constables hired by Fielding to act as a reactive force from his house in Bow Street, in 1749. Fielding's house becoming a central hub for criminal intelligence in the capital, with stipendiary constables (runners) paid for by the reward money they acquired.[120] By 1797 there were sixty-two constables working from Bow Street, comprising both foot patrols and mounted units.[121]

The year after, in 1798, Colquhoun formed the London River Police, a private force, paid for and in sole service of the West India Company, whose large cargo ships were vulnerably anchored in the Pool of London for loading and unloading. This was a direct response to widespread violence, looting and theft on the river that was estimated to be costing traders in excess of £500,000 per year. In response, Colquhoun enlisted an experienced ex-mariner soldier and justice of the

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[117] See, J. J. Tobias (1972) 'Police and the public in the United Kingdom' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 7 1972, pp. 201-19.

[118] C. Emsley (1996) *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[119] Initially, Picadilly, St Georges, and St James.

[120] Essentially, these men were still operating a thief-takers under the archaic and discredited system that had supported Wild, see A. T. Harris (2004) *Policing the City: Crime and Legal Authority in London, 1780-1840,* Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, pp. 75-83.

[121] A. Babington (1969) *A House in Bow Street: Crime and the Magistracy in London, 1740-1881*, London, McDonald and Co., p. 176.

peace John Harriot to devise an effective cost benefit model of preventative policing for the Thames for the West India Company. Harriot's model was formed as *The West India Merchants Company Marine Police Institute*, comprising three branches: a Magistracy staffed by Colquhoun and Harriot; a Lumping Department, which regulated the dockers and lightermen unloading West India Company ships, and; a Police Establishment, with fifty constables warranted by Customs and Excise. Within two years this well-drilled and highly visible structured force had been extremely successful in limiting losses and fostering a brand of lawfulness leading to its incorporation as the country's first public police force under the Marine Police Bill 1800. The London public, however, would have to wait a further 29 years for a comparable metropolitan force to attempt law and order on dry land.[122]

Concluding thoughts

It is evident that eighteenth-century London provides a striking host for the consideration of moral panic theory, emerging as historically unique in terms of its great size, and the density and diversity of its population. Essentially, a young, frequently itinerant, population augmented by a steady flow of newcomers from the provinces and overseas. This provided a multitude of surplus labour to service and toil at the behest of the metropolis, but brought with it anxiety and pressure as well as novelty. With amplified perception of youthful and lower-class excess, the insidious cultural threat of foreignness, and a growing intolerance towards idleness and destitution. As such, many of the social pressures facing the historical city are recognisable within current discourses around moral panics, particularly in terms of the working poor and newly arrived, and their struggle to establish themselves in paid employment and find suitable shelter in a ruthlessly competitive market. For the aspirant middle class, the fight to maintain or improve position, and retain or accumulate property, was becoming dominant. Their developing conservatism steadily synchronising with that of the elite, who in addition to continued prominence and consumption, increasingly desired freedom, detachment and security in a place where all in short supply.

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[122] With the Metropolitan Police Act 1829 (10 Geo.4, C.44).

Moreover, it is London's relentless trajectory throughout the century that perhaps makes the city truly distinctive, establishing a place that became identified with aggressive change and indecent haste - the epitome of a moveable feast. The building boom that had characterised the three decades after the great fire in 1666 was to continue at a frenetic pace throughout the century that followed, with a multitude of residences built alongside grand civic and ecclesiastical buildings. This was to be a new city, reborn with public spaces and purpose built premises for retail, leisure, manufacture and storage. It also crucially provided the central hub of government, law, the arts, and the press, and through its arterial roads and bisecting river the focal point for domestic and international trade. London, to a large extent, worked and played in clear view, with its streets utilised to buy and sell, gossip and protest, celebrate and censure. What is also certain, is that a place of such obvious disparity, particularly between extremities of wealth and poverty, would also play host to conflict, resistance and vice. Thus, the capital can be identified as a place that was disposed towards splendour, extravagance and hedonism but vulnerable to filth, deviance and obscenity. As a consequence London emerges conflicted, as a host for social strain and moral conjecture, and a vessel for concerns over law and order.

Such structural concerns appear authentic, and were certainly aggravated by an obsolete justice system in England which had been outstripped by the pace of social change, and in particular the unprecedented expansion of its metropolis. Hampered in its ineffective response to administration and enforcement throughout the eighteenth-century, social control in the city would be fundamentally linked to the pressure of self-control on the pain of bodily harm. In this erratic environment, the public frequently emerged as arbiters of deviance and criminality, producers of hue and cry, and communicators of consensus. Often appearing as the guardians of order, and occasionally, to use Cohen's terminology, electing entrepreneurs of morality. However, consideration of moral economy suggests that Londoners of all classes could be discerning in the identification of their folk devils and resistant for calls to hysteria under a false flag. This is clear in the reinterpretation of John Gay's *Beggars Opera*, the use of his play as he intended, as a *metaphor*. What now seems a simple plot shift between good and evil, a reversal between hero and villain, provides a tangible show and tell of historical dissatisfaction over endemic

hypocrisy, corruption and cruelty in the elusive pursuit of workable law and communal order. From this, moral panic emerges as a contested concept, identification a matter for both the public sphere and the public at large, appropriate causes would require consensus.

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Chapter 3

Who has not trembled at the Mohocks name? Panic on the Streets, 1712

Now is the time that rakes their revels keep;
Kindlers of riot, enemies of sleep.
His scatter'd Pence the flying Nicker flings,
And with the Copper Show'r the Casement rings.

Who has not heard the Scowerer's midnight fame?
Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?

Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds
Safe from their blows, or new-invented wounds?
I pass their desperate deeds, and mischiefs done
Where from Snow Hill black steepy torrents run;

How matrons hoop'd within the hogshead's womb
Were tumbled furious then, the rolling tomb
O'er the stones thunders, bounds from side to side.

John Gay[1]

Just as Stanley Cohen's original thesis (and its revisions) focused on youth offenders as perpetual folk devils there is much historical evidence that presents that juvenile delinquency was perceived as a serious social problem in eighteenth-century England with regular reference to the excesses of London's idle apprentices and rakes. Indeed, much of the behaviour described in contemporary accounts would suggest the existence of youth subculture and organised groups, as Smith argues '[the apprentices of London] were thought of as a separate order or subculture… [possessing] many of the characteristics which have been ascribed to twentieth century youth.'[2] Such behaviour included organised gang violence and sporadic fighting between rival groups, one contemporary commentator noting that for the

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[1] Excerpt from; John Gay (1716) *Trivia, or The Art of Walking the Streets of London,* London Bernard Lintott, p. 75.
[2] S. R. Smith (1973) 'The London Apprentices as Seventeenth Century Adolescents' *Past and Present*, 61, p. 149.

younger boys fighting was akin to play, but for the apprentices and rakes fights were often spectacles of extreme violence with weapons used and little quarter given.[3] By the early eighteenth century public fear of wayward youth had existed for over a century, with established concern over the length of their hair and their dress,[4] their penchant for drinking to excess, loud music, and dangerous sport.[5] Propensity for intemperance, deviance and petty crime amongst the children of both rich and poor was also seen a problem.[6] As an appropriate playground for such intemperate youth, and indeed young adults, eighteenth-century London was wholly suitable.

Rake Culture and gang violence

In his dictionary of 1755, Samuel Johnson agreed with John Gay on the subject of London's dissolute rake culture, symptomatic amongst the scions of the idle rich, the entry describing a typical member as a: 'loose, disorderly, vicious, wild, gay, thoughtless fellow; a man addicted to pleasure.' By the time of Gay's poem, *Trivia*, in 1716, a recognisable rake subculture had existed for at least fifty years, activated in terms of permissiveness, by the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. Prominent wits, who established themselves as prototypical rakes in the restored Stuart court included John Wilmot, the Earl of Rochester and George Villiers,[7] the Duke of Buckingham, both men closely allied to the King, and dominant amongst a group of upper class thrill-seekers who tormented the capital, christened the 'fast set' by Andrew Marvell.[8] Membership of such a group required a capacity for intoxication, a delight in sexual gratification, and a propensity for lawlessness and violence – in sum, a creative ability to shock. With Wilmot depicted by his biographer accordingly, recalling a description by the Count de Gramont: 'His manners were those of a lawless and wretched mountebank; his delight was to haunt the stews, to debauch women, to write filthy song and lewd pamphlets; he spent his time in

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[3] F. Misson. (1719) *Monsieur Misson's Memoirs and Observations in his Travels over England*, (translated by J. Ozell), London: D. Brown, p.307.

[4] O. J. Dunlop (1912) English Apprenticeship and Child Labour, London: Unwin, p. 112.

[5] G. Pearson (1983) *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*, London: Macmillan, p. 193.

[6] P. King (2000) *Crime, Justice, and Discretion in England, 1740-1820*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 173.

[7] See, B. Fairfax (1758) *Memoirs of the Life of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham*, London: Sam Briscoe for a contemporary overview of the life of Villiers and his circle.

[8] See, F. Linnane (2006) *The Lives of the English Rakes*, London: Portrait, p. 19.

gossiping with the maids of honour, broils with men of letters, the receiving of insults, the giving of blows.'[9]

The apparent disorder, deviance and criminality that flowed from such behaviour is often dismissed in terms of high spirits, high breeding, or high eccentricity by historians, including many prominent in social and cultural history who ignore or circumvent this compelling narrative of male dominated elite crime.[10] Amongst those who recognise an 'otherness' are Wilson who terms the protagonists 'wits'[11] and Bryson who terms the behaviour 'anti-civility,'[12] whilst Sharpe favours 'debauchery.'[13] Similarly, a discussion of this early brand of crimes of the powerful is absent from the influential work on the history of crime of Thompson, Rudé, and Linebaugh with their essential focus on the historiography of criminality (and victimisation) from below. Taken as a whole, this neglect is somewhat surprising when considering that the breadth of grievances against such individuals, groups, or clubs, which included: 'homicide, rape, murder, sodomy, assault, libel, perjury, vandalism'[14] – established categories of genuine social harm rather than mere frolic! For Cohen the link between undeserved affluence and youth is a recurrent and essential theme within episodes of moral panic, recognising that the term *youth* is normally subordinate to *affluence*, in its popular manifestation.[15]

The philologist Thornton Shirley Graves, writing almost a century ago, offered a detailed typology of the prominent rake groups that were operating in London preceding the 'Mohock scare' of 1712 in his '*Some Pre-Mohock Clansmen.*' Graves recognises a long tradition of excess amongst privileged youth in London with classical antecedents in early Greece and Rome, which manifested in the Elizabethan 'Roaring Boys' who 'strutted, and swore, and quarrelled, about the streets of London.'[16] The urban subcultures that developed from the Roarers within

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[9] G. Burnet (1680) *Some Passages in the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester: With A Sermon Preached At The Funeral,* Facsimile edition 1805, London: W. Nicholson, p. 55.
[10] Offences which might fit under current white-collar crime narratives.
[11] J. H. Wilson (1948) *Court Wits of the Restoration*, Princeton: Princeton University Press p. 46.
[12] A. Bryson (1998) *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 255.
[13] J. Sharpe (1984) *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550-1750*, London: Longman, p. 97.
[14] E. Mackie (2014) *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in the Eighteenth Century*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p.47.
[15] Cohen (2002) *op. cit*, p. 150.
[16] T. H. Graves (1923) 'Some Pre-Mohock Clansmen' *Studies in Philology*, Jan 1, 1923, 20, pp. 395-421.

the aristocracy were readily identified as a social problem at the beginning of the seventeenth century, with groups of 'roisterers' and 'rutters' adopting what might be described as a landlocked buccaneering theme,[17] identified in the financial centres of Amsterdam and London – the former known as the 'damned Crewe' and the latter led by Sir Edmund Baynham.[18]   As the century progressed other groups, with similarly exotic nomenclature, came to the fore, including the *Bravadoes,* the *Tityre Tus*, the *Hectors,* and *Hawcubites*. Such gangs were notorious for the spontaneity of their riotous violence, known as 'scowring'[19] with John Marston suggesting a degree of fervour and bloodlust by stating that for these factions 'flesh is their only living.'[20] Similarly, John Stephens and William Fennor[21] noted that there was particular honour in 'combate with a publicke officer,'[22] ensuring that many attacks were directed towards the visible mediators of law and order, which in London frequently meant beleaguered parish constables and weary night watchmen.

When there was no sport to be had with the night watch, the gangs would fight one another, wearing coloured ribbons to signify sides: 'Sir quoth the youth, most Boyes in all our Parish Such ribbans weare in honor of our Morish.'[23] This was a significant escalation from the earlier moral eschewals of libertinism[24] based upon permissive hedonism, with the premise of rake culture being firmly rooted within cruelty and outrage, as Statt argues: 'If the rake is seen as a subtype within a general taxonomy of libertinism, then rakery reveals the aggressive, the violent, the destructive quality of libertinism, and perhaps by inference the element of violence in aristocratic cultural norms.'[25] The aristocratic cultural foundation provided by sectarian gang or club membership in this period can be recognised as a significant form of post-schooling socialisation, a rite of passage fostering an esprit de corps.

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[17] Graves offers 'sword and buckler' *ibid.* p. 397.
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] Or 'Scouring' which impulsively ranged from the breaking of windows and tavern furnishings to sexual assault and wounding.
[20] John Martson (1607) *What You Will,* III, London: For Thomas Thorppe. p. 3
[21] William Fennor (1617) *The Compters Common-wealth*, London: Edward Griffin, p. 53.
[22] John Stephens (1613) *Cinthias Revenge*, II., London: For Roger Barnes, p.6.
[23] Richard Braithwaite (1658) *An Age for Apes*, London: R. Hodgkinsonne, cited in Graves p. 405. See also Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) on the importance of dress to the establishment of folk devil subculture, and its importance as an identifier, *op. cit*, p. 25.
[24] See, J. W. Zophy (2003) *A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe: Dances Over Fire and Water, 3rd Edition,* New York: Prentice Hall, p. 223.
[25] D. Statt (1995) 'The case of the Mohocks: rake violence in Augustan London' *Social History*, 20 (2), May 1995, pp. 179-199.

The martial brutality, though excessive and often ritualised within such sects, was a feature of both London life and the wider world. As such violence was likely to be encountered it was seen to be best met with a degree of familiarity and aristocratic vigour, as Henri Misson, a French visitor, recognised on the London streets: 'Anything that looks like fighting is delicious to an Englishman.'[26]

This necessary capacity and appetite for a fight extended to both formal and informal situations, with duelling commonly used to defend honour and settle disputes within class in London's parks. Alternatively, boxing and street-fighting tactics were preferred when subduing the lower orders, even by the highest nobility, with Misson shocked to witness the young Duke of Grafton attack a coachman on the Strand: 'at fisticuffs in the open street, with such a fellow, whom he lamed most horribly.'[27] This frequently ignored, distinct form of socialised violence can be identified as cultural, class-centric and of its time, as Mackie argues convincingly: 'a study of criminal subcultures grounded in the historical sociology of labor, obscures the important presence of the resilient strand of respectable fears that, especially pre-1800, attached more strongly to the moral and sociopolitical failures of the elite than to threats from below.'[28] Moreover, this particular brand of elite hooliganism linked to status was seemingly immune from official censure, avoiding the branded hands, torn backs, and transportation which would have befallen working class contemporaries.[29] However, in the early eighteenth-century such moral failures began to be seen as a gathering crisis by London's increasingly active public sphere, a situation augmented and exploited by the assembling popular press. The escalating violence, like that in many moral panics that would follow, a signifier of transformation, and an aid to discovery.[30] Hitherto the morals had been questionable, but lacking the consensual apparatus of panic. Accordingly, formerly loose gangs of rakes became guarded 'hellfire clubs' in order to protect the identities

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[26] H. Misson (1719) *M. Misson's Memoirs and Observations in His Travels Over England*, London: Printed for D. Browne, &c., p. 304.
[27] *Ibid.* p. 306.
[28] *Op cit.*, p. 47.
[29] W. Chambliss 'The Saints and the Roughnecks' *Society* (1973), 11(1), pp. 24-31, and W. Chambliss and M. Mankoff (eds.) (1976) *Whose Law? What Order?* New York: John Wiley, pp. 15-16, provide interesting considerations of the role and effect of stratification in circumvention of law and order narratives. The latter is cited by Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) within the context of moral panic as 'enabling the ruling stratum to maintain its privileged position' p. 135.
[30] Many episodes of moral panic possess violence as a variable, often as a sign of loss of control, a crossed line, see for example, Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

and reputations of their members, many adopting codes of secrecy, initiation rituals and 'tribal' rites to test the veracity and constitution of potential members.[31]

Discovery: A small nation of savages

Between April and May 1710 London was captivated by a colourful diplomatic delegation from four Native American Iroquois - three Mohawks from the Haudenosaunee tribe and a Mohican from the Algonquin, on a state visit to the Court of Queen Anne. The visit was ostensibly to raise awareness and garner support for British colonial interests in North America, whilst disparaging French claims of Native American solidarity under their banner. The four delegates caused a great stir in London society during their sojourn in the city, housed in the West End, commanding large crowds when appearing in public and providing fascination for high society.

Following a gift from the Queen of communion plates the portraitist, John Verelst, was commissioned to immortalise the four men on canvas - the paintings becoming collectively displayed as the 'Four Indian Kings' series.[32] Verelst's striking portrait of the Mohican representative, Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow, caused a particular stir, depicting its striking and fearsome looking subject naked to the waist, holding a musket, with tribal tattoos covering face and torso – in the influential *Tatler* he became encapsulated as the 'Emperor of the Mohocks' (fig. 8.).[33] The paintings of the Four Kings were made into mezzotints by the engraver John Simon, which were sold via the fashionable press as prints.[34] This imagery accompanied a multitude of printed sources to feed public consumption, estimated by the *Daily Courant* to include twelve chapbooks, fourteen broadsides, and numerous ballads.[35] These tributes were of dubious quality, described by Hinderaker as: 'hastily assembled geographic and ethnographic descriptions of Iroquoia culled from sensationalized and corrupted readings of a jumble of older accounts'[36] Such

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[31] An illustrative example being the secret 'club' formed by Philip Wharton in 1718, which was based on pseudo-religious ritual, Wharton being variously described as 'a drunkard, a rioter, an infidel and a rake' M. Blackett-Ord (1982) *Hell-fire Duke: Life of the Duke of Wharton*, London: Kensall, p. 70.

[32] Currently displayed at The Portrait Gallery of Canada, Ottowa.

[33] *Tatler*, 13 May 1710.

[34] Including the *Tatler*, which ran repeat advertisements throughout 1710, and into 1711.

[35] *Daily Courant*, 24 April 1710.

[36] E. Hinderaker (1996) 'The 'Four Indian Kings' and the Imaginative Construction of the First British Empire' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 53(3), pp. 487-526.

copy typically included descriptions of the men as dignified 'noble savages' and focused on both their post-colonial decorum and barbaric history of tribal violence, including cannibalism as 'great Eaters of human flesh.'[37] This reputation for unbounded violence was not lost on Defoe, who later reflected on the Mohawk tribe as 'a Small Nation of Savages in the Woods, on the back of our two Colonies of New England and New York…[who] were always esteem'd as the most Desperate, and most Cruel of the Natives of North America.'[38]

London in the years directly preceding the visit of the Four Kings had witnessed a growth in desperation and cruelty of its own in terms of an increased awareness of violent street crime and debauchery. This awareness was assuaged by a now responsive newspaper industry which provided energetic inquiry in assessing the morality of the city's inhabitants and identifying its folk devils. Such scrutiny led to the government of Queen Anne issuing a royal proclamation by way of letter to law officers on 22 October 1711 targeting 'dissolute immoral and disorderly practices'[39] and thus reiterating the content of the *Proclamation for Preventing and Punishing Immorality and Prophaneness* of 24 February 1698, under William and Mary.[40] The decree, essentially a clarion call towards the reformation of manners and public protection, expressed concern that immorality was on the increase, and standards of vigilance slipping.

In the months that followed this proclamation a new menace, which alerted public attention and concentrated respectable fears, was discovered in the form of an ultra-violent tribe of rakes who went by the name of 'The Mohocks.' The name a metaphor for noble savagery, a reaction to the Queen's call for order in October, perhaps. Given the proclivity for secrecy amongst such groups, it remains unclear

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[37] Anon. (1710) *The four kings of Canada. Being a succinct account of the four Indian princes lately arriv'd from North America*, London: John Baker, p. 10.

[38] Daniel Defoe (1711) cited in C. L. Cutler (1992) *O Brave New Words: Native American Loanwords in Current English,* London: University of Oklahoma Press, p. 54.

[39] An Order of Council to Supress Vice, 22 October, 1711. This was effectively a repeat of Queen Anne's *Address to Grand-Juries, Constables, and Church Wardens. Representing Their Power in the Suppression of Vice and Profaneness*, London: J. Downing, which had been circulated in pamphlet form the previous year.

[40] Such action could be construed as the government 'taking stock' often a precursor to the discovery or initiation of a moral panic, a situation Fairchild and Merritt Johns liken to outbreak - 'the virus is in the air' see, A. L. Fairchild and D. Merritt Johns 'Don't Panic! The Excited and Terrified Public Mind' in R. Peckham (ed.) (2015) *Empires of Panic: Epidemics and Colonial Anxieties*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, p. 158.

whether the name and *raison d'être* was chosen by members, reported on by the public or conferred by the press – an obscurity which has allowed the episode to be viewed by some historians as an enigma or chimera.[41] However, in terms of moral panic presence is often identified by reaction, with the identification of a novel folk devil accompanied by an exaggerated sense of harm, or the threat of harm. In turn, this threat becomes enough to galvanise press, politicians and public in a moral crusade however disproportionate or fanciful the source may seem in hindsight, as Pearson argues: 'the extravagance of the rumours circulating around the Mohocks prompted some observers to question whether they existed at all, or whether they were not like the stories of hobgoblins and boggarts. But they were real enough.'[42]

Rumours of attacks in London streets by the gang known as The Mohocks began to circulate in early 1712. Formal record of their social discovery commences in Jonathan Swift's private letters to his friend Esther Johnson ('Stella') on 8 and 9 March, providing initial description of the new folk devils stalking the streets. Whilst briefly acknowledging their existence on the 8[th:] 'Did I tell you of race of Rakes calld the Mohacks that play devil about this Town ebery Night, slitt peoples noses, & beat them,' Swift is seemingly better furnished with the facts the day after, noting that: 'Young Davenant was telling us at court how he was set upon by the Mohocks, and how they ran his chair through with a sword. The Bishop of Salisbury's son is said to be one of the gang. They are all Whigs…I walked in the park this evening, and came home early to avoid the Mohocks.'[43] Stella, then resident in Dublin, had known Swift for over twenty years, and tended to be the recipient of his most intimate correspondence.[44] This confidant relationship suggests

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[41] For example, J. Hogg and F. Marryat (1867) 'Anecdote and Gossip About Clubs' *London Society: An Illustrated Magazine*, vol. 11, January, London: St Bride's Avenue Fleet Street, p. 245; W. H. Irving (1940) *John Gay: Favourite of the Wits*, Durham: Duke University; R. P. Bond (1952) Queen Anne's American Kings, Oxford: Clarendon; Calhoun Winton (1988) 'The Mohocks: Were They Ever Really More Than A Hairstyle? Paper presented at the 2nd Annual *De Bartolo Conference on Eighteenth-Century Literature*, Tampa Florida, 4 March 1988; Calhoun Winton (1993) *John Gay and the London Theatre*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, and; David Nokes (1995) *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

[42] G. Pearson (1983) *Hooligan: A history of respectable fears*, London: Macmillan, p. 188.

[43] 'Journal to Stella' in Jonathan Swift (1831) The Works of Jonathan Swift, in Two Volumes, Volume I, London: William Clowes & Sons, pp. 222-244.

[44] She had known Swift since the age of eight, and was rumoured to have married the writer in a secret ceremony in 1716. Swift wrote 65 'letters to Stella' which were published as the 'Journal to Stella' after his death, and included 'Bon Mots de Stella' as an appendix to his best known work, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). See, L. Barnett (2006) *Jonathan Swift in the Company of Women*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 2.

that there was genuine fear behind Swift's prose, both in his description of the attack on Henry Molins Davenant, later an ambassador to Italy, and his decision to alter his daily routine to avoid the attentions of the gang.

The sword attack on Davenant whilst sitting in his sedan chair, was certainly an escalation of rake violence, with former groups habitually content to break windows and scower taverns. Swift's prior knowledge of the Mohocks also appears sufficient to see the escalation as politically motivated, a Whig conspiracy, and to name as one of the leading perpetrators as Thomas Burnet, son of Gilbert Burnet, a prominent Whig clergyman, who having enjoyed the patronage of King William had found himself out of favour in the court of Queen Anne.[45] Further surviving private correspondence within *The Wentworth Papers* between Anne, Lady Strafford, and her husband Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, a former Lieutenant-General who at the time was British Ambassador to the Hague.[46] Her letters in early March confirm London society's growing familiarity with the new menace, including the assault on Davenant (which she extends to a scalping), writing to her husband on 11 March, she confides:

> Here is nothing talked about but men that goes in partys about the street and cuts people with swords or knives, and they call themselves by som hard name that can nethere speak nor spell; but a Satturday night coming from the opera they asalted Mr Davenant and drew there swords upon him, but he took won of them and sent to the round house, but 'tis thought 'twas somebody that would have been known and they gave mony and made their eskape, but what was the great jest about town was they said they had cut of his head of hare…[The Mohocks] are said to be young gentlemen, they never take any mony from any[47]

Alongside apparent familiarity with the group, Strafford's description indicates a growing consciousness within high society of a degree of method behind the rakish madness of the Mohocks. There is the suggestion of well-armed organised bands behind the attacks, operating close the Opera in Covent Garden, and with wealth

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[45] See, E. Gregg (2001) *Queen Anne*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.115.
[46] See, J. W. E. Doyle (1886) *The Official Baronage of England, vol. 3*, London: Longmans, pp. 415–416.
[47] J. J. Cartwright (ed.) (1882) *The Wentworth Papers, 1705-1739*, London: Wyman, p. 277.

enough to lack the motivation of theft (in a society where property theft was the essence of criminalisation) and bribe gaolers to facilitate escape. The Mohocks were thrill seekers not thieves, and in the face of such an enemy Londoners began to fear for their lives rather than their property.[48] This posits an interesting notion that the actions of the group were irrational and unreasoned, thus providing them with a much higher deviant status as potential folk devils.

The Straffords were politically influential within both the royal court and the Tory establishment, with the Earl having been made a Privy Councillor in June 1711, and destined to become first Lord of the Admiralty in August 1712.[49] Similarly, Swift, was perhaps at his most political at this juncture, as a prominent member of what might be deemed the Tory inner-circle in London, close to both Harley and Bolingbroke,[50] and editor of the main party mouthpiece, *The Examiner*. As such, he was also staunchly anti-Whig, with a recent history of manufacturing political capital from adverse publicity having published *The Conduct of the Allies* in 1711, a pamphlet highly critical of the party's conduct and delay in ending the war against France.[51] The dramatic correspondence passing between Swift and Johnson, and the Straffords, in early March, appears to signify an established collective concern, and awareness of deviant behaviour, albeit within a narrow elite context. However, even though these exchanges are apparently based upon hearsay, they are vitally important in establishing discovery. As Goode and Ben-Yehuda argue: 'the more subjective importance a given topic has for an audience, the greater the likelihood that rumors will be told about it.'[52] Though they may have been conceived by rumour, the Mohocks were quickly realised and subjected to scrutiny by London society.

Prediction: Press consolidation and calls for order

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[48] A. Boyer (1712) *The History of the Reign of Queen Anne Digested into Annals*, 10 vols., x, London: E. Roper, pp. 355-356.

[49] A. Collins (1756) *The Peerage of England: Containing a Genealogical and Historical Account of All the Peers of England,* Vol. III, London: W. Innys and J. Richardson et al., p. 320.

[50] Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, Lord Treasurer, and his contemporary and internal adversary, Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, Foreign Secretary. The two men seen as intense rivals within the party.

[51] See, C. Whibley (ed.) (1917) *Jonathan Swift; the Leslie Stephen Lecture*, London: Leopold Classic Library.

[52] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994), *op cit*., pp. 105-106.

Private correspondence and moreover, court and street gossip, concerning the Mohocks, was soon supplemented by the attention of the London press corps, with both Fleet Street and Grubstreet recognising an opportunity to moralise, sensationalise, and sell copy. In March 1712 the press were still unencumbered by the Stamp Tax that would be imposed in August that year, with: 'twenty-five newspapers in circulation, including manuscript newsletters.'[53]

The fashionable *Spectator* of 11 March 1712, by way of prelude, toys with its readership in mentioning the 'Mohocks' in its popular 'Journal of Clarinda' column, which was written by Joseph Addison. Clarinda mentions the phenomenon in a seemingly passing comment within the ephemera of her fashionable London social life, reflecting on her daily conversations which encompassed: '*Mr. Froth's* Opinion of *Milton.* His Account of the *Mohocks.* His Fancy for a Pin-cushion. Picture in the Lid of his Snuff-box'[54] – suggesting that the gang are commonly known, somewhere between Paradise Lost and pin-cushions.

Two important surviving accounts from the following day, 12 March, appear to be of particular significance in terms of both stimulating and escalating interest in the story to the wider London public (and thus placing the case fully within the public sphere). Both are founded, to a varying degree, on sensationalised informative descriptions of the Mohocks, with concomitant appeals to morality and order. The first of these was a report in the form of a letter in the *Spectator*, by Richard Steele, writing under his favoured pseudonym Isaac Bickerstaff, a 'civic minded gentleman.' Bickerstaff's affectation as a crotchety elderly sage and antidote to 'false arts and vanity' had seen him tolerant of youthful exuberance and excess in his previous appearances in *The Spectator's* thrice weekly sister publication *The Tatler* - with both publications viewed by many as a barometer of good manners. Here he reminisced of his middle age, when a number of such 'Societies of ambitious young Men in *England*'[55] had been committed to drunken hooliganism which he passed over as mere high spirits. By the spring of 1712 *The Spectator* was being widely read by Londoners, not just amongst its middle class target audience, but also by the wider clientele who populated the many subscribing coffeehouses and alehouses -

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[53] Statt (1995), *op. cit.*, p. 182.
[54] 'Clarinda' (aka Joseph Addison) *Spectator*, 11 March 1712, 323.
[55] Isaac Bickerstaff (aka Richard Steel) *Tatler*, 6 October 1709, 77.

this publication and its availability later being recognised by Habermas as instrumental to the foundation of London's public sphere.[56] However, Bickerstaff's playfulness and previous tolerance of rakery was missing from his account of 'The Mohock Club' on 12 March, which takes on a more sinister overtone in its graphic description of the mutilation and misogyny practiced by members:

> The particular Talents by which these Misanthropes are distinguish'd from one another, consist in the various kinds of Barbarities which they execute upon their Prisoners. Some are celebrated for a happy Dexterity in tipping the Lion upon them; which is perform'd by squeezing the Nose flat to the Face and boring out the Eyes with their Fingers: Others are call'd the Dancing-Masters, and teach their Scholars to cut Capers by running Swords thro' their legs…A third Sort are the Tumblers, whose Office it is to set Women upon their Heads, and certain Indecencies, or rather Barbarities, on the Limbs which they expose. But these I forbear to mention, because they can't but be very shocking to the Reader as well as the Spectator. In this Manner they carry on a War against Mankind…The President is stiled *Emperor of the Mohocks*; and his Arms are a *Turkish* Crescent, which his Imperial Majesty bears at present in a very extraordinary Manner engraven upon his Forehead…To put the Watch to a total Rout, and mortify some of those inoffensive Militia, is reckon'd a *Coup d'eclat*.[57]

Steele's persuasive prose as the letter writing Bickerstaff was undoubtedly designed to shock the public in bringing the Mohocks to lurid life. This was done whilst pursuing the *Spectator's* editorial reforming agenda as critique of manners and morality - a concept shared with his co-owner and founder in both publications; Joseph Addison, also a fellow Whig[58]. In effect, The Spectator issues an early warning to Londoners to increase their vigilance and fear for their personal safety, whilst challenging the government to offer protection from this frightening new breed of aristocratic barbarians. However, a further effect is to both glamourise and

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[56] J. Habermas (1989) *op. cit.,* pp. 42-43.

[57] 'Isaac Bickerstaff' (aka Richard Steel) *Spectator*, 12 March 1712, 324.

[58] Steele would become Whig MP for Stockbridge a year later in 1713, Addison had been made an Under-Secretary of State by Halifax in 1705, and in 1712 was the sitting MP for Malmesbury, a seat he held until his death in 1719. See. P. Smithers (1954) *The Life of Joseph Addison*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 270-275.

dramatise the Mohocks, as there is crystallisation of this malicious group into a 'club' with Bickerstaff offering his information for consideration in the newspaper's proposed 'History of Clubs' notwithstanding their obvious barbarity. Missing from this account is any clamour for pursuit or censure.

Similarly, the second initiating account published on the 12th March, concentrates on the dramatic violence, without offering any solution to the problem. This came by way of a Grub-Street pamphlet, very worthy of its 'broadside' heritage entitled *The Town Rakes: or, The Frolicks of the Mohocks or Hawkubites*,[59] to be sold on the streets. The *Town Rakes* ensured that the London public were fully aware of the ferocious nature of the Mohocks, and the high ranking status of their membership, which comprised: 'a certain Set of Persons, amongst whom there are some of too great a Character to be nam'd in these barbarous and ridiculous Encounters, did they not expose themselves by such mean and vulgar Exploits.' These mean and vulgar exploits included nose-slitting, caper cutting, and overturning sedan chairs and coaches, alongside a similar propensity to misogyny to that exposed by *The Spectator*, which included the assertion that they had 'rowl'd a Woman in a Tub down Snow-hill, that was going to market, set other Women on their Heads, misusing them in a barbarous manner. A particular feature of the *Town Rakes* pamphlet is its accusation of the impotence of the Parish Watch in London in the face of such a ferocious foe, the suggestion being that the Mohocks are too strong physically and too great in number for the Watch to admonish or contain.[60] Swift, attuned to the growing sense of panic being massaged by such embellished press coverage in London and the alacrity of their response, wrote to Stella on the 12 March that: 'here is the Devil and all to do with these Mohocks; Grubstreet Papers about them fly like Lightening.'[61]

However, with both Fleet Street and Grubstreet alerted and seemingly agreeing on the reality of threat, reports of further Mohock outrages were soon forthcoming, including the release of 'The Huzza' a chilling Mohock battle

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[59] Anon. (1712) *The Town Rakes: or, The Frolicks of the Mohocks or Hawkubites* London: J. Wright.
[60] Similar accusations of impotence were levelled at the local and county police force following the disturbance at Clacton in the summer of 1964 in the face of the Mods and Rockers episode, Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.
[61] Swift (1712), *op. cit.,* pp. 226-227.

anthem,[62] as Statt argues: 'there seems little reason to doubt the assertions that Londoners were thrown into a general terror and many dared not walk the streets at night.'[63] This growing sense of hysteria was exacerbated when a further broadside entitled *A True List of the Names of the Mohocks or Hawkubites*[64] appeared hot on the heels of the *Town Rakes* and the Huzza to apparently reveal the names of some seventy club members who were guilty of 'several Murders, slitting of Men's Noses, and turning up Whipping of modest Gentlewomen.' This list promised to reveal the names of 'several Persons of Honour (not fit to mention)' and gentlemen involved, alongside a supporting cast of soldiers, merchants, and their servants.

In actuality, it did nothing of the sort, with names obscured and thus left open to conjecture, such as a reference to a 'Pious L's Son' leaving the paying public to deliberate and decide who the pious Lord and his cohorts, might in fact be. Similarly the *True List* alludes to a number of Mohock suspects being held in custody awaiting trial, and that 'others of the Gang are hourly apprehended.' These claims are fanciful, and are not borne out by evidence, with no direct or indirect corroboration between the names listed and those arrested as suspected Mohocks over the course of the episode - as Swift would later reflect in his *Journal to Stella*, the *True List* was in fact 'all a Lye.'[65]

However, in the heat of the panic, many within the court circle were less circumspect, including Martha Johnson, Lady Wentworth, who recorded on 14 March: 'a gang of Devils that call themselves Mohocks; they put an old woman into a hogshead, and rooled her down a hill, they cut soms nosis, others hands, and severel barbarass tricks.'[66] Similarly, the London press maintained the tempo of the panic by continuing to report, or moreover repeat, the gruesome details of each 'novel' act occurring on the streets. In *The British Mercury* this extended to highlighting cases of mistaken identity, vigilantism, and wrongful arrest in the midst of the hysteria, with a: 'Mr. M - - d of Greys Inn, cutting a Gentleman that justled him, over the Face, was pursu'd by the Mob as a Mohock, and had been destroy'd

[62] 'The Night Walkers; Or, The Loyal HUZZAH' University of California, English Broadside Ballad Archive, EBBA 33872, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/33872/xml, (Accessed 14 March 2016).
[63] Statt (1995), *op. cit.*, p. 182.
[64] Anon (1712) *A True List of the Names of the Mohocks or Hawkubites*, London: J. Wright.
[65] Swift, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
[66] J. J. Cartwright, *op. cit.,* p. 277.

by them, had not the Constable convey'd him away in a Coach before a Magistrate.'[67] Mr. M - - d's status as a member of Greys [Gray's] Inn is telling in terms of his apprehension, as the four Inns of Court were regarded in Augustan London as finishing schools for the sons of the upper classes, with Lemmings estimating that close to half of this elite fraternity were to inherit landed estates.[68]

The fearless targeting of members of such an exclusive social group, indicates that the Mob were hunting young men of high social status in their pursuit of justice. The Inns provided a collegiate dormitory culture bordering London's high and low life around Holborn, the Strand, and Covent Garden, and were viewed by many as rookeries of rakery, a model setting from which the Mohocks could be drawn by the public. Consequently, the *Mercury* was also keen to intimate that the protective custody extended to the unfortunate Mr. M - - d did not apply to any of the taken Mohocks apparently awaiting trial, and celebrated rough justice as just desserts for those detained, it continued: 'Yesterday Morning were taken six of the Mohocks and bound over, having before they were taken, been well beaten by the Watch.'[69] Thus, the first half of March 1712 reveals a number of pointers which suggest a building moral panic around the Mohocks, not least the speed of their manifestation as reality following discovery. In a matter of weeks the group had created fear and concern in the city that had drawn the close attention of the elite, and stimulated exaggeration and prediction in both the high and the low press. The reported outbreak of vigilantism on the 14 March adds hostility towards the perceived objects of panic to this mix. With the London public roused on to the offensive, fear was translated into action, with vigilantes seeing the existence of the gang as 'inimical to their [community] interests and that something should be done about it.'[70]

Consensus and disproportionality by royal proclamation

The escalation of both respectable fears and reported reprisals prompted the need for a robust official response, and this was forthcoming on 17 March with a royal proclamation *For the Suppressing of Riots, and the Discovery of such as have been*

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[67] *British Mercury*, 14 March, 1712, 309.
[68] D. Lemmings (1990) *Gentlemen and Barristers: The Inns of Court and the English Bar, 1680-1730*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 2.
[69] *British Mercury*, 14 March, 1712, 309.
[70] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.,* p. 93.

Guilty of the late Barbarities within the Cities of London and Westminster, and Parts adjacent.[71] This proclamation on public morality, the second issued by the government in the space of five months, was the result of an emergency Privy Council meeting convened to discuss the Mohocks and coordinate reaction. This proclamation was markedly more direct than its general predecessor in October, and sought to provide direct reassurance to the people of London in terms of the unfolding Mohock scare (even though the group are not specifically mentioned by name in the edict), rather than postulate on general standards of morality in the city. The text is striking in both its candour and force:

> The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty being watchful for the Publick Good of Her Loving Subjects, and taking notice of the great and unusual Riots and Barbarities which have late-ly been committed in the Night time, in the open Streets in Several parts of the Cities of London and Westminster, and Parts adjacent, by numbers of evil-dispos'd Persons, who have Combin'd toge-ther to disturb the Publick Peace, and in an inhuman manner, without any Provocation, have as-saulted and wounded many of Her Majesty's good Subjects, and have had the boldness to insult the Constables and Watchmen in the Execution of their Offices, to the great Terror of Her Majesty's said Subjects, and in Contempt and Defiance of the Law of this Realm, to the Dishonour of Her Majesty's Government, and the Displeasure of Almighty God.

The proclamation goes on to command the Judiciary, the Lord Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, Sheriffs, and Middlesex Justices to provide ward by ward vigilance and delegate instructions to the constabulary and night-watch to keep order, both in the streets and inside public houses. The latter responsibility, very much an extension of their normal duties. It also commands and rallies the Queen's officers 'Civil and Military' and the general public to do all they can to assist in restoring peace and apprehending offenders, offering a substantial award of one hundred pounds for the

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[71] 'By the Queen, A PROCLAMATION, For the Supressing of Riots and the Discovery of such as have been Guilty of the late Barbarities within the Cities of London and Westminster, and Parts adjacent' *London Gazette*, 4979, 15-18 March, 1711/12.

capture of a Mohock,[72] and amnesty for any gang member who informed on his accomplices.

This important document, as well as indicating the depth of official concern and public fear to very recent events, is the first to provide a representative timescale for the Mohock panic - stating that the reward was to be paid following the apprehension and surrender of a gang member before the first day of May of: 'any Person, who, Since the First Day of February…hath, without any Provocation, Wounded, Stabb'd or Maim'd…any of Her Majesty's Subjects within the Said Cities of London and Westminster, or parts adjacent.' Thus, an awareness of the 'great and unusual riots and barbarities' of the Mohocks, as a discrete social problem, can be identified as running from early February 1712, at the very least, and quite possibly since the October proclamation of 1711. Government intervention was seen as progressive by Swift, who eagerly wrote to Stella the next day to inform that: 'there is a Proclamation out against the Mohocks. One of those that are taken is a Baronett.'[73] The very overt public proclamation of 17 March, should be read in conjunction with an official covert strategy adopted by the government in terms of disseminating intelligence. This had compelled the Middlesex Justices, by way of delegation to their parish constables, to place the watches of Finsbury, Holborn, and Westminster on a state of high alert from 11 March.[74] Under these special measures, each constable was bound over to provide a daily report for their patch in terms of outbreaks of disorder, and provide the names of any offenders detained or wanted. Those constables who failed to do so would be charged with contempt; as a trio from the parish of St Giles were during April 1712.[75] The effect of this dual overt and covert strategy was to foster a culture of 'zero-tolerance'[76] of public disorder in central London, albeit for a limited time; and to raise public awareness of the nature

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[72] Considering historical inflation, the reward represents a figure approaching £20,000 in 2016 - http://inflation.stephenmorley.org/, (Accessed 11 March 2016).
[73] Swift, *op. cit.*, p. 286.
[74] London Metropolitan Archives City of London (hereafter LMA), MJ/SB/B Middlesex Sessions Book no. 702, p. 43.
[75] LMA, MJ/SR/2188, Sessions Roll, recognizances nos. 170, 171, 172, 28 April 1712.
[76] For the current application of this terminology within criminal justice discourse, see J. Q. Wilson and G. L. Kelling 'Broken Windows: The Police and Neighbourhood Safety' *The Atlantic* (1982), 249(3), pp. 29-38.

of rake deviance and excess, as Statt argues: 'A serious effort to suppress the outbreak of violence had begun.'[77]

Official conviction against the Mohock threat in March also extended to the formation of a ministerial commission headed by Simon Harcourt, a Tory stalwart who would become Lord Chancellor in April 1713. Lord Harcourt's commission would go on to recommend through a letter to the Lord Mayor via William Legge, Lord Dartmouth, that all night watchmen in London should go about their duties armed, before the scare was over.[78] The discernible emphasis is of a rallying call for consensus driven by fear, such robust official response chiming with what Cohen termed his 'disaster analogy.'[79] This occurs at the height, or in the immediate aftermath, of an episode of moral panic. Appearing as an explicit call to the battlements, and signified by a government invoking or requesting special powers or measures to deal with projected invasion by hordes of deviants. Cohen emphasises that the identification of pending disaster is exacerbated by perceived threat, scale and visibility. Moreover, Goode and Ben-Yehuda make the point that such disparate calls to mass action usually amount to false alarms, and occasionally mass delusions.[80] In this context the royal proclamation of 17 March, which invoked powers civil and military, is remarkable, as is the suggestion of the arming of the watch by Lord Harcourt. What is clear is that the threat posed by the Mohocks, however disproportionality received, was realised by the government as real, dangerous, and worthy of martial rejoinder.

Political capitalism and the guardians of order

A direct consequence of such public sabre rattling was the politicisation of the Mohock panic, with both high profile individuals and the partisan press becoming embroiled in a Tory versus Whig sub-plot, with the Tories in particular keen to make political capital from the affair and paint themselves as guarantors of law and order. The two parties had enjoyed a turbulent relationship in the preceding decade, with the Tories under the earl of Godolphin forming an uneasy co-opted coalition with the

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[77] Statt (1995), *op. cit*., p. 185.
[78] LMA, COL/CA Repertories of the Court of Aldermen, Rep 116/132.
[79] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.,* p. 163.
[80] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *op. cit*., p. 29.

dominant Whigs in Parliament in the aftermath of the Acts of Union,[81] as a prelude to a Tory landslide in the election of the autumn of 1710. The recent attack on Davenant in early March had already implicated Thomas Burnet, son of the prominent Whig clergyman the Bishop of Salisbury, as Swift had confided to Stella on 8 March. The Tory diarist and Librarian of the Bodleian Library, Thomas Hearne having recently been acquainted with Burnet at Oxford, now added his opinion to the accusations of delinquency, reflecting that: 'Bp. Burnett's Son, who was lately either Commoner or Gent. Commoner of Merton Coll. (and hath been always look'd upon as a Young, little impudent Brat) is said to be one of the principal of the Mohocks.'[82] Burnet himself denied any direct involvement with the club but was alive to the suspicions of his accusers on account of the: 'innate fierceness in my looks, will have it that I am one of this gang.'[83] However, he also appeared to possess a certain degree of inside intelligence regarding the Mohocks, to the extent that he was able to give a name for the mysterious Mohock Emperor, who had been brought to public attention by *The Spectator*.

This was said to be 'Tim Allyn,' who like Burnet was an alumnus of Oxford and a Middle Templar. The suggestion of Allyn (Timothy Alleyne), lately of Barbados, as the Emperor would gain further credence after the publication of the popular tract *Who Plot Best: The Whigs or the Tories*, later in 1712. This stated that in the reverberation of the Royal Proclamation of 17 March 'The Scowrers Scamper'd , The Emperor fled to the *Indies*, and his Empire came to an End.'[84] However, *Who Plot Best* fails to lay the blame for the Mohocks at the feet of the Whigs, which it states, if proven: 'wou'd render the Whigs some of the wickedest People that ever were.'[85] The ambitious Whig plot described therein, was founded on the destabilisation of London society by the Mohocks in order to derail the finely balanced peace negotiations with France. This 'plot' was subsequently written off by the author as the hearsay fabrication of a hungry 'Honest Grubstreet Half-penny

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[81] *The Union With Scotland Act* 1706, 6 Anne c. 11, and; *The Union With England Act 1707*, Anne c. 7, which formed the Parliament of Great Britain.
[82] D. Watson Rannie, C. E. Doble, and H. E. Salter (eds.) (1901) *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 327.
[83] Cited in R. J. Allen (1933) *The Clubs of Augustan London,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 109.
[84] Anon. (1712) *Who Plot Best: The Whigs or the Tories. Being A Brief Account Of All the Plots That have happen'd within these Thirty Years. Viz…, In a Letter to Mr. Ferguson*, London: Printed for A. Baldwin, p. 16.
[85] *Ibid.* p. 14.

Scribler' whilst raising the possibility of the Tories exploiting the episode as a Jacobite distraction prior to 'bringing in the Pretender'[86] This implausible revelation of the Mohocks as Whiggish shock troops brought immediate retort, with the Tories accusations of dirty tactics turned inward by the *Observator*[87] and their exaggerated fears lampooned in ballad form as *Plot upon Plot*:

You sent your Mohocks next abroad
With Razors arm'd and Knives,
Who on Night-walkers made Inroad,
And scar'd our *Maids* and *Wives*;

They scowr'd the Watch,
And Windows broke,
But 'twas their true Intent,
(As our wise Ministry did smoke)
To o'rturn the Government.[88]

These satirical jabs did nothing to alter a hardening Tory position which assigned a Whig personality to the Mohocks, with Hearne viewing them as that party's young Turks run amok, who having achieved the premeditated mayhem, were in the process of being disowned: 'They are found to be young, lew'd, debauch'd Sparks, all of the Whiggish Gang, & the Whiggs are now so much asham'd of this great Scandal (provided Whiggs can be asham'd) that they publickly give out there have been no such People…But this is only one Instance of their abominable Lying.' Swift sympathised with Hearne's view and had been busy throughout mid-March writing responses to the various plot accusations with a series of counter-treatises.[89] He had also become convinced that the Mohocks meant physical harm to the Tories, and that consequently, he, as a prominent party member, was amongst their quarry.

Swift's letters to Stella during this period suggest a disinclination from press reporting of the Mohocks activities, towards a reliance on word of mouth from trusted allies, on 15 March he states: 'Ld Treasr advised me not to go in a Chair,

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[86] *Ibid*. p. 15.
[87] The accusation being that the Tory Party was the power behind the Mohocks, who were Jacobite sympathisers, funded by the French: *Observator*, 12-15 March 1712, 22, pp. 1-2.
[88] Anon. (1712) *Plot upon Plot: A Ballad. To the Tune of Heigh Boys up go we,* London: R. Janeway.
[89] J. Swift (1712) 'An Account of a Horrible Plot;' 'No Plot like a True Plot,' and; 'A Plot and no Plot at all,' advertised in the *Medley*, 24-28 March 1712.

because the Mohocks insult Chairs more than they do those on Foot,'[90] a fear perhaps reinforced by the running through of Davenant's sedan chair, and his digestion of the *Town Rakes*, by now a popular staple. Swift's advisor on this occasion was of the highest repute, being Lord High Treasurer, Robert Harley, Queen Anne's chief minister. Harley, privy to the latest intelligence, provided Swift with a running commentary of the case, leaving him to reflect on the Mohock's 'mischievous design' and rejoice in Harley's news pertaining to demise of one of their number and the capture of some fellow gang members: 'Severall of them Ld Treasr told me, are actually taken up. I heard at dinner that one of them was killed last night.'[91]

As March progressed Swift's fear of the Mohock threat did not diminish, with further tales of cuttings and beatings in unprovoked attacks provided by credible close sources.[92] This was allied to continued media coverage providing scandalous details of the objectives of the Club, with the *Spectator* of 21 March informing its readers of a cadre of Mohock 'Sweaters' amongst their previously reported ranks of Tumblers, Dancing Masters and Lion Tippers. The apparent role of the Sweaters was to assault those 'treating with Night-Walkers' by forming a 'Magick' circle and pricking their buttocks with sword-tips causing the victim to jig and sweat, which is described by a letter-writer, Jack Lightfoot, who purports to first-hand experience of the process.[93] The effect of continuing rumour on Swift was palpable, leading to changes in his transport arrangements after dark, with anxiety and fear expressed to Stella on an occasion when he: 'could not get a Coach, and was alone, and was afraid enough of the Mohocks.'[94] This resolute practice, with an added air of defiance, continued to the end of March, when he wrote: 'Our Mowhawks go on still, & cut Peoples faces evry night: fais they shan't cut mine, I like it better as it is, the Dogs will cost me at least a Crown a Week in Chairs.'[95] The

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[90] Swift, *op. cit.* pp. 284-285.
[91] *Ibid.*
[92] Including Lady Winchelsea, who reported to Swift first hand, on the vicious night time attack by the Mohocks on her elderly maid at the door of their house: Swift, *Journal to Stella*, 16 March 1712.
[93] *Spectator*, 21 March 1712, 332.
[94] Swift *op. cit.* pp. 288-289.
[95] *Ibid.*

fear expressed in Swift's prose is palpable, and seems to be founded in a perception of the Mohocks as both ruthless and politically motivated.[96]

Perspective: Defoe, Gay, and tragi-comical farce

Swift's ongoing terror was not shared by his contemporary fellow satirists Daniel Defoe and John Gay, who appear content to treat the episode as an opportunity for rationality and ridicule. Defoe, whilst seeing the Mohock threat to London as genuine and serious, expressed confidence that official response would extinguish the menace, asserting in the *Review*, that: 'In a Nation and City so well govern'd as this, I cannot but wonder to see such a Consternation among the people.'[97] Defoe seemingly retained his composure throughout the Mohock affair whilst others around him were losing their heads. This, in the face of accusations which accused him of being a central figure behind the anti-Tory outrage, published in a mid-March broadside entitled *The Church of England's Vision: or Dr Richardson's Dream*, which showcased 'that Seditous Wolf in Sheeps Cloaths (Daniel D'F - - e).' This libel was immediately rebutted by Defoe, who had been enlisted to write on behalf of Lord Oxford's Tories at the time, he queried: 'is it not strange, that while I am proposing to you in the readiest Way to Root them out, I should be Printed and cryed about the Streets, as one Concern'd in such a Villainous Practice…the Thing [The Church of England's Vision] came out with an air of Grub-street.'[98]

Gay's response, as a staunch Tory, was surprisingly apolitical, preferring to view the Mohocks affair as yet another popular performance of humanity on the colourful stage that was London.[99] Gay's liking of colour led to rumour that he was behind the 'Mohock Manifesto' that had appeared in *The Spectator* on 8 April. The manifesto, which is preceded by an address by 'Taw Waw Eben Zan Kaladar, Emperor of the Mohocks' added to the mystique of the Club considerably, and

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[96] Such exaggerated fear is common to volatile episodes of moral panic, often those which posit the threat of physical injury. This can be seen as a theme of the London Monster episode, examined within this thesis. A link can be made to heightened emotions drawn to both subjective personality and social symbolism by Kevin Walby and Dale Spencer in 'How Emotions Matter to Moral Panics' in S. P. Hier (ed.) (2011) *Moral Panic and the Politics of Anxiety*, New York: Routledge, pp. 104-117.

[97] Daniel Defoe, *Review,* March 1712, 153.

[98] Daniel Defoe *Review*, March 1712, 155.

[99] See, P. Lewis 'The Beggar's Rags to Rich's and other dramatic transformations' in P. Lewis and N. Wood (eds.) (1988) *John Gay and the Scriblerians*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 75-88.

included a defence that the group had no interest in assaulting the innocent, and were instead to be seen as a positive force for moral reform:

> We have nothing more at our Imperial Heart than the Reformation of the Cities of London and Westminster…all Husbands, House-keepers, and Masters of families…[should] not only to repair themselves to their respective Habitations at early and seasonable Hours: but also to keep their Wives and daughters, Sons, Servants and Apprentices from appearing in the Streets.[100]

This tongue-in-cheek manifesto was a playful parody of the preceding Royal Proclamations of October and March, and can be interpreted as dismissive of the Mohock threat.[101] The playfulness, and much of the terminology of the Mohock Manifesto, found its way into Gay's play that would follow, *The Mohocks: A Tragi-Comical Farce, As it was Acted near the Watch-house in Covent Garden. By Her Majesty's Servants*.[102] Released on 15 April, this short farce of 32 pages, often passed over in Gay's works as a prelude to his lucrative and highly influential *Beggar's Opera*, was not performed within his lifetime - it was however, widely read in the spring of 1712.[103] Here, in three scenes, Gay provides an overview of the Mohocks panic as a farce, with the entire play is infused with the language of the moment drawn from both the high and the low press, with the Prologue reminiscent of the drumming syntax of the Town Rakes setting the tone:

Oh Readers! had you seen the Mohocks rage,
And frighted Watchmen tremble on the Stage;
Had you but seen our, Mighty Emperor stalk;
And heard in Cloudy honest Dicky talk…
That's a sure way to raise the Poet's Name:

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[100] *Spectator*, 8 April 1712, 347.

[101] Guthrie, *op. cit*. argues convincingly that Gay was almost certainly the co-author, with the assistance of Alexander Pope, of a further satirical broadside released at the height of the Mohock panic. This possesses a folk devilish supernatural air, advancing the Mohocks as the purveyors of Armageddon, with the short title: *An Argument Proving From History, Reason, and Scripture, That the Present Mohocks and Hawkubites Are the Gog and Magog mention'd in the Revelations* (1712), London. [single sheet]

[102] John Gay (1712) *The Mohocks: A Tragi-Comical Farce, As it was Acted near the Watch-house in Covent Garden. By Her Majesty's Servants,* 15 April 1712 (Facsimile Copy, 2012), London: Kessinger Publishing.

[103] See, P. Lewis (1968) 'Another Look at John Gay's "The Mohocks"' *Modern Languages Review*, LXIII, pp. 790-793.

A New Edition gains immortal Fame.[104]

Within these few short sentences of prose Gay manages to satirise both the Watch and the London Press in their respective approaches to the affair; the Constabulary's based on self-preservation, the Media's as a cash cow. The three scenes take place in a *Tavern*, the *street before the Watch-house*, and another *Tavern. The Justices sitting* (i.e. a court of law), respectively. In scene one, the drunken Mohocks having been roused by their 'Emperor' impose their fearsome credentials on the audience by singing:

We will scower the Town,
Knock the Constable down.
Put the Watch and the Beadle to flight;
We'll force all we meet
To kneel down at our feet,
And own this great Prince of the Night.

The play develops to expose the Mohocks as bullying juvenile delinquents, a chimera, with the response of the Watch accordingly ridiculous in the face of this highly exaggerated threat. The turning point in the play being when the Mohocks force the bumbling and cowed watchmen to change clothes with them, before standing trial in their place before the Justices. At the end the Mohocks reveal that they have played a part, that of a tribe of violent savages, and are guilty only of impersonation, not criminality, stating 'We are gentlemen, Sirs, 'twas only an innocent Frolick.' The panic that had gripped London is thus reduced to a group of young rakes cocking a snook at law and order. Herein lies the power in Gay's nimble narrative, in that if anyone, moreover anything, might be put on trial for the excesses and failures of the Mohocks episode, it ought to be shambling officialdom.

Dénouement and symbolisation

On April 17 1712, a month after its last, the government issued a further royal proclamation concerning the Mohock scare, this time requesting that any remaining

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[104] Excerpt from The Prologue, John Gay (1712) *The Mohocks*, *op. cit.*

witnesses to the excesses of February and March should come forward.[105] This final proclamation can be seen as a bookend, effectively signifying an end to the fervour of panic, which had lasted for around ten weeks. As Statt argues: 'By mid-April, however, the spasm of street violence and its attendant panic had peaked, and the popular fear of the Mohocks was beginning to subside.'[106] Amongst the nocturnal reports of rake violence that were compiled by the law officers of London over this period, are a number of first-hand accounts that imply a Mohock signature. There are nevertheless limitations to the reliability of such intelligence; with all eye-witnesses reporting with heightened senses and at night, in the gloom of lamp light. This presents a highly problematic physical setting for gathering credible testimony, exacerbated by the unique ideological setting attached to Mohock offenders, which amongst other things, comprised class-awareness, connections, and a fearsome reputation.

Thus, the returns prepared by parish constables in compliance with the special measures imposed in mid-March, should essentially be seen as victim petitions. In other words, witness accounts in lieu of warrant, rather than tried cases which benefit from the greater scrutiny attached to due process. However, many of the reports within the returns of constabulary provide persuasive evidence of Mohock activity. For example, amongst the returns of the constabulary for the tight confines of Holborn between 1 February and 1 April are petitions that substantiate: a man being beaten with swords by two attackers; a woman being beaten at a turnstile by three men; another being kicked, beaten and thrown into a cellar by a trio of men; two separate attacks on two husband and wife couples, by a trio of assailants, and; a quartet of individual assaults on three members of the public and a watchman.[107] Other serious unprovoked group assaults, many of which appear misogynistic in their ferocity,[108] were reported in Westminster, Covent Garden, Clerkenwell, and the Strand, with constables frequently recording serious injury, including that of Elizabeth Fisher, who was pregnant when she was attacked by a group of five or six

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[105] *London Gazette*, 17 April 1712.
[106] Statt, *op. cit.* p. 189.
[107] LMA, MJ/SP Middlesex Justices Sessions Papers, MJ/SP/ April 1712, and draft of warrant for petty constables, 28 March 1712, folios 3-26.
[108] See in particular, *ibid.*, LMA MJ/SP folios 4-27, the analogous attacks on Mary Ann Kilby and Christon Jones, which both involved cutting of the lower lip.

men in the Strand, who threw her onto the cobbles, causing her to miscarry a week later.[109]

In addition to the constables' returns the court records in existence include a number of assault indictments where the defendant has been identified as the perpetrator, and was subsequently classified by the suffix 'gentleman' in the court roll.[110] Such records involving 'gentleman offenders' at centre of the Mohock panic include charges of assault on a constable, assault on a merchant with accomplices, riot and assault, and riot and assault with accomplices.[111] However, amongst these instances two tried cases in particular were to stimulate public attention. The first of these was a riotous assault on John Bouch, a watchman, stationed in Essex Street, near The Strand in the early hours of 11 March. Bouch later testified at trial that he had been attacked by a gang of more than twenty men armed with swords who had design to: 'nail him up in his watch-house, and roll him about the street.'[112] Following the attack, Bouch and several other witnesses were able to identify, pursue, and detain around half of his assailants, who were given as: Lord Hinchingbroke, Sir Mark Cole, Captain Robert Beard, Captain John Reading, Thomas Fanshawe, Thomas Sydenham, Edward Montague, Robert Squibb and Hugh Jones. Many of these men, with the exception of Jones, who was Cole's servant, were from highly prominent families, including Hinchingbroke, a Whig, and sole heir to the Earldom of Sandwich.

The second incident occurred on 3 April when Robert Cutmore, a servant, was attacked by two men, one of whom had cut the unfortunately named Cutmore, across his nose with a sword. The assault was seen by a number of witnesses, leading to the arrest of Captain Thomas Seaman, who had injured Cutmore, and Edward Churchill, who was said to have acted as an accessory – a charge later discharged by the Magistrates.[113] Alongside the assault, Seaman's indictment tellingly included 'suspicion of being a Mohock.'

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[109] *Ibid.*, LMA folio 4.
[110] Although something of an abstruse term, an indicator of high birth and wealth, or at least the bearing of it in front of the Bench.
[111] LMA MJ/SP Sessions File (SF) 545, SF nos. 20, 26, 33, 49.
[112] LMA MJ/SR/300, folio 48, Gaol Delivery Book, 5 June 1712.
[113] LMA MJ/SR/2188 folios 43, 44, 28 April Recognizances.

The two cases were tried at The Old Bailey within a day of one another on 5 and 6 June 1712. In Seaman's case on 5 June, he was found guilty of the assault on Cutmore and nominally fined.[114] In, the case involving the riotous assault on John Bouch, only four of the original nine accused stood trial, with Hinchingbroke, Beard, Fanshawe, Sydenham, and Montague, all discharged before trial. Of the remaining four, Cole, Reading, Squibb and Jones, in a forthright caricature of Gay's farce, testified that their reason for being on the streets armed on the night of the 11 February was to hunt for Mohocks disturbing the peace, with their apprehension a case of mistaken identity. This defence was however rejected by the jury who found them guilty, with the four men each being fined three shillings and four pence by the court; a somewhat merciful justice later immortalised in print as *The Tryal, & c. of Sir Mark Cole, Bar., &c.*[115] Like Gay's fictional Mohocks, the five tangible 'rakes' found guilty at the Old Bailey in the summer of 1712, for the moral outrages of the previous spring, had merely 'Frolicked' and as such, were also able to cock their snook at law and order.

The surviving direct literary response at the close of the Mohocks episode, *The Tryal*, offers a parallel to twentieth and twenty-first century instances of moral outrage involving violent young men. In that it expresses public incredulity at the light sentence imposed on the offenders despite widespread calls for punitiveness as the episode unfolded. It could be argued, to an extent, this lack of severe censure at closure prevented full symbolisation of the Mohocks as exemplary folk devils, but a symbolic blow had been dealt towards the violent rake subculture from which they had emerged. Cohen (drawing on twentieth-century models), emphasises the important consideration of social class when reflecting on such cases, with affluent delinquents protected to an extent, but worthy of special attention when certain boundaries are crossed:

> Oxbridge-type 'pranks' or 'high spirits' could be tolerated and not assigned
> social   problem status not just because the deviants were protected by their

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[114] LMA *ibid*. MJ/SR/2189 indictment no. 25, and MJ/SR/300, folio 48, Gaol Delivery Book, 5 June 1712.

[115] Anon. (1721) 'The Tryal, & c. of Sir Mark Cole, Bar., &c' in *A Compleat Collection of Remarkable Tryals, of the Most Notorious Malefactors, at the Sessions-House in the Old-Bailey, from the Year 1706, to the Last Sessions,* Vol III, (Facsimile Copy 2012), New York: Gale, pp. 105-107.

relative power, but because such activities occurred on a relatively small scale, were self-contained and invisible. The student only became afolk devil when his actions became more political, more visible, and more threatening.[116]

This view may go some way to explaining the apparent light touch of the Old Bailey in the summer of 1712, with the court, perhaps, finding the perpetrators guilty of nothing more than high spirits, which would suggest that London public had been guilty of mass delusion. However, a further explanation is that media interest in the Mohocks had all but ended in March. By the middle of April, the youthful, or perhaps naïve, eyes of the London press were directed elsewhere, unconcerned or perhaps unaware at the juncture of the commercial opportunities that existed in the manipulation of publicly expressed fear.

As such, the two trials of the five wealthy young men finally accused of the Mohock outrages passed quietly, and received no press coverage. This offers a significant rarity in terms of the historical application of moral panic theory, with a majority of later episodes comprising public offence holding press attention until at least the passing of sentence, and with certain causes célèbres, for years afterwards. The closest article referencing the Mohocks to the trial dates of Seaman and Cole et al., is a byline advertisement in the *Protestant Post Boy* on 7 June 1712. The advert is for a semi-annual publication entitled *The Political State of Great Britain*,[117] which contains amongst other things, an 'Account of the Pretended Mohocks and Other Remarkable Occurrences.'[118] Volatility in terms of fading public and press attention is not unusual, as Goode and Ben-Yehuda explain 'by their very nature moral panics are volatile; they erupt fairly suddenly…and, nearly as suddenly, subside.'[119] However, it is certainly uncommon for a case which had captivated senior members of the establishment, inspired a satirical play, and mobilised the guard within the space of ten weeks, to be consigned to legend so soon after discovery and consensus of reality.

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[116] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.,* p. 164.
[117] Abel Boyer (ed.) (1712) *The Political State of Great Britain*, vol. 13, London: John Baker.
[118] *Protestant Post Boy*, 7 June 1712.
[119] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit*., pp. 38-39.

Concluding thoughts

It is clear that the Mohock panic that gripped London for less than three months in the spring of 1712, has many direct parallels to Stanley Cohen's original thesis which formed the basis of his processual hypothesis in *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*.[120] On the streets of early eighteenth-century Holborn and on the beach of mid-twentieth-century Clacton, the offending folk devils are wild young men with money in their pockets, under the influence of popular culture.[121] They were also regarded as members of a furtive subculture with novel nomenclature and rituals, alien to mainstream society. Each of these subcultures is represented to an extent by partisan violence, which in hindsight can be seen as embellished, at best sporadic or by some, chimeric. Causative factors within such events are manifold of course, but a key moral element of the episode in early 1712 appears to be that it came in the midst of an official campaign for morality under the auspices of the Society for the Reformation of Manners.[122] Thus, the tolerance threshold for libertinism and rake culture was likely declining at a time when the population of London was not only increasing, but getting younger and thereby offering further potential for socialising and hedonism.

In the case of the Mohocks the source of their subculture is particularly interesting and clearly exotic, founded on a desire to adapt what was increasingly seen as sadistic rakism into a form of noble savagery. This highlights the cultural impact of the visit of the four Iroquois 'kings' to London in the spring of 1710, and the flurry of fashionable excitement and print they had inspired. It is not entirely clear whether the group appropriated the Mohock name for themselves, or whether it was conferred upon them by their actions, but given the connotations of fierce 'nobility', the former appeal to vanity appears more likely. As folk devils, rake groups possessed a history of adopting tribal names and wearing colours, and costumes in their pursuit of violent sport. Indeed, by the first decade of the eighteenth-century the clique had been recognised as a social problem by the wider

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[120] S. Cohen (1972) *op. cit.*
[121] For the Mohocks perhaps *The Four Indian Chiefs*, for the Mods and Rockers, *Bo Diddley* and *Gene Vincent*.
[122] See A. Hunt (1999) *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22-24.

population in London, and increasingly the narrow elites from which they had emerged.[123]

The recorded discovery of the Mohocks as folk devils emanated as rumour from this elite, and is first found in the unconnected personal correspondence of Jonathan Swift and Anne Strafford. However, the appearance of the Mohocks in the popular press is very concurrent (within four days of Swift's letter to Stella on 8 March), suggesting that the group had been at large in London for some time. Unusually, it does not follow that Swift or any of the other outraged powerful actors emerge as *moral entrepreneurs* in the classic sense, seemingly content to keep their heads below the parapet until the terror hopefully subsided. The exaggerated fear felt within the group was clearly enough to alter behaviour and force precautions, whilst an intrigue of political undercurrent based upon the destabilisation of law and order in London was quickly created. However, such fears amongst the establishment were not felt universally, notably with both Defoe and Gay rebutting the threat posed by the Mohocks as embroidered folly, Gay's satirical retort in particular exposing officialdom as participants in a ridiculous farce.

Prediction and the garnering of general hostility was therefore left to the popular press. A fledgling mass media is evident, its composition far from fully formed, but already assuming a key role, with London's twenty-five newspapers leading the way. At the commencement of the Mohock episode, the press appears to act as a catalyst, recognising that it can control action and force reaction. The newspaper 'industry' in Augustan London was exactly a decade old in March 1712,[124] but within that decade an innovative and responsive agency had been created, that was able to take a persuasive 'puff' from the highbrow *Spectator* in the morning, and form it into a plethora of gory Grubstreet renditions on street corners

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[123] The royal proclamations on public morality of February 1698 under William III, and October 1711 under Anne, both targeted 'vice' the activities of drinking, gambling, whoring, and fighting which symbolised rake culture. See, R. O. Bucholz (1993) *The Augustan Court: Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.355-356.

[124] London's first daily newspaper the *Daily Courant*, being launched, in Fleet Street on 11 March 1702.

by midday.[125] A commercial spirit that John Gay captured so well as 'a sure way to raise the Poet's Name, A New Edition gains immortal Fame.'

That is not to say that press treatment of the Mohocks was based on illusion, or bereft of reality. It was however subject to amplification. As in Clacton in 1964, there was undoubtedly youth perpetrated violence in Holborn, Covent Garden and their environs in early 1712. Much of it sectarian, spiteful, and vicious. At the core of press led processual moral panics are always grains of truth, instances of witnessed deviant or criminal behaviour, the role of the press, wittingly or unwittingly, able to turn these incidental molehills into mountains. To flesh out the newly formed folk devils into the sum of fears and create consensual indignation. Violence is very much the *motif* of this particular case, with the Mohocks materialising during a crime wave in the bleak era of *Hanging Not Punishment Enough*,[126] ensuring that those who feared being out after dark would be even more fearful. In the eye of a moral panic fear of threat has little to do with actual threat, reality becoming a matter of perception.[127] To paraphrase Geoffrey Pearson, for Londoners that spring the Mohocks were *real enough*.

Such disproportionate press reaction often goes hand in hand with a disproportionate political reaction and manufactured or not, it is evident the threat posed by the Mohocks was taken seriously by both the government and the general public at the height of the scare in mid-March. At this point, there are reports of vigilantism[128] preceding the gathering of the Privy Council resulting in the grim royal proclamation, which roused both civil and military power and offered substantial reward. The latter, combined with the Harcourt Commission's covert suggestion that the watch be armed reveals an extraordinary state of affairs, which posits the episode as approaching moral crisis at its height.

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[125] This is particularly evident in the events of 12 March, when Steele's letter of mutilation and misogyny as Bickerstaff in the *Spectator,* corresponds with the appearance on the *Town Rakes*, pamphlet and its tales of barbarism and vulgarity.

[126] A popular moralistic treatise that sought to provide a bleak picture of London's inherent criminality - Anon. (1701) *Hanging, not Punishment enough for Murderers, High-way Men, and House-breakers*, London: A. Baldwin.

[127] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

[128] A further salient point here is that the reported vigilantism was a rarity as 'inter-class' with *bona fide* young gentlemen around the Inns of Court targeted for pursuit.

However, it must be considered that the rise of this particular menace occurred at a time of great socio-political change, deemed by Wood to be: 'the great era of conspiritational fears and imagined intrigues'[129] Much of this had been brought about by an uneasy Restoration and political conflict, which over time became a propagator of deviancy amplification. Indeed, Beattie points out that after a decade of war and Whig and Tory jousting,[130] the long awaited peace with France that was finally on the horizon had turned political eyes inward. Key amongst these was the demobilisation of a bloated army and navy, which he argues fostered 'Anticipation of trouble on the streets of the capital [which] may explain the panic that appears to have seized London in 1712 over the violence of the so-called Mohocks.'[131] This allows us to revisit Cohen's contention that culturally and socially folk devils are constantly in the background, already with us, creeping up on the moral horizon.[132] Thus, the processual moral panic over law and order caused by the Mohock scare in 1712 may well have been predicted, anticipated, or indeed created.

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[129] G. S. Wood (1982) 'Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 39(3), pp. 402-441.

[130] These internecine hostilities had led to the Sacheverell riots in March 1710, and the consequent collapse of the Whig party in the run up to the election the same year. The conflict continued throughout 1711, notably between Harley and Walpole, leading to the latter being imprisoned in the Tower of London for impeachment for much of 1712, see W. A. Speck (1979) *Stability and Strife: England 1714-1760*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, pp.205-215.

[131] J. M. Beattie (2001) *Policing and Punishment in London, 1660-1750: Urban Crime and the Limits of Terror*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 370.

[132] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. vii – viii.

Chapter 4

Kill-grief and Comfort: Madam Geneva and the London gin panic, 1720-1751

'that poison called gin is the principal sustenance (if so it may be called) of more than 100,000 People in this metropolis. Many of these wretches there are, who swallow Pints of this poison within the Twenty-four hours; the dreadful effects of which I have the Misfortune every Day to see, and to smell too…the intoxicating Draft itself disqualifies them from using any honest means to acquire it, at the same time that it removes all sense of fear and shame and emboldens them to commit every wicked and dangerous Enterprise.'

Henry Fielding.[133]

Substance abuse has been a recurring theme for moral panic theory since its inception. The Rockers in Stanley Cohen's study possessed a traditional blue-collar taste for alcohol, but his Mods, with their modish sensibilities, apparently preferred amphetamine. Despite, scant evidence of the popular use of 'uppers,' let alone epidemic, the headline writers in 1964 warned of a plague of 'Purple Heart Happy Hoodlums' and 'Drug Crazed Youths' poised to invade the English seaside. Consequently, the erstwhile moral entrepreneurs were horrified to discover this novel folk devil lurking in their midst and demanded 'very strong action indeed.'[134] Goode and Ben-Yehuda trace several episodes which accentuate drink and drug abuse in their *Social Construction of Deviance*. Commencing with the Prohibition Movement in 1900, through the anti-marijuana legislation of the 1930s, and into the hard drug panics in the United States and Israel during the 1980s.[135] Thus, such hysteria is far from novel. Indeed panic about corrupting 'foreign' substances

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[133] Henry Fielding (1751) *op. cit*. p. 89.

[134] Cohen (2002) *op. cit*., p. 111-112. In his revised introduction to the 2002 edition, Cohen discusses the contemporary recreational use of *ecstasy,* and the press hysteria that had followed the death of Leah Betts in late 1995. Describing it as an example of 'melodramatic moral panic.'

[135] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit*., pp. 13-17, 185-223.

appears to occur generationally, a concept succinctly summarised by Cohen as 'the wrong drugs: used by the wrong people at the wrong places.'[136] Moral panics within this category tend to focus on a perceived underclass of wretched users and wicked pushers. They are frequently longitudinal, possess policy implications, and find their history by offending cultural norms and social custom.

Long before John Bull emerged from the Scriblerus club in early eighteenth-century England, an earlier manifestation of the national everyman character existed in John Barleycorn. Barleycorn's roots as a mascot were in Anglo-Saxon paganism as *Beowa* (Barley), the spirit of the fields. His legend and the folk songs derived from it celebrated perennial death and renewal, and the restorative properties of 'drinking his blood.'[137] The song was established as a drinking anthem in the fields and alehouses of early modern Britain, as a celebration of ale, an ancient word meaning feast or plenty.[138] Beer for the British existed as a cultural icon, a symbol of productivity, and a cause for celebration in a nation of drinkers. According to Thomas 'pots of beer' permeated social life, playing 'a part in nearly every public and private ceremony, every commercial bargain, every craft ritual, every private occasion of mourning or rejoicing.'[139] Hailwood further suggests that it provided an *idiom* for good fellowship which reached its peak in the seventeenth century, encouraging an explosion of drink related literature, usually in the single sheet form of penny ballads, costing the same as a pint of ale.[140]

Beer drinking was also recognised as possessing several public policy benefits in terms of economy and health. Production provided a way of utilising and adding value and shelf-life to surplus grain, allowing it be viewed as an aid to labour and productivity.[141] Similarly, the brewing process was seen to circumvent many of the consequences of drinking contaminated or brackish water, with the end product

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[136] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

[137] K. Herbert (2011) *Looking for the Lost Gods of England,* Ely: Anglo-Saxon Books, p.16

[138] The legend was often sold as a broadside in eighteenth century London, which doubled as a song sheet – see for example Alexander Pennecuik (1725) *A Huy and Cry After Sir John Barlycorn*, London. The legend itself is British, with any early anthology example in the *Bannatyne Manuscript* (1568) and an interpretation by Robert Burns in 1782.

[139] K. V. Thomas (2003) *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, London: Penguin, p. 17.

[140] M. Hailwood (2014) *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press, p. 121

[141] J. F. Warner 'Good Help is Hard to Find: A Few Comments About Alcohol and Work in Preindustrial England' *Addiction Research*, 2, 1995, pp. 259-269

often used as panacea and anaesthetic to both medical and social ills.[142] Thus, at the turn of the eighteenth century, whilst some organised opposition to excessive drinking existed, principally from the Societies for the Reformation of Manners (SRM) as a derivative of Sabbath breaking,[143] the general consensus was blithe, culturally unconcerned about intoxication. Indeed, for many, beer drinking was seen as a signifier of honesty and trust, with Defoe considering 'As to vices, who can dispute our intemperance, while an honest drunken fellow is a character in a man's praise?'[144] For the English, the hearty inebriate Johns - Barleycorn, Oldcastle, and Falstaff - were folk heroes, with no negative connotation to devilry in drink, even in excess.[145]

Innovation and discovery: The seductive Madam Geneva

Jenever was the strong juniper flavoured spirit of Antwerp which had provided succour and 'Dutch courage' for British troops billeted in the city during the Dutch War of Independence against Spain in the 1580s – its potent martial properties described as a 'battle elixir'[146] Originally imported into Britain in small amounts as a stomach medicine in the early seventeenth century it gained some popularity as a recreational drink in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution and accession of William and Mary in 1688.[147] The adoption of Geneva[148] was also due to the embracing of technological advance in terms of distillation over fermentation. A development allied to the high price (and adversarial connotations) of 'popish' French wine and Brandy which frequently provided the symbolic focus for trade sanctions and embargoes - England also was blessed with grain not grapes. Seeing the enormous economic opportunity for the establishment of a home grown spirit with readily available corn as its core ingredient, the government ended the

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[142] A. L. Simon (1926) *Bottlescrew Days: Wine Drinking in England During the 18th Century*, London, p. 46.

[143] Anon. (1694) *A proposal for a national reformation of manners*, London: John Dunton, p. 8.

[144] Daniel Defoe (1703) *A True Collection of the Writings of the Author of the True-Born Englishman, corrected by himself,* London, The Preface.

[145] See particularly, D. Birch (ed.) (2009) *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; and, S. Doloff 'Falstaff's Honour': Homeric Burlesque in 1 Henry IV (1597-8), *Notes & Queries,* (2008), 55 (2), pp. 177-181.

[146] V. Van Acker – Beittel (2013) *Genever: 500 Years of History in a Bottle,* Richmond: Flemish Lion, p. 137

[147] H. Horwitz (1977) *Parliament, Policy and Politics in the Reign of William III,* Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 9.

[148] The Anglicised form of Jenever (Dutch gin).

manufacturing monopoly previously enjoyed by the London Guild of Distillers in 1690. The effect of this was to create an open market for domestic London 'gin' a raw interpretation of Jeneva frequently flavoured with Turpentine, with no impediment to production or trade.

The new product was cheap and potent, proving immediately popular with London based vendors and consumers, who by 1700 were consuming on average one third of a gallon of strong spirits per capita per annum.[149] Such consumption was initially regarded as economically useful and socially passive, with Bernard Mandeville paradoxically decrying gin as an 'infamous liquor'[150] capable of making 'men quarrelsome, renders 'em brutes and savages…and has often been the cause of murder'[151] whilst recognising utility in docile drunkenness amongst the lower orders. According to Mandeville, gin acted as a social prop, accelerating the alcoholic process of 'universal comfort' as a sop to the daily misery of the poor, providing useful 'courage of soldiers, and animating the sailors to combat'[152] whilst raising tax revenues. Indeed, for the exchequer economic impetus in the first two decades of the century trumped any half-hearted expressions of morality, giving gin a protected status which according to Davison ensured 'a charmed place in the eyes of the government.'[153] This period coincided with the ascendency of the astute Robert Walpole, a Whig, who assumed the role of *de facto* Prime Minister under George I in April 1721. With the establishment still reeling from the financial collapse of the South Sea Bubble and the revelations of widespread political corruption that followed, the naturally conservative Walpole, was in no mood to entertain social policy which endangered fiscal recovery.[154]

However, since around 1720 there had been murmuring opposition to the unregulated availability of gin in London, with per capita intake having doubled in twenty years. With the corrosive effects of the new spirit plain for all to see on the streets, it was the medical profession who led the moral charge, with George Cheyne

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[149] J. Warner (2003) *Craze: Gin and Debauchery in an Age of Reason*, London: Profile Books, p. 3.
[150] B. Mandeville (1711) *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Passions, Vulgarly called Hypo in Men and Vapours in Women*, London, pp. 260-270.
[151] B. Mandeville (1714) *Fable of the Bees*, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
[152] *Ibid.*
[153] L. Davison 'Experiments in the Social Regulation of Industry: Gin Legislation, 1729-1751' in L. Davison et al. (eds.) (1992) *Stilling the Grumbling Hive*, Stroud: Alan Sutton, p. 27.
[154] J. Black *(2001) Walpole in Power,* Stroud: Sutton Publishing, pp. 19-21.

of the Royal College of Physicians condemning gin in his *Essay of Health and Long Life*, in 1724.[155] Cheyne's pioneering position was publically backed, albeit tongue in cheek, by both Defoe and the ethical weathervane that was Mandeville the following year. The former exposing the spirit as a fool's medicine 'Specifick to cure all the Maladies of Life'[156] and the latter (for now) decrying the 'Dutch courage' it had instilled in the criminal classes.[157]

Further official support for reform in 1725 came from a committee of the Middlesex Justices concerned at the proliferation of small time vendors of 'Bung your eye!' on their streets. The Justices commissioned an investigation on the returns of gin sales from a survey in Westminster, finding *inter alia* that only twenty percent of individuals were licenced, amongst six thousand dwellings selling spirits. Concluding that these extraordinary figures went 'far beyond all proportion to the reall wants of the inhabitants.'[158] This judicious and timely use of 'political arithmetic' to demonstrate cause and effect, a methodology employed by both sides in the ensuing battle over gin, had a significant effect in stimulating support for reform.   This led to a committee of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) petitioning the House of Commons in January 1726, to achieve a solution to the destitution associated with uncontrolled gin drinking in London, in particular the plight of infants born of gin 'the cause [of] weak, feeble, and distempered Children, who must be, instead of an advantage and strength, a charge to their Country.'[159] This was submitted by John Freind a physician to the Royal family and the only Member of Parliament in the College's hierarchy. The focus of the RCP's petition, on the pestilence of gin drinking as cause of disease and idleness, was also thematic, in that it highlighted the need to find a workable policy balance between public wealth and public health - expressing the desire for symbiosis, the mutual protection of both entities.[160]

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[155] George Cheyne (1724) *An Essay of Health and Long Life*, London: Printed for George Strahan.
[156] D. Defoe 'Self Murder. Royal Gin Recommended. A Satire' cited in W. Lee (ed.) (1969) *Daniel Defoe. His Life and Recently Discovered Writings,* New York: Burt Franklin, p. 452.
[157] B. Mandeville (1725) *Enquiry into the Causes of the Frequent Executions at Tyburn*, London: J. Roberts.
[158] LMA MR/LV 34/3, and; LMA MJ/OC/3, ff. 41-3.
[159] RCP of London, Annals, 19 January 1725, ff. 72 recto. cited in Warner (2003) *op. cit.*, p. 95.
[160] E. Gibson (1771) *An Earnest Disswasive from Intemperance in Meats and Drinks, With a more particular View to the Point of Spirituous Liquors*, 15th edn., London.

The pleas of the RCP were apparently ignored in the Commons, with Parliament, and Walpole in particular, preoccupied with the ruinous possibility of having to fight a full-scale war against Spain following skirmishes that had culminated in the Siege of Gibraltar in February 1727.[161] London's Magistracy however, had seen no abatement of the excesses on their respective patches since their report of 1725, and now pamphlets began to circulate which drew public attention to their previous findings, including the anonymously written *Dissertation on Drunkenness* which emphasised the social cost of spiralling vice as a consequence of spirit drinking.[162] Thereafter, a more combative stance on enforcement targeting vendors was adopted by a cohort of Middlesex and Westminster Justices.

This determined group was led by the Westminster Chairman Sir John Gonson, a Christian moralist, with the active support of Nathaniel Blackerby and Thomas Lane of Middlesex.[163] Under Gonson's leadership gin was placed at the fore of the evils identified as undermining public morality, seeing it as the causative factor in an upsurge of dereliction that was currently gripping the city. Once more the two pronged attack of health and productivity was employed, he argued: 'Nothing is more destructive either to the Health or Industry of the poorer Sort of People, on whose Labour and Strength the Support of the Community so much depends, than the immoderate Drinking of *Geneva*.'[164] This time the protestations of the beleaguered Magistracy allied to the helpful threat of mass delinquency, was not lost on the establishment, which included the recently crowned George II, who linked causation to 'Night Houses, Geneva Shops, and other tipling Houses.'[165] From this point press reporting appears to adopt a more solemn view of gin when it appeared on its inner pages.[166] The reading public having, apparently, previously viewed the self-destruction attributed to gin drinking as a voyeuristic form of *volenti*

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[161] A three year stand-off that became known as the Anglo-Spanish War 1727-1729.

[162] Anon. (1727) *A Dissertation on Drunkenness, shewing to what an intolerable Pitch that Vice is arriv'd at in this Kingdom*, London: Printed for T. Warner, pp. 10-13.

[163] Gonston an active member of the SPM and the SPCK, see P. Clark 'The 'Mother Gin' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1988, 38, p. 74.

[164] John Gonson (1740) *Five Charges to Several Grand Juries*, fourth ed., London: W. Meadows, p. 14.

[165] *London Evening Post*, 10-12 October, 1728, p. 1

[166] See for instance, *London Evening Post*, 9-11 April 1728, p.3.

non fit iniuria - exemplified by Defoe's 'fact based' satire *Self-Murder. Royal Gin* of 1725 which referred to a spate of a dozen deaths in a single month during 1725.[167]

The magistracy's lobbying for statutory intervention finally paid off in 1729 following the report of a Middlesex grand jury which recognised unregulated gin shops as public nuisances.[168] This, on the back of a series of petitions from god-fearing groups within the middling classes concerned for the moral implications of the ready availability of strong spirits, keen to ally themselves with powerful lobbyists in the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), and thus the ear of the Master of the Rolls and SPCK advocate, Sir Joseph Jekyll. As White argues 'ecumenical organizations brought together those of progressive and conservative tendencies alike, connecting the urban magistracy with the Campaign for the Reformation of Manners and the House of Commons.'[169] However, as potential emancipators of moral panic, this early alliance was formed from men who might be best described as *moral crusaders*, rather than the *entrepreneurs* commonly identified in conveying panic to the public. The two concepts, though analogous and potentially coexistent, possess important differences. For Becker, who coined both, a crusader is propelled solely by moral interest, and lacks the rationality, projectionism and essential pragmatism of the entrepreneur.[170] Cohen provides context in stating 'The crusader is moved by righteous indignation as well as self-interest. Unlike the pragmatist [entrepreneur], he sees the action as a 'cause' or a 'mission'' rather than possessing social benefit or restoration.[171] Such was the case in 1729, with an increasingly powerful cohort crusading against the depravity of gin but unable to garner the necessary wider consensus to transform a moral blight into a social problem. They would however, get their initiating act of Parliament.

Always roving: The revenue imperative and the human cost

The statutory impetus behind the Gin Act of May 1729, however, would be manifestly fiscal – a means of raising revenue. In simple terms the legislation would be used to hike prices, thus pricing the poor out of the market, which as a by-product

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[167] *Op. cit.,* p. 451.
[168] *The Historical Register for the Year 1729* (1729), London: R. Nutt, pp. 154-155.
[169] J. White (2003) 'The "Slow but Sure Poyson": The Representation of Gin and Its Drinkers, 1736-1751' *Journal of British Studies*, 42(1), January, p. 40
[170] Becker (1963) *op. cit*, p. 148.
[171] Cohen (2002) *op. cit*, p. 104.

would in turn alleviate 'the great Mischiefs occasion'd among the meaner Sort of People, by the excessive drinking spirituous Liquors, particularly of that call'd Geneva or Gin.'[172] This was done by imposing an annual license on vendors of distilled compound waters (spirits favoured with fruit) at a cost of twenty pounds, alongside a substantial duty of five shillings a gallon on all sales. The act also attempted to curtail street trading by levying a fine of ten pounds on offenders. With the new law attacking retail, its provisions were initially endorsed by the London Company of Distillers (LCD), who undoubtedly saw its restrictions as an opportunity to increase their controlling monopoly and share of the marketplace. This truce was short-lived, as it soon became apparent to all interested parties that the Excise Office lacked the manpower and willpower to collect the levies, and that there were very few takers in the city for the expensive licenses.[173]

Thus, the primary cause and effect of the 1729 act was to disenfranchise and undermine small retailers, who increasingly saw themselves singled out in terms of unfair taxation and diminishing access to credit. This was combined with a growing realisation that Walpole planned to use the spirit trade as a cash cow, whilst protecting his landowning allies in Parliament, many of whom had vested interests in both the supply of corn, and the means to distill it.[174] This indifference ensured that the new law was doomed at the outset and easy to skirt on technicality; with many small distillers opting to make 'non compounded' (without fruit) distilled spirits, which were given the appellation *Parliament brandy*. This heady concoction provided the strength of gin without the inconvenience of licensing or duty, and was sold flagrantly, with the *London Evening Post* suggesting in June 1729 a distillers conspiracy to flood the market, whilst reporting on a vendor placing a sign 'over his Door, Parliament Brandy Sold here (i.e. Distill'd Spirits) which he sells not much dearer than Gin us'd to be.'[175]

In the six months that followed the introduction of the first Gin act and despite the arrival of Parliament Brandy, adult consumption of strong spirits in

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[172] *Historical Register for the Year 1729*, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
[173] J. Warner (2003) op. cit. citing the Excise Registers in the Public Record Office states that only 453 licences were purchased during the lifetime of the Gin Act 1729, p. 99.
[174] See J. White (2003) *op. cit.*, p. 42.
[175] *London Evening Post*, 26-28 June 1729, p. 3.

London dropped by a third of a gallon to one gallon per capita per annum.[176] However, this momentum was soon lost and by 1732 pre-act consumption rates had returned.[177] Throughout, the distillers and landowners had lobbied their friends in Parliament to undermine the act on the grounds that 'the Act hath been a discouragement to the distilling of spirits and ought to be repealed.'[178] A 'repeal committee' headed by Walpole was formed and a report produced advocating abolition and expressing a desire for export production. Once again economic pressure provided the policy imperative, with the Prime Minister possessing 'no wish to undermine an industry that provided him with revenue' and evidently no basis for moral panic.[179] Thus the Gin Act 1729 was repealed and replaced with the revised Gin Act of 1733, the epitome of a statutory light touch, which simply ended the taxation of sales whilst firming up on the prosecution of casual street hawkers – a process, primarily facilitated by payment on conviction to informers.

1734 saw levels of gin production and consequently consumption reach an all-time high, with the attempt at statutory reform of the gin trade floundering as a regulatory damp squib, rather than an edifying tool of social change. Though wounded, the moral reformers continued their crusade. Drawing strength from the growing diversity of their senior membership which by now encompassed religion, law, politics and medicine, and possessed a collaborative commitment. Amongst the medics within this group was the prominent clergyman physician Stephen Hales who viewed public health and public policy as intertwined, a cause for state paternalism and when necessary, intervention. In response to the recent legislative impotence, the polymathic Hales published his *Friendly Admonition to the Drinkers*[180] in 1733, inventively employing the language of disease to address a contemporary social problem. Indeed, Hales' reputation as a biomedical scientist provided clinical weight to his empirical opinions on gin, which he saw a poison, capable of causing acute damage to the blood, stomach and liver. According to Hales, such damage was not medically irreparable, but prevention was better than cure in terms of halting both disease and addiction, he argues: '[It is] extremely difficult, for the unhappy

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[176] Warner (2003) *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[177] To around one and a third gallons per capita, per annum.
[178] *C.J.* 9 and 12 March 1732-33, cited in M. D. George (1979) *op. cit.*, p. 46.
[179] Warner (2003) *op. cit.* p. 102.
[180] S. Hales (1734) *A Friendly Admonition to the Drinkers of Brandy: and other Distilled Spirituous Liquors*, London: Joseph Downing.

dram-drinkers to extricate themselves from this prevailing vice; so much more it becomes the duty of the governors of the nations, to withhold from them so irresistible a temptation.'[181] Hales' pamphlet acted as a catalyst to the reform lobby, and soon drew support from Thomas Wilson, the bishop of Sodor and Man, and a prominent member of the SPCK who had been expressing a growing concern for the safety of the children of the London poor. These interventions can be seen as both timely and significant in steering the previously narrow reform case towards social pragmatism. Moreover, two important theoretical antecedents can be identified in terms of moral panic. Firstly, Hales' use of *medicalisation* as a form of moral prediction, now a familiar methodological tool in establishing legitimacy over contested domains.[182] Secondly, Wilson's focus on children to forge commonality and consensus – if these drinkers of spirits cared so little for their own salvation, they should at least consider that of their offspring.[183]

A tragic illustrative case was to occur in February 1734, involving a woman named Judith Defour. Defour, a gin addict, placed her ragged two year old daughter, Mary, in the workhouse in the knowledge that clean clothing would likely be provided, and later the same afternoon returned with a forged release note and a female companion (identified only as 'Sukey') to collect the child. Once clear of the institution, the pair stripped Mary of her clothing to sell, before asphyxiating the infant and throwing her naked body into the filth of a street ditch.[184] The clothing (and ultimately the child's life) fetched a pittance, which was promptly spent on gin. At the Old Bailey Judith Defour recounted her infanticide:

> [It was] one Sukey, that persuaded me to it; and was equally concern'd with me. On Sunday night we took the child into the fields, and stripp'd it, and ty'd a linen hadkerchief [sic] hard about its neck to keep it from crying, and then laid it in a ditch. And after that, we went together, and sold the coat and

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[181] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[182] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 91-94.
[183] Children are frequently utilised as ideal exemplars and tragic catalysts during episodes of moral panic, with several models cited by Cohen, and Goode and Ben-Yehuda. Certain cases, like that of James Bulger in 1993 are significant portents – C. Hay 'Mobilization through Interpellation: James Bulger, Juvenile Crime and the Construction of a Moral Panic' *Social & Legal Studies*, (1995), 4(2), pp. 197-223.
[184] S. Walton (2004) *A Natural History of Human Emotions*, New York: Grove Press, chapter 9.

stay for a shilling, and the petticoat and stocking for a groat. We parted the money, and join'd for a quartern of Gin.[185]

Defour's own mother in moral mitigation described her gin addled daughter to the Justices, prior to their passing of a death sentence, as 'never in her right mind but always roving'[186] – a futile epitaph, which would later provide a moral muse for Hogarth. The incomprehensible tragedy was also of significance as a symbol, a folk devil, for the reformers, as Dillon argues 'the Defour story had all the ingredients they had warned about: addiction, violence, even the abuse of welfare. It summed up everything that the Gin Craze led to.'[187]

With such horrors coming to light and the provisions of the 1733 act proving toothless, Middlesex reconvened their committee to consider the ongoing effect of spirit drinking on public order in London, a decade on from their original report – the reformers being in need of revised political arithmetic. Reporting in January 1736, their statistics confirmed a significant increase in retailers to seven thousand and forty four, but still an inaccurate number that the Justices regarded as corrupted; with many of the constables responsible for returns operating as sellers. Of particular concern was the increase in sales via the 'inferior trades' which had quadrupled in ten years, allowing for the concept of individuals feeding their own addiction whilst inducing others - the concept of 'score' – 'they are easily tempted to drink freely of it, especially as they can drink the whole week upon score, and too often without minding how fast the score runs against them; whereby at the week's end they find themselves without any surplusage to carry home the their families, which must of course starve.'[188] A further significant expression of mounting unease in this wholly condemnatory report is aimed at the predicament and conduct of women, with particular emphasis on mothers, it states:

> With regard to the female sex, we find the contagion has spread even among
> them, and that to a degree hardly possible to be conceived. Unhappy

[185] Proceedings of the old Bailey, 27 February 1734, 'Judith Defour , was indicted for the Murder of   Mary Defour, otherwise Cullinder , by choaking and strangling her with a Piece of Linen, Jan. 29' www.oldbaileyonline.org, (accessed 22 August 2016).
[186] *Sessions Papers*, February 1734, cited in M. D. George, op. cit., p. 54
[187] P. Dillon (2002) *The Much-Lamented Death of Madam Geneva*, London: Review, pp.97-98.
[188] *The Late Presentments of the Grand-Juries of London, Middlesex and the Tower Hamlets*, Jan. 1735-6, appendix to *Distilled Spirituous Liquors the Bane of the Nation*, op. cit.

mothers habituate themselves to these distilled liquors, whose children are born weak and sickly, and often look shrivel'd and old as though they had numbered many years. Others again daily give it to their children.'[189]

The striking impression provided by the Justices is that of a ruinous spiral, which by this juncture was not only drawing in the lesser trades but also their own constabulary, the previously reliable, the hitherto respectable.[190] In their emphasis of the plight of children, the Justices may have had the benefit of Bishop Wilson's recently published *Distilled Spirituous Liquors the Bane of the Nation*.[191] A policy tract aimed directly at the legislature that built on the scientific foundation provided by Hales, but with a particular focus on child mortality and the consequent prospects for long term socio-economic policy. Remarkably, in terms of contemporary medical knowledge, Wilson raises the possibility of gin addict mothers passing on their alcohol dependency to their unborn children, in an echo of the condition presently recognised as fetal alcohol syndrome.[192] There is also clear analogy within studies of moral panic to the 'crack babies' scare which occurred in America during the mid-1980s, when widespread fears arose over the transmissibility of chronic cocaine dependency. The call in that instance amounted to a plea for the future of the country. As Goode and Ben-Yehuda, state, in reference to the episode 'Babies are society's future, its most precious and valuable commodity – and they make up its most vulnerable members. Nothing generates more anger than the physical abuse of tiny, helpless infants.'[193]

Such references to the possibility of a 'lost generation' resonated, at a time when population size was linked to the continuation of prosperity and growth, the essence of nation building. Those horrified at this portent of national crisis included Sir Joseph Jekyll, who having held high office of Master of the Rolls almost twenty years, was both influential and well connected. Jekyll, a noted orator and member of

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[189] *Ibid.*

[190] See, M. D. George, *op cit.*, citing the Middlesex justices in 1736 '[effecting] those who are in other respects sober and regular…whole families…fathers and masters, children as well as servants' p. 53.

[191] T. Wilson (1736) *Distilled Spiritous Liquors the Bane of the Nation*, London: Printed for J. Roberts.

[192] E. L. Abel 'Gin Lane: Did Hogarth Know About Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?' *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, (2001), 36(2), pp.131-134.

[193] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 216-219.

the Whig junto,[194] was also a committed moralist and known curmudgeon, once described by Pope as 'an odd old Whig, who never changed his principles or wig.'[195] Such qualities saw that abstinence finally had a worthy champion, and a newly rejuvenated moral lobby now gathered to him.[196] This in turn, ensured that a steady stream of critical comment and copy appeared in the London press in the run up to the new bill, a direct contrast to the muted prelude to the 1729 act.[197]

Jekyll's media offensive included the printing of one thousand copies of Wilson's *Distilled Spirituous Liquors* pamphlet, which had conceived gin as an evil indulgence, for lobbying purposes at his own expense. Furthermore, a personal plea was made to the King to condemn gin in his speech to Parliament. This extraordinary approach, made through Queen Caroline, was declined, but the Queen's sympathetic ear was retained.[198] Consequently, she was to become instrumental as regent in the push for a moralising gin act, positioning herself as a 'hearty enemy to distilled and spirituous liquors.'[199] Caroline's patronage was necessary, with Jekyll and Wilson's proposed bill seeking to regulate morality rather than modify revenue streams. For them, public decency (allied of course to godliness) was a long term policy goal, holding the view that the restriction of strong spirits would lead to an increase in self-discipline and order, which in turn would provide healthy subjects willing and able to labour, fight, and reproduce for Britain into the latter half of the century. The draft bill, though firmly rooted in obedience rather than altruism, was to be described as 'one of the boldest experiments in politics that was ever made in a free country.'[200]

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[194] See, H. T. Dickinson (1973) *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy*, London: English Universities Press, pp. 122-126.

[195] E. Foss (1870) *A Biographical Dictionary of the Justices of England (1066–1870).* London: Spottiswoode & Company, p. 374.

[196] A powerful group, which included a cluster of prominent MPs in Phillips and Oglethorpe, clergy such as Gibson, the Bishop of London, and the senior magistracy in Gonson, Lane, and Blackerby. Lobbying support was garnered from the SPCK and Georgia Trustees, as well as the by now diminishing SRM.

[197] See, Davison, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[198] Historical Manuscripts Commission (1928) *Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont, Diary Vol. II,* London: HMSO, p. 229 - 230.

[199] C. L. S. Linnell (ed.) (1964) *The Diaries of Thomas Wilson*, London: The Camelot Press, p. 26.

[200] W. Cobbett (ed.) (1811) *The Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 9, London: T. C. Hansard, col. 1110.

The trial of the spirits: Cosmetic social surgery

As Jekyll and Wilson's 'bold' bill moved towards law the pamphlet pressure continued with the appearance of the anonymously written *Trial of the Spirits*.[201] This persisted with the theme of gin's detrimental effect on national morality and health, though in much more explicit terms clearly aimed at powerful interests - imploring 'where will you find soldiers? How will the culture of your lands, the useful manufactures and Merchandise of the Nation be carried on?'[202] The author makes full use of their anonymity in attacking the vanity and immorality of the gentry, whilst highlighting the imbalance of power and lack of integrity in the gin war. In this sense it is a remarkable and utilitarian document, with its assertion that 'No body of men ought to get estates at the expense of the poor.'[203] Echoing Hales and Wilson it also applies the analogy of disease and observed physiognomy to instill fear, warning of the coming of a 'pigmy generation.'[204] The *Trial* immediately found support and a defender in Adam Holden, who in vindication of its combative stance explained that the key to alleviating the social ills of spirits was in the expectation and control of consumption. In his *Vindication,* Holden is calling for functionalism, using a rudimentary psychological model to explain the simplicity and atavism of the poor, essentially their lack of mental strength expressed as self-control: 'Lay but the Temptation before these Sort of People…and all the Laws in being or that can be made consonant with the natural Right of the Subject can never prevent 'em from being drunk.'[205] Thus, essentially he is describing social breakdown in the capital to the disconnected, the workings of a raw inner city population to the privileged, the respectable classes of the provinces, the detached capitalists.[206]

The landed interest was considered by the lobbyists amongst both the reformers and the distillers in the prelude to the Gin Act of 1736, with both sides

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[201] Anon. (1736) *The Trial of the Spirits; or, Some Considerations upon the Pernicious Consequences of the Gin Trade to Great Britain*, London: T Cooper.
[202] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[203] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[204] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[205] A. Holden (1736) *A Vindication of a Pamphlet Lately Published Entitled "The Tryal of the Spirits"* London, pp. 9-10.
[206] In this sense, Holden's pamphlet can be viewed as an attempt at symbolisation, the exposure of folk devils. Advocating the need for control of this dangerous substance, and communicating the need for consensus (a core tenet of moral panic) to the disconnected.

utilising political arithmetic to make their points. An emboldened moral lobby estimated the number of habitual spirit drinkers in London stood at over four hundred thousand,[207] with the majority seen to be diverting income previously spent on food to feed their appetite for gin. On this basis, and with the aid of Hales, Wilson calculated that every pound spent on grain for gin production was costing the farmers three in food wastage, a deficit of over a million pounds annually.[208] Such alarming accountancy, was immediately countered by the distillers who argued that the diversion of grain from the manufacture of bread went into the spirits industry, which domestically directly employed ten thousand families, and indirectly many more.[209] Moreover, as the bill had taken aim at curtailing the consumption of all spirit liquors, further economic trepidation had been expressed in the colonies, by the owners and overseers of the sugar plantations supplying the molasses required in the manufacture of rum. This was estimated to account for at least twenty percent of their output, the loss of which would lead to 'evil consequences' and foreign policy implications, with the French domination of the marketplace.[210]

The economic consensus of the moralist pamphleteers, which had furnished the 'boldness' in Jekyll's original bill, was an intention to attack the spirits trade at source – taxing the suppliers as well as targetting the dealers. This in theory would be imposed on the distilleries as an incentive to move production from quantity to quality, by levying two shillings on every gallon produced. However, immediately prior to the bill's passage through Parliament when a draft was subjected to the scrutiny of the Treasury, the offensive was restrained by bureaucracy, the boldness lost. Similarly, having reiterated an opinion that the appropriate target for spirit regulation must be retail, Walpole once again stressed the fiscal as a trump of the social, the imperative for the government was to balance the books and raise revenue by enforcement, ensuring, as Davison, argues 'that the Gin act should be no more than an exercise in cosmetic social surgery.'[211]

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[207] An incredible figure in a city with a population of around seven hundred thousand.
[208] T. Wilson, *op. cit*. pp. 14-20.
[209] Anon. (1736) *An impartial Enquiry into the Present State of the British Distillery*, London: J. Roberts, pp. 16-17.
[210] Anon. (1735) *The Case of the Sugar-Trade, with Regard to the Duties intended to be laid on all Spirituous Liquors, Sold by Retail*, London: J. Roberts.
[211] Davison, *op. cit*., p. 34.

However, whilst the bill was being debated in Parliament the focus of the press had been firmly on the domestic, with a flurry of articles decrying the breakdown in public order, perhaps in anticipation of political capitulation. This had the effect of providing popular momentum of the need for reform and reinforcing spirit drinking as the root cause of London's social problems, with the *London Magazine* in February reflecting on 'hardly a Week, I may say a Day, that we don't hear of some Murder, Robbery, Fire, or other dreadful Mischief, occasioned by people being intoxicated with these inflammatory Liquors.'[212] Though gin was rarely cited as a headline at this point, media scrutiny in the preceding six months, aided by the polemical nature of pamphleteering and the Middlesex report in terms of source material, had undoubtedly intensified. This in turn led to a preference for lurid stories about gin aided or gin induced misfortune, including reports of immorality, injury, destitution, death, child cruelty and combustion.[213] On occasion, several such variables were combined, with *Read's Weekly*, informing in December 1735 of a woman 'so much intoxicated with Geneva, that she fell on the fire, and was burnt in so miserable a Manner, that she immediately died and her Bowels came out.'[214] Later that month a letter which appeared in the *Daily Journal* which was to provide further encouragement for the reform movement and their supporters in the press thereafter, under the title 'DRUNK for a Penny. Dead Drunk for Two-pence'[215] - the crude wording having been observed on a sign above a gin shop. This phrase was to provide a convenient literal sign for the profanity of the fag end of the spirit trade, usually with a third sentence 'Straw for nothing' added - with many of the dreaded gin shops providing straw as a means to sleep off your stupor.[216]

By early 1736, both the London and provincial press[217] were becoming more enthusiastic about running byline stories containing accounts of misfortune aggravated by spirit abuse, frequently adopting a tone of senseless sacrifice, and saturating issues with gin related news during times of partisan parliamentary debate on the subject. Whilst this increased press coverage can be explained, in part, by the

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[212] *London Magazine*, February 1736, p. 73.
[213] For example, note *Daily Gazetteer*, 24 January 1736,p. 2; *Read's Weekly Journal*, 6 March 1736, p. 3; *Grub-Street Journal*, 1 April 1736, p. 2; and, *Read's Weekly Journal* 3 April 1736, p. 2.
[214] *Read's Weekly Journal*, 13 December 1735, p. 3.
[215] *Daily Journal*, December 18 1737, p.4.
[216] As a retrospective see 'Hogarth and his Works.-No, XI.' *Monthly Supplement of the Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, January 31-February 28 1835, p. 84.
[217] For example, *Norwich Mercury*, 13-20 March 1736, p. 2.

concentrated lobbying linked to politicised ownership of the press, it also signifies an incremental building of awareness, concern and hostility, common to many longitudinal moral panics. Moreover, the exaggerated and hyperbolic nature of such reporting in terms both of scope and scale, raises the likelihood of deviancy amplification.[218]

The premature death of Madam Geneva

When the new Gin Act was enacted on 30 September 1736[219] it was draconian as had been anticipated, but having been neutered of its extension to wholesale distillers, it had consequently lost most of its teeth. The statute was applicable to all distilled spirits, and imposed a compulsory fifty pounds annual license fee on vendors along with a twenty shillings per gallon excise charge - designed to orchestrate a prohibitive price. However, it was within its enforcement criteria that the law's austerity credentials could be seen. Firstly, by requiring any vendor of less than two gallons to be licensed, a legislative anomaly, as the only persons able to take out a license were the landlords of public victualling houses[220] on the express approval of at least two magistrates. Secondly, unlicensed street sellers (hawkers and barrow sellers) were to be fined ten pounds per offence, and summarily sentenced to period of hard labour in breach; and thirdly, officers of excise were granted formidable powers to enter and search premises, with a fine for impediment of fifty pounds. The administrative crux being that the magistracy would target the mobile, policing the streets to eliminate the visible small time hawkers 'in all other places,' whilst the Excise would prosecute the static, spirit vendors selling from unlicensed premises. Without a standing police force, the success of both of these enterprises would be reliant on informers, who would be paid by the collar. Targetting a perceived underclass whilst attempting gentrification, as a workable social policy the concept fell somewhere between zero tolerance and *sus* law - the very essence of the statute was both disciplinary and retributive.

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[218] For a valuable analysis of press coverage and gin legislation between 1736-1750 see J. Warner, C. Birchmore-Timney, and F. Ivis 'On the Vanguard of the First Drug Scare: Newspapers and Gin in London, 1736-1751' in *Journalism History*, 27(4), Winter 2001-2002, pp. 178-187.
[219] 9 Geo. II., c. 23.
[220] Established alehouses, brandy shops, inns, and public houses.

Having already had to quell a serious riot in Spitalfields during the summer, when the local workforce had targeted Irish weavers and labourers undercutting their wages,[221] the government anticipated a similarly violent response to the new act. Thus, two days before introduction, on advice from government spies warning of militant publicans and Jacobite sympathisers, Walpole called out the army - with five hundred guards standing by at the Tower of London and dispersed throughout the city.[222] The day of institution, however, passed without incident, save a large number of spirit drinkers still recovering from an excess of untaxed gin in the prelude, lingering 'in the Streets dead drunk, with their taking Leave of that Liquor.'[223]

One relatively restrained form of public protest that did arise in the coming weeks, in the provinces as well as London, were mock funerals for Madam Geneva. These appear to have consisted of a sombre ceremonial cortège followed by an extended wake, where the 'mourners' were able to drown their sorrows and bid farewell to their beloved Mother Gin.[224] The publicans were also grieving with many draping their signs in black to show deference, at the behest of the distillers who supplied them.[225] Such wakes were greeted with varying degrees of scorn, mirth, and relief by the press, as a possible sign of resolution.[226]

Several satirical prints were produced to commemorate Geneva's 'passing' in September 1736, each one providing its own tale of probity in the aftermath of the chemical chaos that had gripped London. The prints are all at turns mocking and celebratory – moral metaphor is explicit throughout, and key to understanding public opinion. The *Lamentable Fall of Madam Geneva* (fig. 9.), depicts a busy London street scene with a gloomy and disheveled group of male and female drinkers and hawkers in the foreground, in the centre on her back lies the bloated prone body of Madam Geneva flanked by two mourners holding supportive broadsides. They are

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[221] F. McLynn (2002) *Crime and Punishment in Eighteenth-century England*, London: Routledge, p. 221.

[222] G. Rudé (1959) 'Mother Gin and the London Riots of 1736' *Guildhall Miscellany*, 10, pp. 59-60. Whilst similarities might be drawn here to the Mohocks panic of 1712 in terms of the call to arms in March, Walpole's action in 1736 appears protective rather than rousing, in anticipation of tangible public disorder.

[223] *Daily Journal*, 30 September 1736, p. 2.

[224] *Daily Gazetteer*, 5 October 1736, p. 1.

[225] G. Rude, *Hanoverian London, op. cit.*, p. 153

[226] *London Evening-Post*, 25-28 September 1736, p. 2.

heckled on their left side by beer drinkers outside of an alehouse, and wine drinkers on the right under a vintners sign.[227] The *Funeral Procession of Madam Geneva* (fig. 10.), a larger landscape print, provides a more formal vision of St Giles showing a long winding funeral procession of upright men in white aprons, the distillers. They are led towards Geneva's grand casket and the graveyard beyond by a naked beggar. In the foreground we see the distillers' grieving customers, as mostly female. As these women brawl and weep amongst stray dogs and their destitute children, a sign on an empty tavern reads 'Gin no more by Retale' with another stating 'Geneva, Brandy, Rum, Arrack, Ca...' an eager sign painter stands by ready to receive the instruction to repaint.[228] However, perhaps the most striking visual satire to emerge in connection with the 1736 act is provided by a more traditional symbolism addressed *To the Mortal Memory of Madam Geneva* (fig. 11.).[229] Here, we see depicted a hierarchical funeral monument garnished by those who stand to lose the most from the regulation (death) of gin. The top of the image is dominated a large wooden still, atop of which reclines a guardsman pointing his bayonet at a distiller's apron upon which is inscribed 'To the Mortal Memory of Madam Geneva. Who died Sept. 29. 1736. Her Weeping Servants & loving Friends consecrate This Tomb.' Geneva herself lies nonchalantly propped on one elbow in the foreground, flanked by two urchin gin hawkers with empty casks, a distraught fishwife with her weeping child, and an indignant distiller leaning on his barren still. In this print, an elderly Madam Geneva is depicted as a malevolent toothless crone, complete with hooked nose and pointed hat – suggestive of her endorsement as a more traditional English folk devil.[230] Indeed, persuasive negative stereotyping is observable in all of these prints. Gin drinkers, regardless of age or gender, are to be drawn from the indolent poor, providing a powerful symbol of shamelessness when 'images are made much sharper than reality.'[231]

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[227] *The Lamentable Fall of Madam Geneva*, 29 September 1736, London: Eliz. Foster, BM Satires 2278, www.britishmuseum.org (accessed 28 July 2016).
[228] *The Funeral Procession of Madame Geneva*, 29 September 1736, London: John Clark. BM Satires 2277, www.britishmuseum.org (accessed 26 July 2016).
[229] *To the Mortal Memory of Madam Geneva*, 29 September 1736, London: Heroman van der Mijn. BM Satires 2279, www.britishmuseum.org (accessed 26 July 2016).
[230] M. Gijswijt-Hofstra et al. (1999) *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, London: The Athlone Press, p. 180.
[231] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.*, pp. 27-30.

Jekyll's bold vision, terminally stymied by Walpole into palatable legislation, came into force quietly, but the celebration of the death of Madam Geneva was to be premature. In practice the government's attempt at severe disciplinary legislation had simply politicised the public's drinking habits, and by the spring of 1737 the consumption and proliferation of the previous summer had returned, with the spirit readily available 'in all the Towns round London as much as ever.'[232] The act had enjoyed some limited success in terms of the licensing of established vendors, but it had failed to achieve its primary purpose, which had been the prevention of itinerant street trade in strong spirits. This was chiefly due to the reliance on paid informers in bringing prosecutions, as it soon became apparent to the magistrates that they were being overwhelmed by hawkers and minor offenders of no fixed abode who were clearly unable to pay the extortionate ten pounds fine.[233] This in turn led to the informers turning their attentions towards the unlicensed, but otherwise respectable, publicans, who were frequently defended by their regulars within their communities.

Davison, drawing on the figures for prosecutions reported under the 1736 act, as amended, from Justices' reports and those disseminated in the press, considers the statistics to be both erroneously recorded and exaggerated. Moreover, the number provided only covers fines and claims for reward (from informants), thus failing to take account of both acquittals and committals for imprisonment. He argues that in terms of what should have been an administrative operation of civil law: 'the excise commissioners would have had to convict nine people every day for eighteen months, and the metropolitan JPs about ten people a day over the same period. If such a scale of activity had been even close to accurate, this would have been one of the most invasive penal laws enacted during the early eighteenth century.'[234] There is also evidence from the excise proceedings that the level of fines was substantially reduced in practice, with reports from the spring and summer of 1737 demonstrating that the commissioners for excise were prepared to reduce fines in a number of cases, and fully mitigate others 'after admonishing them for their offending against the Laws.'[235]

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[232] *London Evening* Post, 9-12 April 1737, p.1.
[233] An equivalent labour value of around £20,000 in 2016.
[234] Davison, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.
[235] *Read's Weekly Journal, or British-Gazetteer*, 17 December 1737.

However, it was perhaps the necessary dependency on paid informers that reveals the lasting characteristics of the Gin Act 1736, and would essentially galvanise the public's response to it. Londoners were used to the deployment of informants within their communities, since the SRM had used them to furnish immoral intelligence during the 1690s.[236] By 1736 the populace had grown both weary and resilient to the practice, with developed forms of vigilante justice and 'just deserts' often meted out as a collective response. This situation was made considerably worse after the government attempted to strengthen their offensive against street vendors in 1737. This was done by tabling a substantial amendment to the 'revolutionary' 1736 statute less than a year after its inception – thereafter amended as the Gin Act 1737. With Walpole's directive unravelling, this new clause provided excise commissioners with additional powers (akin to that of the magistracy) to use and reward their standing army of officers and informants in the prosecution of petty street vendors and hawkers. This immediately achieved the desired surge in convictions of minor offenders, who were mostly women, but at a high cost, with a reactive escalation in mob violence towards known informers and those suspected of being informers.

The methodology of informing was prone to corruption, particularly given the high rewards on offer, with a single five pounds collar equivalent to a year's wages for a casual labourer or junior servant.[237] This ensured that alongside the brisk turnover in overt spirit hawkers, dishonesty and deception was employed to entrap the covert. With no penalty imposed on medicinal alcohol, the more ruthless 'professional' informers would approach landlords requesting spirits as an under-the-counter curative for themselves or a loved one. Once provided, the sample was promptly submitted to the excise officers as real evidence of illicit gin trading.[238] Less innovative underhand tactics that were frequently employed included perjury, the simple tactic of lying on oath about behaviour for financial reward or to settle scores;[239] and, extortion, whereby people were threatened with exposure to the

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[236] Informants were also used in the city in the enforcement of the Conventicle Act 1664.
[237] D. A. Kent (1989) 'Ubiquitous but Invisible: Female Domestic Servants in Mid-eighteenth Century London' *History Workshop Journal*, 28, 1989, p. 117-118.
[238] *London Evening Post*, 26-28 April 1737, p. 2; *Daily Post,* 27 April 1737, p. 2.
[239] J. F. Warner, F. Ivis, and A. Demers 'A Predatory Social Structure: Informers in Westminster, 1737-1741' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 33(4), 2000, p. 625.

authorities unless payment was forthcoming.[240]   The London public's unease at having informers in their midst led to calls for exposure, with advertisements taken out in the daily press requesting information and naming and shaming 'for the Benefit of the Public.'[241]   In such a distrustful and negatively charged atmosphere communities closed ranks, and the traditional plebian social and meeting space of good fellowship, the alehouse and the inn, were made unwelcoming, guarded, and surly. Consequently, when informers were exposed they were seen as fair game for 'the rough discipline of the rabble.'[242]

Rough discipline in this regard was analogous to the collective bloodlust normally reserved for the pillory, and as such the ensuing violence and scale was both erratic and unpredictable in its intensity. As the *London Evening-Post* reported 'a Woman who had inform'd against her Neighbour for selling Gin fell into the Hands of the Mob in Bond Street, and was so severely treated that it is thought she cannot recover the Wounds and Bruises receiv'd.'[243]   Between the mid-summer of 1737 and early 1738 serious attacks were reported in the press on a weekly basis ranging from public humiliation and chastisement to beatings and lynchings. Throughout, the illicit trade and flagrant consumption of strong spirits on the streets of London continued, but was now accompanied by simmering malcontent, leaving the Walpole supporting MP, William Hay, to confide in his diary 'it is now become a question whether this Nation is for the future to be governed by a Mob or by the legislature.'[244]   Within a matter of months, a statute long conceived as a tool of social control designed to regulate public morality had delivered more public disorder, a debacle.

The government response to the disorder was an attempt to instill further statutory discipline in the form of secondary legislation, thereafter the Gin Act of 1738. The new clause making it a felony offence to attack an informer, conferring the dire prospect of transportation or execution on the previously enthused vigilantes. By the time of this amendment however, the act was held in contempt and the passion for persecution and prosecution, was on the wane. This state of affairs had

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[240] *London Evening Post*, 26-29 November 1737; *London Evening Post*, 27-29 April 1738.
[241] *Country Journal or Craftsman*, 23 September 1738, p. 31.
[242] *Read's Weekly Journal*, 1 October 1737.
[243] *London Evening-Post*, January 5-7 1738.
[244] Diary of William Hay MP, 3 February 1737, cited in Davison, *op. cit*. p. 41.

certainly been aided by the loss of its architect, and his powerful patron, within a short time of enactment - Queen Caroline having died in November 1737, followed by Sir Joseph Jekyll ten months later in August 1738.

By 1739 the Gin Act was being openly ignored by retailers, magistrates and the commissioners of excise in London. Moreover, a significantly weakened Walpole government did not possess the appetite for further debate over spirits or an enthusiasm to repeal and replace the failed legislation, so did not intervene. By 1740 the Gin Act was seen as a dead letter, leaving Johnson to record that the law had been 'well intended, but was dictated by anger, and ratified by zeal; and there-fore was too violent to be executed, and, instead of re-forming, exasperated the nation.'[245] The nation's exasperation was also a critical factor in diminishing any groundswell of reforming public opinion, and thus dissipating the crucial consensus necessary to transform a waning moral crusade into a vigorous moral panic.

The lesser of two evils: Crime, consensus and moral regulation

Between December 1740 and October 1748 Britain was at war in Europe,[246] ensuring that foreign policy took precedence over domestic matters. Two further Gin Acts would be passed during this period however, though with a very different ethos to the *prima facie* moralising interventions of the mid-1730s. The first of these appeared in 1743 and repealed the failed Gin Act of 1736. The Gin Act 1743[247] was an administrative statute enacted in March with two conjoined aims; to fund the war effort by amending the punitive nature of its predecessor. The timing was judicious, as in 1743 Britain reached the peak of its spirit consumption during the eighteenth century, with sales recorded at over eight million gallons.[248]

The birth of the 1743 Act had not been without resolute opposition, but many of the arguments raised were seen as somewhat old hat; akin to state sponsored sin and the endorsement of debauchery, a sentiment immortalised in song as *Drinking by*

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[245] S. Johnson (1825) *The Works of Samuel Johnson, Parliamentary Debates, Volume the Eleventh*, London: W. Pickering, p. 477-478.

[246] The War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), which for Britain incorporated the Jacobite Rising in 1745. See, J. Black (2011) *Debating Foreign Policy in Eighteenth-Century Britain,* London: Routledge, pp. 201-202.

[247] 16 Geo. II, c. 8.

[248] D. L. George, *op. cit*, p. 48.

Authority. Now who'd be sober?[249] In the Parliamentary debates that had preceded its introduction a conservative reform lobby had emerged which included the entire bench of bishops in the Lords, alongside capable orators in Lord John Hervey and Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield. Their arguments against spirit drinking however were somewhat stale and amounted to a prevailing desire for prohibition, with Chesterfield elucidating in an echo of Jekyll and Wilson that 'Drunkenness is universally and under all circumstances an evil…[gin] must be removed out of the reach of the people, and secured by the heaviest taxes, levied with the utmost rigor.'[250] Such pious calls to man the moral barricades were by now twenty years old!

Reformative arguments on this occasion were unheeded, and when the new law was passed its basis was primarily fiscal, with Walpole's infamous 'sinking fund' now referred to by Chesterfield sarcastically as the 'drinking fund.'[251] This was achieved with a degree of success, by making the sale of gin 'public' – with the cost of a spirits license vastly reduced for licensed alehouses to twenty shillings per annum, and distillers forbidden from retailing direct to the public. In the short term this policy proved successful in delivering workable licensing and reduced consumption.[252] However, after three years of sustained lobbying pressure from wholesale distillers, and alive to the necessity of additional revenue for the ongoing war effort, the government reversed once more and provided secondary legislation. This repackaging emerged as the relatively unopposed Gin Act 1747, giving back the right of direct sale to the distillers via a five pounds license, whilst increasing the excise duty on spirits[253] – a further example within this episode of the pursuit of wealth overriding welfare.

The relative passivity over gin was short lived, as with the Peace Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle achieved in October 1748, seventy nine thousand war veterans from the army and navy returned to Britain, the vast majority to the streets of London

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[249] *Drinking by Authority. Now who'd be sober?* (1743), London.
[250] Philip Dormer Stanhope, *The Modern Chesterfield: A Selection of Chesterfield's Letters to his Son*, edited by Robert McMurdy, 1917, Boston: Gorham Press, p. 260.
[251] BL Add. MS 6304, f. 168. Cited in Davison, *op. cit.,* p. 41.
[252] M. D. George, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
[253] 20 Geo. II, c. 39.

where their homecoming was anticipated as a carnival of debauchery and crime.[254] Within months such grim forecasts were being confirmed as correct by the press, with a surge in property crime and street robbery, the *Whitehall Evening Post* lamented '[with the] frequency of audacious Street Robberies repeated every Night in this great Metropolis…there is no Possibility of stirring from our Habitations after dark, without the Hazard of a Fractured Skull, or the Danger of losing that Property People are sometimes obliged to carry about them.'[255]

Such a tangible crime wave could be identified as creating a mini-moral panic of its own in London between 1749 and 1753, with a vast number of battle weary demobbed servicemen attempting survival amidst a crisis of unemployment and destitution. In 1749, half of the men that were to be hanged had been soldiers or sailors in the recent war, in a space of one year, transposed from the tools of state violence to the victims of it.[256] The focus for much of the press in this instance centred on the vulnerability of the haves over the have nots, with a suggestion that the wealthy were being specifically targeted whilst the poor were being specifically ignored, sharing an ability to 'plead poverty'.[257] Such brazen solidarity amongst an unruly underclass was identified as both challenge and threat to civil society, and the most obvious causative drug available in the chandler's shops and on the barrows that served their communities was gin.[258] Moreover, post-war Madame Geneva had lost both fiscal influence and political allies, and would be vulnerable, particularly to sustained, energetic, and vivid opposition – which now emerged.[259] Alongside the diehards in Parliament, these mid-century gin reformers comprised a remarkable amalgam drawn from art, law and church. Chief amongst them were the social satirist William Hogarth, London's polymathic chief-magistrate Henry Fielding, and the philanthropic cleric Isaac Maddox, bishop of Worcester – with all three arguably

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[254] J. M. Beattie (1986) *op. cit*., p. 193. See also N. Rogers (2013) *op. cit.,* p. 152.
[255] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 14-17 January 1749.
[256] P. Linebaugh 'The Tyburn riot against the surgeons' in D. Hay et al. (1975) *op. cit*., p. 89.
[257] N. Rogers 'Confronting the Crime Wave: The Debate over Social Reform and Regulation, 1749-1753' in L. Davison et al. (eds.) (1992), *op. cit*., pp. 78-80.
[258] Chandler's shops were singled out as a particular problem at this juncture, as the low-end thrift shops of their day, now selling gin in small measures alongside bread and other household goods. Note, R. Campbell (1747) *The London Tradesmen*, London: T. Gardner, p. 280, for a derogatory summary.
[259] R. T. Connors (1993) 'Pelham, Parliament and Public Policy, 1746-1754' unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Cambridge, pp. 185-218.

at the height of their power and influence.[260] Here, we can identify the entry of authentic *moral entrepreneurs* to the fray of the gin panic.

By 1750 Hogarth was established as part social institution, part social barometer, as the painter of pervasive moralising masterpieces such as the *Harlot's Progress* (1732) and the *Rake's Progress* (1734). Prints of which were so plagiarised, so copied, so coveted, that they were the reason for the Engraving Copyright Act, the first copyright act and thereafter known as 'Hogarth's Act,' in 1734.[261] However, during his lifetime, Hogarth's most popular print in terms of sales was *A Midnight Modern Conversation* (fig. 12.), a conversation piece from 1733 which sat blissfully between his ruined Harlot and futile Rake. *Midnight* features a delightfully riotous drinking scene replete with eleven drunken friends of the middling sort, gathered around a voluminous punch-bowl set upon a table. The viewer is treated to the evening's end with the protagonists literally, punch-drunk. The characters depicted are very much the type of English archetypes that Defoe had identified as 'honest drunken fellows.' The revelry is wholesome and normal, almost natural.[262] However, ever searching for moral progress and having recently received accolades for his *Rake's Progress* series (1747) Hogarth had been working on a very different drinking scene, one that would repulse rather than delight.

The result was *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane*, companion pieces, issued directly as prints in mid-February 1751, and advertised in the London *Evening-Post* at the comparatively low cost of one shilling.[263] A price which ensured that the prints could be purchased for display in window, coffeehouse and alehouse alike. *Beer Street* offered a salt of the earth treatment of its beer drinking inhabitants; they are depicted as well nourished, fun loving, and content – a bawdy scene of health and industry (fig. 13.). It is essentially a warm humorous image of satisfaction at the end of the

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[260] In 1751 Hogarth and Maddox were both aged 54 (fellows of the RA and RSA respectively), Fielding 44. The trio were good friends, sharing a practical curiosity and concern towards the social problems of London.
[261] 8 Geo.2 c.13.
[262] P. Williamson (1999) 'Hogarth and the Strangelove Effect' *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 23(1), pp. 83.
[263] *London Evening-Post*, 14-16 February 1751.

working day, as Hogarth confirmed 'Here all is joyous and thriving. Industry and jollity go hand in hand.'[264]

   Gin Lane, provides a jarring contrast (fig. 4.). Here, we are taken to a chaotic scene in a St Giles slum, in the background amidst the rubble of ruination a tenement topples, the parish is disintegrating. The only industry depicted here is that of the pawnbroker, Gripe, seen buying essential tools and cooking utensils from his gin addicted customers, the undertaker, Kilman, and the gin distiller, who does a roaring trade. In the foreground is the iconic figure of a nursing mother sitting drunk at the top of a steep flight of stone stairs which descend to a gin cellar which bears the by now infamous legend 'Drunk for a penny, Dead drunk for twopence, Clean straw for nothing.' The woman has syphilitic chancres on her legs, the effects of prostitution. In her stupor, oblivious, whilst attempting to take snuff, her baby has fallen out of her arms to its certain death - a metaphor for the Defour case. The wasted corpse of an anti-gin pamphleteer sits upright at her feet, as to her left a boy fights with a dog over a bone. To the right another mother forces gin down her baby's throat to silence it, perhaps the next victim of the cellar steps – everywhere, disorder is held in tension. The composition is instantly shocking and memorable, Hogarth as contemporary photo-journalist, creator of images that demand reading, as Bryson argues 'In Hogarth there is always that second level of reading…of official morality and its unofficial counterpoint, the Hogarth image is entirely *exhausted*.'[265]

   The issue of Hogarth's prints as visual portent was followed within weeks by narrative with the publication of Henry Fielding's *Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* in March – the proximity of themes and timescale a signifier of their collaboration.[266] In his enquiry Fielding concentrated on utility, seeing gin as a disinhibiting futile luxury, a distraction, which would ultimately deliver a barren nation. In this respect, his work echoes the earlier reforming tract of Wilson, but differs greatly in terms of its pragmatism. The crux being that instead of seeing the immoral by-product of gin drinking as debauchery, Fielding linked it specifically to *crime*, and thus provided causation for the ongoing crime wave that

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[264] W. Hogarth (1833) *Anecdotes of William Hogarth, Written by Himself: With Essays on his Life and Genius, and Criticisms on his Work*, London: J.B. Nichols & Son, p. 64.
[265] N. Bryson (1981) *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Regime*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 150-152. Here, describing *Industry and Idleness* (1747).
[266] R. Paulson (2000) *The Life of Henry Fielding, vol. III.,* London: Blackwell, p. 17.

was gripping the capital.[267] This crucial connection was vital in creating momentum for moral panic in 1751, playing to the fears of the propertied classes, rather than inviting them to salvage the souls of the poor.

Fielding had met with Thomas Wilson to discuss strategy in December 1750, who relayed their conversation to Maddox.[268] Maddox himself, aided by the other veteran reformer of the 1730s Stephen Hales, had been working with the economist Josiah Tucker to design a forceful and provocative sermon flavoured by the evidence of political arithmetic over the threat of moral turpitude.[269] Maddox's methodology drew on *The History and Survey of London* (1739),[270] by the historian topographer William Maitland, a contemporary as a Fellow of the Royal Society. In order to provide the public with 'evidence' the bishop consulted parish registers and bills of mortality to provide a bleak picture of the nation's future, which was built upon the disease and diminishing birthrate wrought by gin. His credentials to provide evidence of social harm were further strengthened by his role as a patron for the protection of foundling children and campaigner the establishment of public infirmaries.[271] Maddox delivered his sermon at St Bride's church in late January to an audience which comprised the Lord-Mayor, aldermen and common-council of the City of London, as well as the Governors of several Hospitals. The effect on those assembled was substantial, with the aldermen resolving to enlist other parishes and jurisdictions, and petition Parliament with Maddox's sermon.[272] This, they delivered on 21 February, as a petition from the City of London, coinciding with the influential barbs of Hogarth and Fielding to form a trident. Within the space of a month sixteen more petitions against gin were submitted, the middle class providing the necessary

[267] The crime wave was serious enough to warrant a government committee to investigate its causes in 1750, Beattie (1986) *op. cit.*, p. 220-221.

[268] C. L. S. Linnell, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

[269] *London Magazine*, March 1751, pp. 112-113.

[270] Maitland's *History*, in terms of its data collated from Parish Registers and Bills of Mortality, was very much a work in progress, with an updated version in two volumes appearing in 1756, and four editions thereafter.

[271] E. Caulfield (1931) *The Infant Welfare Movement in the Eighteenth Century*, New York: Paul Hoeber, p. 50-52. C. L. S. Linnell, op. cit., p. 257.

[272] I. Maddox (1751) *An Epistle to the Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor, aldermen and common-council, of the City of London…concerning the pernicious and excessive use of spirituous liquors*, London: H. Woodfall.

consensus.[273] In response only one half-hearted submission on behalf of the distillers was forthcoming.[274]

The press, with the ammunition provided by Hogarth, Fielding and Maddox, and sensing change, had joined the fray, with the *Gentleman's Magazine* publishing returns from the Bills of Mortality, which purported to show four thousand convictions for licensing convictions and seventeen thousand gin-shops operating within the city from the previous year.[275] Even though these figures may well have been exaggerated for impact,[276] the constable's returns for the City, Westminster and Holborn districts in 1750, though incomplete, provide a similarly striking snapshot. Within these returns the iniquity of St Giles recorded five hundred and eighty eight illegal gin shops and 'twopenny houses of the greatest infamy' out of two thousand residences.[277] Other publications provided sniping editorials taking aim at government procrastination, with many reinforcing the recent strategic contributions from Fielding, Maddox, and in particular Hogarth.[278] Press coverage represented an immense swing towards the social reform position, with Warner et al. concluding that having competed on a relatively even footing in all previous campaigns, in 1751 positive polemics backed by the distilling lobby only accounted for two percent on articles in the run up to the ratification of the new repealing act in June.[279] Confronted with such unfavourable odds, in terms of eloquent and formidable moral entrepreneurs holding the support of the press corps, the Company of Distillers withdrew from the debate conceding that its governors 'did not think fitt to Appoint any Committee or to proceed any further thereon.'[280] A year on, the relevance and influence of the Company would be so diminished that it would withdraw its parliamentary agent.[281]

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[273] *House of Commons Journals, xxvi*, pp. 55, 77, 84-85, 106-107, 114, 117, 133.
[274] Bystander [anon.] (1751) *The Consequences of laying an additional Duty of Spirituous Liquors, candidly considered*, London. Gale facsimile reprint (2010).
[275] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1751, pp. 89-136.
[276] Davison, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
[277] J. P. Malcolm (1810) *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs Relating to London during the 18th Century*, London: Longman, p. 96.
[278] See for example, *Read's Weekly Journal*, 2 February 1751, p. 3; *The General Advertiser*, 20 February 1751, p. 1; *The General Advertiser*, 20 March 1751, p. 1.
[279] J. Warner et al. (2001), *op. cit.*, p.185.
[280] LMA, CLC/L/DA/B/003/M506209/003, *Court Minute Books of the London Company of Distillers*, 6209/3.
[281] *Ibid.*, 6207/1A.

Thus, the Gin Act 1751 came into effect on 1 July 1751 without significant opposition.[282] Concerns had been expressed during its passage through Parliament over the sacrificing of revenues, but on this occasion the law would be driven by the desire for social change rather than fiscal stability.[283] The debate over gin had been exhausted in the preceding thirty years, and the topical link to crime was critical to its conclusion. The terms of the statute increased excise, imposing a fifty percent price rise on wholesale curtailed the practice of retail from the distillers to unlicensed traders. Retail license fees were doubled, and licensing was restricted to landlords holding substantial property, alongside a ban on all retail sales to poorhouses and prisons. There would be no symbolic mock funerals for Madame Geneva this time, nor prints commemorating her passing. Press interest continued until the autumn, mostly concerned with the remaining rogue informers, but diminished thereafter, the hive stilled.[284]

Reflecting in 1756, Jonas Hanway held up the 1751 Gin Act, as an exemplar of reforming legislation, a means of social control and sate to top down moral panic, as 'the hand of Providence interposed by the instrumentality of His Majesty's minsters.'[285] Prints of *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane* would soon be used as exemplars, as shock devices by eighteenth-century schoolmasters and poorhouse beadles in providing moral discipline for their impressionable charges.[286] Gin had been identified as a parasite by the reformers which inhabited the bodies of the weak-minded, a substance capable of creating reviled folk devils. Initially cheap to buy, eighteenth-century spirits were evidently stupefying and addictive, but it was dire poverty that provided the incubation and longevity for their use. Geneva's most popular nicknames 'kill-grief' and 'comfort' are bereft of the intrinsic luxury detected by Jekyll, Wilson, and Fielding. It was a vice which symbolised the metropolitan chaos of London and its dissolute poor, stigmatising them for a generation - its passing after 1751 more to do with absence than abstinence.

Concluding thoughts

[282] 24 Geo. II c. 40.

[283] H. Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II, vol. I*, John Brooke (ed.) (1985), pp. 48-50.

[284] For example, *London Evening-Post*, 11-13 July 1751, p. 4; *London Morning Penny Post*, 31 July – 2 August, 1751, p. 2; *London Morning Penny Post*, 2-4 September 1751, p. 2.

[285] J. Hanway (1759) *A Candid Historical Account of the Hospital for the Reception of Exposed and Deserted Young Children*, London: p. 10.

[286] D. Bindman *(1981) Hogarth,* London: Thames & Hudson, p. 32.

The gin craze that gripped London between 1720 and 1751 at first sight appears as a classic processual moral panic in terms of a nation taking stock, calculating and symbolising deviance.[287] Further examination however suggests a rather more complex phenomenon that in socio-political terms is perhaps best viewed as a series of oscillating moral crusades and panics of varying intensity, punctuated by legislative interventions, rather than a single unified episode.[288] Broadly, within the period 1720-1729 there is discovery and problematisation; the decade between 1730-1740 witnesses prediction, symbolisation, and debacle; and, 1748-1751 evidences entrepreneurialism, consensus and closure.

There is however a strong constant; and that is the offending substance. Throughout, gin is the driver as a foreign body, which having arrived on English soil with a Dutch monarch in the 1680s, insidiously entrances and corrupts the nation thereafter. The technology of distilling is also imported, and thus a threat - a forced man-made process, as opposed to the more natural and familiar timescale of fermentation. In this sense, it is the spirit itself which emerges as the folk devil, moreover the creator of folk devils, a corruptor of bodies. This can be clearly seen in Defoe's early century language of beer drinkers as honest and heroic, contrasted with Fielding's mid-century view of gin drinking as immoral and criminalistic. Indeed, for Hogarth whose output straddles the period, it is explicitly about the substance, with both the wine and the beer seen in his *Midnight Modern Conversation* and *Beer Street* as conducive to industry and good fellowship, whereas gin, in *Gin Lane*, is presented as the harbinger of death and decay – an expressive contrast between the happy drinker and the violent drunkard.

The real moral gatekeepers standing in the face of this innovative alien threat can be identified as the Whig governments that held power from the 1720s to the 1740s. Successive administrations that at turns protected gin and stimulated its use, after effectively opening the floodgates to deregulation in 1690. This despite having anecdotal knowledge, at the very least, in the first decade of the eighteenth century that London Geneva was a brew that was cheap, potent, disinhibiting and addictive.

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[287] S. Cohen (2001) *op. cit.,* pp. 19-35.
[288] There were eight gin acts passed between 1729 and 1751, a striking testament to the disputed immorality associated with the substance, the stamina of the reformers and the stoic resistance of both the distillers and successive governments.

With the dawn of a reform movement in the mid-1720s, genuine policy innovation can be seen in the work of Cheyne in his medicalisation of gin as a social problem, pioneering the contributions of Hales, Wilson, and Maddox that would follow. Similarly, the social activism of the Middlesex and Westminster Justices at this juncture provided exposure of a lack of awareness or indeed concern from the political establishment about the social decline unfolding on the streets of the capital. The press focus in the 1720s and early 1730s corroborates this sense of passivity, with coverage primarily presented as misadventure, tales of folly about people unable to hold their drink. The 'problem' is a lack of self-control rather than any social threat, and the media only engages fully with the wider debate during periods of legislative activity, as an indicator of alliance of partisanship.[289] Consequently, when the long awaited 1729 Gin Act did appear its singular purpose was to raise revenue, with state ire directed not at intemperance, but at those failing to fully pay for their pleasure. This impassiveness to the effects of strong spirits on the health of the populace was readily identifiable in the complicity of Walpole and his landowning allies, who were to preside over the gin debacle for twenty-one of the thirty-one years it was on the political agenda.

The Judith Defour case in 1734, and the intensification of reform lobbying as a prelude to the Gin Act of 1736, also provide important enduring themes. With Defour, the folk devil becomes the sum of all the fears, the mother so corrupted, so pathetic, that she is capable of destroying her own child. Defour thus becomes a lasting symbol of female depravity and feckless poverty. Not just for Hogarth, but for the reformers and their printmakers in particular, incredulous at the thought of women drunk alongside men, without men, outnumbering men – visually, depicting them as failed mothers, mad bitches, or aged witches within an obnoxious underclass.[290] This coincided with the moral crusaders coming of age under the powerful patronage of Joseph Jekyll and Queen Caroline, with panic over gin usage perhaps attaining its height. However, the introduction of the Gin Act 1736 that followed was a fudge, an attempt at prohibition and gentrification allied to enforcement via informant. This politicised spirits and created closed, suspect

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[289] J. Warner et al. (2001) *op. cit.*

[290] This numerical bias and social construction in terms of the gender and casting of gin drinkers is viewable in all of the popular prints that were issued to coincide with the 'death of Madam Geneva' in 1736, and reissued thereafter, and of course within *Gin Lane*.

communities, ensuring more street violence in response - a public policy process akin to pouring oil on the flames.

It was the Austrian war between 1740 and 1748 that provided a defining hiatus in the course of the gin panic. With the 1736 Act a dead letter, the outwardly successful regulatory act of 1743 and feeble reverse of 1747, effectively taking spirits off the primary political agenda for almost a decade. The muted victory then acted as catalyst, with spirit drinking pushed to the fore as a consequence of peace. The price of this visibility was a high one, owed to the tens of thousands of wretched soldiers and sailors who returned to London facing destitution. These unfortunates exacerbating a crime wave which might now be read as survival. Here, there was a critical change of focus for press reporting, with fear activated in new forms of selective and mobile criminality, which appeared to brazenly target the respectable and the propertied. Thus, in 1750 the gin addicts were transformed from an inert nuisance to a violent threat, emerging as fully formed as folk devils. It is at this point that the truly entrepreneurial Fielding, Maddox, and Hogarth powerfully come to the fore, with commanding written, visual, and vocal moral cues which possessed wide appeal. Their judicious intervention, with the link made between crime and gin, the mobilisation of the middle classes, and rousing of the press, providing a series of critical blows for the distillers, and as a consequence, *Mother Gin.*

Chapter 5:

Morality amid monstrosity: The London Monster panic, 1790

The newspapers are full of him; the playwrights entertain audiences with his exploits from the stage; the ladies are afraid of him; the mob gives every pedestrian a keen look in case he is the Monster; all the walls are covered with posters advertising a reward for the apprehension of the Monster; a fund has been opened to finance the hunt; Mrs Smith, a society lady, has shot him with a pistol behind the ear; he disguises himself, goes about in various different guises, wounding beautiful women with specially invented instruments, with hooks hidden in bouquets of flowers.

Georg Forster[1]

The foregoing diary entry of Forster, a German visitor to London in May 1790, captures the city at the height of 'Monster hysteria' providing a succinct illustration of a peculiar panic that gripped the city between the spring of 1788 and the summer of 1790. In many ways the *grip* of the episode, like many moral panics since, can be considered as intensified and amplified by prevailing socio-political events and moralising discourses supplementary to *straightforward* sexual deviance and indiscriminate violence.[2]   Moving into the last decade of the eighteenth-century, London, once again in the midst of significant socio-political change with eyes directed across the channel, was ready for a Monster. A new folk devil to act as Aunt Sally and depository - a phantom piquerist[3] would provide the vessel and the focus.

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[1] Georg Forster, diary entry 12 May 1790, in *Werke, xii, Tagebucher*, Berlin (1973), pp. 297-298, cited in Bondeson (2000), *op. cit.,* p. 51.

[2] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.,* consider a number of cases of sexual deviance in *Social Construction of Deviance*, including panics around pornography, child sexual abuse, sexual psychopathy, and sexual slavery, pp. 8-11, 18-19, 45-47.

[3] In this case repeated pricking or stabbing (wounding) of the victims, apparently with improvised instruments. See A. Agrawal (2009) *Forensic and Medico-legal Aspects of Sexual Crimes and Unusual Sexual Practices*, New York: Taylor and Francis, pp. 364-366, and; S. Neumann et al.

Whilst the London Monster is now recognisable as a perennial folk devil, the highly publicised serial offender, here a predatory sex attacker, his actions at the time were accorded exceptional significance. During his relatively short reign of twenty-five months, fifty seven complaints were made to London Magistrates by women alleging that they had been molested and stabbed by an individual stranger, said to be the Monster, in public. These reported attacks were of a highly interpersonal and indeed visible nature, often face-to-face, with the assailant molesting the victim with intent to injure whilst making strange verbal threats. One effect of these apparently random violent assaults was to draw parallels to the historical Mohock attacks of 1712 which were by now established as a cultural symbol of panic, a watchword for malevolent disorder, for the people of London. In turn, the attacks were seized upon by public figures and the press as an appropriate new focus for condemnation. Public anxiety shifted from enduring concerns over the gathering mob in the bloody aftermath of violent rioting a decade earlier, to public galvanisation in the search for the 'Monster' as this new menace was dramatically labelled.

As the phenomenon took hold of public consciousness it became ingrained in London's collective psyche; newspapers, pamphlets, ballads and prints communicated the growing hysteria to eager consumers with an established appetite for lascivious stories of sex and violence. Fundamentally, the case appeared to be founded on a media led campaign to agitate, or at the very least stimulate anxiety amongst the populace of London, voraciously reported, as Emsley suggests; 'with all the lurid sensationalism generally associated with newspapers of a later century.'[4] Accordingly, it might be argued that the Monster case allows a number of current parallels to be explored, in terms of public fear, insecurity, press frenzy and the galvanised need for a conviction at any cost. What we would now term, trial by media.

'Frotteurism, piquerism, and other related paraphilias' in E. Hickey (ed.) (2006) *Sex Crimes and Paraphilia*, New Jersey: Pearson, pp. 237-248 for forensic and psychological background.
[4] C. Emsley (2013) *Crime, Police, & Penal Policy 1750-1940*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 26.

Sex, the metropolis, & the monstrosity of deviance

Hanoverian London was brazen when it came to sexual excess, and throughout the eighteenth century the city established a deserved reputation as the vice capital of Europe.[5] With large numbers of prostitutes (amateur and professional) working in brothels, bagnios, bawdy houses, molly houses,[6] and walking the streets. As such the capital's working girls (and boys) were both a familiar sight, and a recurrent subject for moralists, satirists and social commentators of the day. Principal amongst them Hogarth, for whom they became a *motif*, Sandby, Collet, Gillray, Cruikshanks, and Rawlinson.[7] Father Poussin's *Pretty Doings in a Protestant Nation: Being a View of the Present State Fornication, Whorecraft in Great-Britain*, first published in 1734 and thereafter reprinted as *Satan's Harvest Home*,[8] provided a compendium of morality for the capital well into the 1790s, with an undertone of redemption. Poussin, who lived for much of his life close to the ferment of Covent Garden, provides the following warning of perdition to visitors:

> When a person unacquainted with the Town passes at night thro' any of our Principal Streets, he is apt to wonder whence the vast body of Courtezans, which stand ready, on Small Purchase, to obey the Laws of Nature, and gratify the Lust of every drunken Rake-hell…when each revolving Evening sends them up from White-Chapel to Charing-Cross.

To Poussin, it was familiarity and quantity that appears to have caused most offence, with street trade much more visible and blatant than in Paris, Amsterdam, or Naples. *Satan's Harvest Home* targeted those participating in fornication, adulteration, procuring, pimping and sodomy, under the designation of 'whorecraft,' leaving the beleaguered priest to contemplate 'Where the Devil do all those Bitches

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[5] See in particular: R. Purks-Maccubbin (ed) (1985) *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorised Sexuality During the Enlightenment,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; T. D. Hemming, E. Freeman, and D. Meakin (eds) (1994) *The Secular City: Studies in the Enlightenment*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press; V. Gatrell (2006) *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London,* London: Atlantic, and; D. Cruickshank (2009) *The Secret History of Georgian London: How the Wages of Sin Shaped the Capital*, London: Random House.

[6] 'Bagnio,' a bathhouse with rooms for hire, occasionally for purposes of prostitution. 'Bawdy House,' a slang term for a brothel. 'Molly House,' from the Latin *mollis*; an illicit meeting place for homosexual men.

[7] Hogarth's images in particular have endured, with several notable depictions of the perils of debauchery, vice and prostitution, including *A Harlot's Progress* (1731), *A Rake's Progress* (1735), *Industry and Idleness* (1747), and *Gin Lane* (1751).

[8] From 1749.

come from?' For many however, the variety and quality of whorecraft provided by London was the attraction, with the infamous guidebook *Harris's List of Covent Garden Ladies,*[9] providing an indecent literary foil for *Satan's Harvest* between 1757 and 1795.

In terms of numbers, an editorial in the *Universal Daily Register* in 1786 advocated that a sixth of the population of the capital, over one hundred and ten thousand individuals, were 'Rakes or Whores' buying or selling sex on a regular basis in the late 1780s.[10] Similarly, a series of nationwide studies into 'the sin of prostitution' by London's stipendiary magistrate, Patrick Colquhoun, in the decade that followed the Monster scare suggested that there were around one hundred thousand women operating as prostitutes in England and Wales, with fifty thousand of this number residing in London. Of these he posits that two thousand were educated women (occasional prostitutes), three thousand were from the class above 'menial servants' (part-time prostitutes), twenty thousand were of the class who would otherwise have been employed as menial servants (professional prostitutes), and twenty five thousand were low ranking women 'who cohabit with labourers and others without matrimony' (women of low morals).[11]

The work of Harvey emphasises the commonplace nature and normalcy of the practices described by Colquhoun, arguing that large numbers of women in London 'were prostitutes in the most limited sense of the term.'[12] Moreover, as Henderson argues whoring in London was driven by necessity rather than choice, which for the majority amounted to desperation, trading the only saleable commodity they possessed.[13] This wretched existence, was described by Defoe as 'amphibious,' in the sense that lower class women in London often required proficiency in two elements to survive – 'From Bawdy House to Service and from Service to Bawdy-House again.'[14] An intimation that many alternated between the volatility of

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[9] Anon. (1773) *Harris's List of Covent Garden Ladies or Man of Pleasure's Kalendar*, London: H. Ranger.

[10] Editorial, *Universal Daily Register*, 1 August 1786.

[11] Colquhoun, P. (1800) *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*, sixth edition, London, pp. 338-341.

[12] A. D. Harvey (2001) *Sex in Georgian England: Attitudes and Prejudices from the 1720s to the 1820s*, London: Phoenix, p. 84.

[13] T. Henderson (1999) *Disorderly women in eighteenth-century London*, London: Longman: p. 58.

[14] Andrew Moreton [a pseudonym for Defoe] (1724) *Public Stews: Or, An Essay Upon Whoring*, cited in Henderson *ibid*, p. 16.

employment in domestic service, and the physical risks associated with prostitution. Gatrell provides further perspective, via a sensitive interpretation of the forty five thousand women described in Colquhoun's latter classifications 'though more or less honest labourers lived in all these places, here also lived the poor men and women who pimped, stole, begged or sold themselves as need or chance dictated.'[15] Whilst Colquhoun's moral motive, ill-defined methodology, and consequently numbers, are questionable, they provide a striking portrait of prostitution as a social problem at the juncture. Other studies of the era highlight the dangerous nature of the trade, prone to violence and disease '50,000 of our unwary youth [of whom], 20,000 contract that deplorable disease (syphilis) from which few of these women are free.'[16] Deviant sexuality had also captured the attention of the moral masses with concerns over *inter alia;* the perils of Onania,[17] the predatory nature of Sapphic monsters[18] and the 'game of flats,'[19] and open hostility towards male homosexuality, with sodomy, likened to bestiality at statute, a capital offence.[20]

Prostitutes who worked the street also faced the prospect of assault, rape, or robbery. Dangers shared with the majority of poor Londoners, particularly after dark or in streets abutting the rookeries[21] of St Giles and Spitalfields. A telling statistical indicator, highlighted by Beattie, suggests that interpersonal violent crime comprised over a third of recorded offences between 1663 and 1802. This in a society apparently pre-occupied with property crime which accounted for over half.[22] Violent offences were recorded as 'offences against the person,' statistically a rather unhelpful amalgam comprising assault, sexual assault, rape, and murder. However the gender of the accused in each case was recorded and therefore can be

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[15] V. A. C. Gatrell (2013) *The First Bohemians: Life and Art in London's Golden Age*, London: Allen Lane, p. 80.

[16] Anon. (1813) *Fund of Mercy: Or an Institution for the Relief and Employment of Destitute and Forlorn Females.* London: Printed by the Philanthropic Society, p. 6.

[17] Anon. (1708) *Onania; or the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution, and All Its Frightful Consequences in Both Sexes Considered.* London.

[18] Predatory lesbianism, see in particular: Anon. (1620) *Hic Mulier: or, The Man-Woman: Being a medicine to cure the coltish disease of the Staggers in the Masculine-Feminines of our times*, London; and, Frederick Scheffer (1736) *The Toast. An Heroick Poem in four books*, London.

[19] Poussin *ibid.* See also, J. Lackington (1783) *Two Letters on the Bad Consequences of Having Daughters Educated at Boarding Schools*, London.

[20] 25 Hen. VIII c.6 'Buggery comyttid with mankynde or beaste.'

[21] The term rookery was coined by the eighteenth-century poet George Galloway in 1792 to describe the slums of St Giles, as: 'a cluster of mean tenements densely populated by people of the lowest class.'

[22] J. M. Beattie (1975) 'The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth-Century England' *Journal of Social History*, 8 (4), pp. 80-116.

distinguished, with a striking bias of eighty two percent male, contrasted with eighteen percent female perpetrators. Such disparity cannot be simply dismissed in terms of mere physical weakness, what Thompson termed 'the enormous condescension of posterity,'[23] at a time when the majority of poor women were made strong and hard, through labouring long hours alongside their male counterparts. Rather, with offences against the person situated culturally within the realm of men, gendered violence could be interpreted at turns as menacing, pervasive and ubiquitous. Such dangerous familiarity ensured that for many, an interpretation of serious sexual deviance required much more than straightforward excess and obscenity – it required monstrosity.

Folk Devils and Sexual Monsters

The concept of the monster is explicitly linked to that of the folk devil. From the Latin term *monstrare*, to teach, reveal, or show, the label has cultural significance as an omen or warning. As McCormick argues early modern monsters existed as Devilry 'in the category of the preternatural, somewhere between the natural and the supernatural, as that which remains, the unexplained…products of Nature's playfulness.'[24] These apparently natural abnormalities fascinated influential early empirical philosophers, notably Francis Bacon, who saw the appearance and observance of physical and spiritual 'monsters' as a fundamental device of social progress.[25] An analogous methodology was later employed by Durkheim to great effect, who paradoxically perceived deviance as both necessary and normal in a functioning moral society.[26] Moreover, the discovery of a new monster will often have the effect of affirming prevailing moral codes, defining cultural values, and drawing (occasionally redrawing) social boundaries.

Public perception of sexual monstrosity in eighteenth-century England centred primarily on curious physiognomies and unusual appetites. As such the

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[23] E. P. Thompson (1980) *The Making of the English Working Class*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[24] I. McCormick (ed.) (1997) *Secret Sexualities: A Sourcebook of 17th and 18th Century Writing*, London: Routledge, p. 9.
[25] See in particular, Francis Bacon (1620) *Novum organon*, London, in B. Montagu (ed.) (1831) *The Works of Francis Bacon,* 17 Volumes, vol. xvi, London; and, K. Park and L. J. Daston (1981) 'Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England' *Past & Present,* 92, pp. 20-54.
[26] E. Durkheim (1895) *The Rules of Sociological Method*, S. Lukes (ed.) (2013), London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 99-100.

descriptive term 'monster' was in frequent popular use, particularly as a signifier of a propensity for sodomism, or as insult in terms of the subject's potential for it - to quote Ned Ward:

'Tis strange that in a country where
Our ladies are so kind and fair,
So gay, and lovely, to the sight,
So full of beauty and delight;
That men should on each other doat,
And quit the charming petticoat.
Sure the curs'd father of this race,
That does both sexes thus disgrace,
Must be a monster, mad, or drunk.'[27]

Ward's use of the term in the first decade of the eighteenth century is typically evangelical in reinforcing 'safe' heterosexual norms, and identifying deviance as unnatural and perverted. He also distinguishes the monster, from the madman or drunkard – the monster is manipulative, conscious and culpable. Such use infused the popular press as the century developed, adding to public mystique and fascination in exotic and unusual sexualities.

Monster nomenclature is evident throughout Charles Ancillon's *Eunuchism Display'd*, first published in English in 1718. Here, Ancillon provides a lurid European typology of the practice, describing eunuchs that are born so as aberrations of Nature 'which every day produces so many monsters,' and those that are made as 'imperfect creatures, in a word, monsters.'[28] Abnormality in terms of anatomy, also provided the subject matter of James Parsons' *A Mechanical and Critical Enquiry into the Nature of Hermaphrodites* (1741) a popular contemporary medical text containing case histories, which, whilst generally paternal and benevolent in tone, likens the intersexed to animals as 'prodigies or monsters in nature.'[29] Both of these important publications emphasise the perceived desire for adherence to nature, a

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[27] Edward [Ned] Ward (1710) 'Of the Mollies Club' Chapter XXV of Edward Ward's *Satyrical Reflections on Clubs. By the Author of the London-Spy*. Vol. V. London : J. Phillips at the Black Bull in Cornhill.
[28] Charles Ancillon (1718) *Eunuchism Display'd. Describing all the different sorts of eunuchs etc..Written by a person of honour*, London: Printed for E. Curll. Reprint (2010) London, Gale ECCO. Originally published as Traité des Eunuques (1707), p. 12.
[29] James Parsons (1741) *A Mechanical and Critical Enquiry into the Nature of Hermaphrodites*, M DCCXLI., London: Printed for J. Walthoe, over-against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, p. xvii.

consciousness for sexual classification and the adoption of a normative role. This in a period when fashionable male sexual behaviour was increasingly polarised in terms of morality; blurred between the boorish coarseness of the rake and the narcissistic effeminacy of the fop.[30] Membership of the latter group, did not always require effeminacy, with the eye of suspicion falling on 'dangerous' celibate singletons and bachelors in particular, as refusers of marriage, closet misogynists, and Levellers - 'monsters of men, called Women-haters.'[31]

The increasing casualness of sex and sexual violence was also a popular theme within contemporary literature, albeit once again with an emphasis on sodomy as causative factor. According to *Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy* (1749),[32] the nub of the 'problem' was seen to be a softness and lack of self-discipline in young men, brought about in the main by over-indulged childhoods and lack of exercise. However, the causative reasoning of modish, delicate formative years could not be applied to the perpetrators of analogous sexual offending cases that had captured the imagination and fear of the London public in the proceeding century. The first of these, involved unprovoked sadistic attacks on women around Holborn and the Strand in 1681, by an assailant given the nickname of 'Whipping Tom.' The name was due to his propensity for lifting skirts in order to slap his victims on the buttocks with bare hands or switch whilst shouting 'Spanko!': '[Whipping Tom] with great speed and violence seized her, and in a trice, laying her cross his knee, took up her Linnen, and lay'd so hard up-on her Backside, as made her cry out most piteously for help, the which he no sooner perceiving to approach (as she declares) then he vanished.'[33] A seemingly 'copycat' Whipping Tom was at large in nearby Hackney thirty years later in the autumn of 1712, just as the recent Mohocks panic was abating in the city to the south.[34] With seventy birch switch attacks recorded on lone women in the vicinity, before a man named Thomas Wallis was apprehended. Wallis confessed to the offences as a form of misogynistic revenge 'on all the

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[30] For a contemporary, early eighteenth-century view see in particular, Ned Ward (1708) 'Sir Narcissus Foplin: or, the Self-Admirer' in *The Modern World Disrob'd: or, Both Sexes Stript of their pretended Vertue*, London.
[31] Edward Harley (1745) *The Harleian Miscellany*, London: Robert Dutton, p. 200.
[32] Anon. (1749) *Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy, in England*, London, p. 49.
[33] Edward Brooks (1681) *Whipping Tom Brought to Light and Exposed to View*, London, p. 2.
[34] S. *Toulalan (2007) Imagining sex: pornography and bodies in seventeenth-century England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 108.

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women he could come at after that manner, for the sake of one Perjur'd Female, who had been Barbarously False to him.'[35]

When considering why these two cases gained lasting notoriety amongst a population of London hardened to sexualised violence, including group violence,[36] it can be argued that it is their very *deviance* that provided the engaging factor. Here, the (apparently) single offender – a stranger, the lack of obvious motive, the unusual *modus-operandi* which had the effect of galvanizing public morality, the consistent offending pattern, and apparent immunity from arrest. This unorthodoxy was centrally linked to a public interpretation of inadequacy driven by personal corruption (perversion) and effeminacy. Moreover, for some, Whipping Tom was a moral crusader, a nighttime agent of social justice seeking to provide the dissolute women of London what they 'wanted' or had coming. All of these complex factors would be observable, transferable and significant in the discovery and construction of the London Monster.

Discovery: 'Oh ho! Is that you!'

The major preoccupation of the journalists writing headlines for the London Press in early 1790, and for those paying them to do so, was international politics, specifically the happenings in revolutionary France. Much of this was concentrated on notions of latent radicalism and disorder. Comment on such matters was not confined to the written word, and by this juncture visual satire had developed from spontaneous art form to responsive industry encompassing prints, pottery, and textiles, as Emsley argues: 'Political activists and sharp-eyed entrepreneurs developed other kinds of iconography as a sort of short-hand for the ideas and arguments.'[37] In the spring of 1790, the attention of both the press and the iconoclasts briefly turned to matters closer to home, becoming fixated on the deviant behaviour of the serial sex-offender who they styled the London Monster.

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[35] J. Ashton (1937) *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne, vol. 2,* London: Chatto & Windus. p. 72.
[36] For example, alongside the Mohocks panic of 1712, serious gang attacks on women in the capital had been reported and attributed to the 'Young Bloods' in 1761, and Wapping based Lascar seamen during runs ashore in 1780. Similarly, notorious serial single offenders, such as the rake and 'Rape-Master General' Colonel Francis Charteris, who operated in London during the first third of the eighteenth-century, gained infamy as a subject of the *Newgate Calendar* without assuming the mantel of public *folk devil.*
[37] C. Emsley (2000) *Britain and the French Revolution*, London: Longman, p. 12.

The alleged Monster attacks appear to have commenced two years earlier in March 1788[38] with two women being cut by a stranger in the city, [39] the second of these a Mrs Wright who described her attacker as 'of a shabby appearance, much like a hair-dresser.'[40] In May 1788 Maria Smyth, a doctor's wife, became the first recorded victim, when she was followed and harassed by a man in Fleet Street - during which she was sworn at in a manner which was marked by 'a tremendous eagerness.'[41] As they walked the man continued his verbal assault, and when they reached the doorstep of her destination in Johnson's Court, stood grinning alongside her before lunging to wound her on the chest and thigh with a sharp instrument, remaining next to her, apparently calm and unconcerned of apprehension, until she was lifted inside. Three further attacks occurred in May 1788, all involving a similar distinctive signature with the victims verbally abused, assaulted and cut with a sharp implement or instrument, possibly a thin bladed knife or a lancet.[42]

The attacks resumed the following spring, when in May 1789 Sarah Godfrey was stalked and insulted by a stranger in the west end who followed her from Bond Street to Picadilly, before stabbing her in the thigh in Charlotte Street.[43] Regular incidences were recorded across London throughout the remainder of 1789, including five serious unprovoked incidents of wounding between September and December, in which all of the victims were followed and subjected to indecent language prior to being stabbed with sharp implements. The last of these cases involved two young sisters, Francis and Elizabeth Baughan, who were approached and scrutiny insulted by a man in Bridge Street, during the early evening of 7 December. After failing to escape, the two women were subjected to a violent attack in Parliament Street, during which their clothing was slashed. Notably, the sisters stated that they had been harassed and verbally assaulted in public by their attacker

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[38] *Times*, 7 March 1788.

[39] For the superlative contemporary account see, John Julius Angerstein (1790) *An Authentic Account of the Barbarities lately practised by the Monsters,* London: printed for S. Bladon, Paternoster-Row, M, DCC, XC; with, J. Bondeson (2000) *The London Monster: Terror on the Streets in 1790*, London: Tempus, providing a useful chronology of 'Alleged Victims of the London Monster' pp.272-274.

[40] John Angerstein (1790) *Ibid.* pp. 167-68.

[41] *Ibid.* pp. 9-12.

[42] *Ibid,* pp. 25-30

[43] *Ibid*, pp. 17-18.

several times before over the previous two years, including an escalation of his aggressive conduct in Green Park which had led to Frances slapping him.[44]

The turning point in public awareness and scrutiny of the London Monster was to come a month later on 18 January 1790, when he once again attacked two sisters. Sarah and Anne Porter had spent the evening of the 18th celebrity spotting from the galleries at a ball held in celebration of the Queen's birthday, with London in festive mood.[45] As the crowds dispersed the sisters consulted with Mrs Nancy Miel, their chaperone, as to them walking the short distance from St James's Palace to their home, Pero's Bagnio, in nearby St James's Street without the need to wait for their father as escort. They set off, and within sight of their home a man approached Sarah Porter calling out 'Oh ho! Is that you!' before striking her violently about the head. Sarah shouted to the other two women to 'make haste!' and the trio were at the door of Pero's when the man attacked Anne Porter from behind, hitting her on the buttocks and upper thigh. In a similar vein to the attack on Maria Smyth, the man was in no apparent hurry to leave, and instead lingered to goad and grin on the doorstep, until Miel and the sisters were let inside, by their teenage brother, John. Once admitted, Anne discovered that she was bleeding profusely from the wound on her hip, with blood soaking her dress and pooling on the floor. A surgeon, Tompkins, was sent for, who recorded a vicious wound six inches long and three inches deep at its centre.[46]

In the aftermath of the attack on his daughters, their father, Thomas Porter, reported the incident to the magistrates at the Bow Street public office. This was the nearest London had to a detective police force at the time, following the rejection of the Pitt government's Police Bill of 1785, and with it modernisation through organisation.[47] There, Sir Sampson Wright, the duty magistrate informed the

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[44] See, the notes of Judge William Mainwaring, Middlesex Sessions 1790, National Archives (HO 47/17/100), and J. Angerstein, *The Lawyer's and Magistrate's Magazine*, 2, 1790-91, London, pp. 345-60.
[45] *World*, 19 January 1790.
[46] J. Angerstein, *op cit.* pp. 37-40, and E. Hodgson (1790) *The Trial at Large of Rhynwick Williams*, London, pp. 9-15. See also retrospective press accounts of the attack from: *World*, 15 June 1790, p. 3; *Oracle*, 9 July 1790; and, *New Lady's Magazine*, 5, 1790, pp. 372-77.
[47] E. A. Reynolds (1998) *Before the Bobbies: The Night Watch and Police Reform in Metropolitan London, 1720-1830*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 85-87. See also, C. Emsley (1983) *Policing and Its Context, 1750-1870*, London: Macmillan, pp.47-52 for the historical environment concerning reform at this juncture.

outraged Porter that a further four women had been attacked in the same manner as his daughters on the evening of the 18th, with verbal obscenity followed by the cutting of clothing. It had begun to dawn on the London magistracy that they were dealing with a serial offender, whose commitment and confidence appeared to be growing rather than diminishing. Consequently, despite, most of the reported attacks occurring in the evenings, their drawn-out and barefaced nature, had furnished Bow Street with several eye-witness accounts of the Monster. However, the descriptions ranged from short to tall, fat to thin, dark to fair, shabby to well-dressed, with others mentioning cocked hats and curly hair, a distinguishing large nose or distinctive shrill voice. Such wide-ranging descriptions of features and facets were practically useless, and quickly became a sinister amalgam for an archetype Monster. This amalgam also provided a host of potential markers for suspects, once the case began to reach the consciousness of the wider London public in early 1790. The victim profile was however much more constant, with a distinct preference for attractive, young, eligible, women – the well-to-do, the valued.

For McCreery, the Monster's rationale and selection was linked to a desire to persecute and corrupt, she stresses: 'By making women listen to his foul language, he corrupted their supposed innocence, which made them less appealing to prospective husbands. In other words, by these cruel attacks the Monster devalued his female victims in the eyes of society.'[48] Similarly, in terms of contemporary desires and sensibilities, the absence of rape, or attempted rape, particularly after shouting obscenities and cutting clothes, was incomprehensible - providing insight of feral animalistic deviance. Such deviance, unrestrained and beyond defence, had the potential of weakening the social status of men as well as that of women. This incongruity fed heightened emotions around the case, tapping into perceptions of ethereal folk devils and initiating moral reflectiveness. As Katz argues 'Emotions do not typically burst into our awareness as thoughts, which 'self-reflection' may commonly imply. Emotions emerge in experience as a bodily awareness, an internal tension.'[49] To Londoners the threat posed by the Monster was abnormal, sinister, and preternatural.

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[48] C. McCreery 'A Moral Panic in Eighteenth-Century London? The 'Monster' and the Press' in D. Lemmings and C. Walker (eds.) (2009) *op. cit.,* p.197.

[49] J. Katz 'Response to Commentators' *Theoretical Criminology*, (2002), 6(3), pp. p. 375.

As official awareness of a Monster at large gained ground following the spate of attacks in mid-January, the incidents went on unabated, in fact their frequency increased. Late January and early February saw three further instances of stalking, insulting, and the cutting of clothing (and in one case hair),[50] including a particularly unusual attack on the maidservant of a Mrs Gordon, who reported being wounded by an improvised blade that had apparently been affixed to her attacker's knee.[51] This was followed by an especially violent attack in mid-March on Mrs Charlotte Payne, the lady's maid to the Countess of Howe. Mrs Payne, middle aged, prim, and outwardly respectable as the longstanding retainer to an aristocrat, was approached by a man as she was en route to the house of Lord Howe. Despite being snubbed the persistent stranger followed 'making love to her all the way with a rather uncommon energy.' This continued to the steps of Lord Howe's house in Grafton Street, where she was repeatedly kicked from behind, her assailant 'making use of the most horrid language and imprecations all of the time…[stating] I would enjoy a particular pleasure in murdering you, and in shedding your blood!'[52] This he achieved, by inflicting injuries so severe that it was widely reported later that spring that she may have died as a result of her wounds; the press later reduced the diagnosis to a 'state of extreme danger.'[53]

Two further attacks were recorded in late March, with a Mrs Blaney stabbed in Bury Street on the 28th, and a young maidservant suffering a cut nose at the very end of the month from a blade secreted in a nose-gay of artificial flowers. The girl had been approached and asked to smell the flowers by her assailant who proceeded to push the perilous bouquet into her face. This method was used again in an analogous incident in early April, when another maidservant was targeted and stabbed in the face by a blade concealed amongst artificial flowers.[54]

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[50] That of a Mrs Drummond, on her departure from a theatre, J. Angerstein, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
[51] *Ibid.,* p. 41.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 45-7.
[53] See in particular: *Public Advertiser*, 1 May 1790, p. 4; *Public Advertiser*, 17 June 1790, pp. 3-4; and, *British Mercury*, 13, 1790, p. 272
[54] J. Angerstein, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

The pursuit of decency: Consensus, panic and the press

By the beginning of April 1790, despite an attempt by Bow Street to exercise discretion in their ongoing investigations,[55] the press had realised that there was a phenomenon at large, having widely reported the attacks on Payne and Blaney, and latterly linking them to the offences of the previous two years. There was Grubstreet hay to be made. The moral charge was led by the *Morning Chronicle* who positioned the Monster as 'the miscreant whom we have noticed more than once for similar instances of brutality.'[56] This combative editorial stance was followed by a number of other popular titles, leading to a flurry of letters to editors. Some proffering information to aid in the apprehension of the miscreant, others bemoaning the lack of police action or protection, and some using the platform to confirm the London public's widely held fears: 'Until your known authenticity stampt credit on the report that there existed a MONSTER, who felt a horrible gratification in maiming the most beautiful part of the creation, I can assure you, that there were several even otherwise credulous people, who imagined the whole a fiction.'[57] Other letters in this vein, were sent to newspapers by husbands of previous victims, seemingly eager to absolve their wives of blame or vindicate their own fears that their attacker had been irrational and predatory.[58]

A notable campaign via letter was started by the husband of Maria Smyth, the first victim of cutting in 1788. Dr Andrew Smyth contacted the *Morning Chronicle* requesting the contact details of previous known victims so that public response could be stimulated and intelligence gathered on the Monster.[59] Smyth's actions led to twelve other women coming forward, as something akin to a nascent survivor's group, to offer solidarity and insight into their experiences.[60] This show of unity and public emotion reveals an important principle of moral panic theory in episodes where deviant behaviour is contested, or difficult to categorise. With the public becoming 'seized' by the episode and contemplating society's moral boundaries,

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[55] Particularly in response to the attacks on Sarah and Anne Porter on 18 January. See J. Bondeson, *op cit*. p. 40.
[56] *Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1790.
[57] Letter to 'Mr. HERALD', *the Morning Herald*, 12 April 1790.
[58] See for example, the letter from Mr Andrew Franklin, *The Morning Herald*, 20 April 1790.
[59] *Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1790.
[60] J. Bondeson, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

there is a need to determine appropriate response, within this 'survivors accounts' carry significant weight.[61]

Maria Smyth was at the centre of dramatic developments on the 14 April, when she identified the man who attacked her whilst with her husband at an auction. Andrew Smyth followed the man to his home address in Great Queen Street, and proceeded to inform the Bow Street public office of his suspicions. He was later identified as William Tuffing, a hairdresser turned clothier and was promptly arrested, denying all charges. A strategic confrontation between Tuffing, Maria Smyth, and several Monster victims, including the Baughans and Anne Porter, was arranged for the following week on 19 April at Bow Street, the spectacle attracting a large and fashionable crowd. However, at the hearing none of the women present were able to identify Tuffing as the Monster.[62] This included Maria Smyth who had conceded that she 'then thought only, that he [Tuffing] was like the person'[63] who had attacked her. This was a decision that quickly appeared conclusive when a runner brought news that another Monster attack had occurred that morning in St Martin's Lane,[64] half a mile to the south east. This, whilst the suspect was being held in custody and cross-examined by Mr Justice Addington, the presiding magistrate at Bow Street.[65] Though charged, there is no record that Tuffing ever stood trial for the crimes of the Monster.

Early press attention during April, particularly surrounding the events of the 14-19 was deeply moralistic in tone, with an emphasis on chivalry and exposing the Monster as a sadistic homosexual[66] - a 'disgrace to manhood.'[67] This included the typically diffident *Times*, whose reporter observing the witnesses at Bow Street on the 19th decided upon both flattery and censure, concluding that the victims had been 'wounded by some MONSTER (for such the perpetrator of such horrid deed must be, as there was not one but laid strong claims to beauty).'[68] This theme of wanton

[61] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit*, p. 51-52.
[62] *World*, 20 April 1790, p. 3.
[63] *Oracle*, 20 April 1790.
[64] Rebecca Lohr who was followed and 'clawed about the arms' with an improvised device whilst on an errand in St Martin's Lane on the morning of 19 April, J. Angerstein op. cit., p. 55-58.
[65] *British Mercury*, 13, 1790, p.216.
[66] See D. Jones (1995) 'Frekes, Monsters and the Ladies: Attitudes to Female Sexuality in the 1790s' *Literature and History,* 4, pp. 1-24.
[67] *Oracle*, 20 April 1790.
[68] *Times,* 20 April 1790, p. 3.

sexualised violence would come to personify the press response to the Monster episode. With headlines often composed, and capitalised, to denote the need for terror and vigilance. The effect was to exacerbate public fear and sharpen public anger, a common reaction in cases of moral panic where sexual predators are thought to be at large.[69] Ensuring that the '[community is] "thrown in a panic" about the danger that violent sexual psychopaths pose to women and children.'[70]

Moral entrepreneurship and the focussing of hostility

A spark which undoubtedly stimulated the excitement generated around the panic in April 1790 and throughout the Monster episode, was the involvement and intervention of John Julius Angerstein. Angerstein, had made a fortune in marine insurance as joint founder of Lloyds, having been instrumental in taking the practice of insurance from the murk of the coffee house to the respectability of the Royal Exchange.[71] His immense wealth supported households in Pall Mall and Blackheath and his personal art collection would later form the basis of the National Gallery.[72] At fifty-five years old, and recently installed as Chairman of the modernised Lloyds of London, Angerstein was arguably at the height of his powers in 1790, a pillar of London society operating in both royal and political spheres. He was thus, also, the perfect foil for the Monster, as an archetypal humanitarian moral entrepreneur.[73]

The Monster case, once exposed by the press in early April, had quickly captured the imagination of Angerstein, thereafter taking it upon himself to interview all known victims of the offender, in order to collect and collate evidence. These accounts would later form his *Authentic Account of the Barbarities lately practised by the Monsters,* providing the most definitive and contemporaneous record of the episode. Here, the testimony of each victim is gathered, alongside details of the injuries sustained, their physical appearance, demeanour, and personal situation. The latter categories within Angerstein's notes read rather like a beauty contest, with comments veering between the genteel and the lewd - with the handful of the lower

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[69] Cohen (2002) *op. cit.,* pp. xiv – xvii.
[70] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.
[71] *S. Palmer (2004)* 'John Julius Angerstein (c.1732–1823)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[72] See: C. Lloyd (1966) 'John Julius Angerstein, Founder of Lloyds and of the National Gallery' *History Today*, 16 (6), pp. 373-379.
[73] Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) *op. cit*., pp. 79-82.

class victim's typically given shorter shrift, thus, leaving little doubt that each of the appraisals was linked to the social value and delicacy of the subject under scrutiny, accompanied by chivalric (occasionally paternal) sensibility.

For Angerstein, the nature of the attacks were both craven and immoral 'rendered still more atrocious by the insult that generally accompanies the outrage, and by the savage delight he enjoys in the terror, pain, and distress of the lovely victim!'[74] Angerstein's own growing sense of moral outrage saw him convene a meeting on the evening of 15 April to find a solution to the crisis. The result, in alliance with Bow Street, was the offer of a reward of one hundred pounds to be paid in two instalments on committal and conviction of the Monster, an enormous amount at that time.[75] Details of this unprecedented reward saturated the popular press the next day,[76] with handbills printed containing a description of the 'INHUMAN MONSTER'[77] at large, distributed throughout the city.

The cumulative effect of the arrest and release of Tuffing and the appearance of the Angerstein reward within days of one another on the population of London was irresistible, leaving the press and public motivated and galvanised in their search for the Monster throughout April and May, with Bow Street overwhelmed with speculative and falsified information, citizen's arrests[78] and reports of vigilantism.[79] The form of vigilantism was both sporadic and organised with the appearance of safety committees, petitions and patrols.[80] This situation was exacerbated and agitated further when a poster commissioned by Angerstein appeared from the Public Office, Bow Street on the 29th April, emphasising the one hundred pounds reward and remarkably containing a footnote, which compelled servants to inform on their masters:

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[74] J. Angerstein, quoted in Bondeson, *op. cit*. p. 46.

[75] As a comparator, the Economic History Association suggests a 'commodity labour value' in excess of £133,000 for £100 in 1790. Economic History Association - http://eh.net, accessed 28 July 2016.

[76] See, for example: The *World*; The *Oracle;* The *British Mercury*; and the *Daily Herald*, all, 16 April 1790.

[77] Miss Sarah Sophia Banks (sister of Sir Joseph Banks), Scrapbook, British Library L.R.301.h.3-11, ff. 44-5. Collection of contemporary notices and handbills, hereafter referred to as the 'Banks Scrapbook'.

[78] *Times*, 15 May 1790; and, the *Gazetteer*, 17 May 1790.

[79] *Times*, 21 April 1790.

[80] Such as at Westminster and the Percy-Street Coffee House Petition (*Banks Scrapbook*, ff. 46-47), which became the St Pancras Monster Patrol, see S. Halliday, *op. cit*. pp. 196-197.

ALL Servants are recommended to take Notice if any Man has Staid at home without apparent Cause, within these few Days, during Day light. All Washerwomen and Servants should take Notice of any Blood on a Man's Handkerchief or Linen, as the *Wretch* generally fetches Blood when he strikes. All servants should examine if any Man carries Sharp Weapons about him, and if there is any blood thereon, particularly Tucks…[81]

Being hunted in such a rarefied environment appeared to stimulate the Monster into action, with twenty six further attacks involving his signature stalking, abuse and cutting, attributed between 26 April and 27 May 1790 - virtually one per day.[82] Dramatic incidents happening with such seamless regularity was a gift for the press who continued to feature 'this disgrace to the British name'[83] on a daily basis. However, despite the attention, there was no sign of early capture to provide an end to the mounting panic, and the description provided by the Angerstein handbill of 16 April and the poster of the 29th continued to be regularly contradicted by press reports of the latest attacks, including the possibility that he might be a 'foreigner[84] or in league with a group of monsters. Matters were complicated yet further by the issue of a second poster dated 7 May 1790 from Pall Mall, titled 'Mr. ANGERSTEIN Informs the Public.' This adopted a different tone from its predecessors which had focused on the reward, instead appearing as a reactive appeal to decency in the light of recent attacks, whilst rather unhelpfully providing several differing descriptions of the wanted man or men. Furthermore, concerns had arisen that despite press saturation and frantic chatter, the hue and cry was failing to reach London's illiterates. So tradesmen's servants and baker's boys were urged by the poster to spread the word to the domestic servant girls within their social circles.[85]

Sir Sampson Wright provided the press with a fillip in mid-May to confirm that the Monster had recently narrowly avoided capture on two occasions, the first

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[81] J. Angerstein 'One Hundred Pounds REWARD' poster, 29 April 1790, facsimile, cited in J. Bondeson, *op. cit*., p. 49.
[82] J. Bondeson, *op. cit*. pp. 273-274.
[83] *World*, 5 May 1790.
[84] *Public Advertiser*, 1 May 1790.
[85] Poster 'Mr. ANGERSTEIN Informs the Public,' 7 May 1790, London: Printed by J. Moore, No. 134, Drury-Lane.

after pursuit by the public in Picadilly,[86] the second by eluding the watch in Lincoln's Inn Fields.[87] Wright was keen to reassure an increasingly frustrated public that despite having 'twice escaped in a most wonderful way; but surely from the enormity of his offences, he cannot long elude that punishment he justly merits, and we hope very soon to announce his being in custody.'[88] Unlike the increasingly beleaguered magistracy, Angerstein had thus far managed to retain the support of the majority of the public and press, aided by the existence of his reward no doubt, but also, perhaps, because he was seen as London's best hope in bringing the Monster to justice. In this vein, the *World* newspaper proffered praise on behalf of a grateful nation on 11 May for his continuing endeavour and resilience in the apprehension of the 'unnatural wretch,' declaring that 'His public spirit is felt in every corner of the Isle.'[89] This view was undoubtedly helped by his perceived status as an energetic 'amateur,' which allowed him to combine holding the moral (entrepreneurial) high ground, with a developed understanding of the power and reach of popular media. A power exercised in the eyes of some of the victims and their supporters, with 'alacrity' as a form of shared catharsis.[90] However, for his campaign to maintain momentum Angerstein had to keep the London press mobilised and regularly fuelled in order to keep the Monster at the forefront of public discourse - it was a relationship based upon mutual dependency.

Hysteria, ridicule and iconography

The middle of May in the London of 1790 passed as a watershed in terms of the public mood, rapidly changing from bellicose to despondent. Angerstein himself was frustrated and concerned, witnessing the detrimental effect of the hysteria surrounding the Monster panic on the population of the city, with the magistracy harassed, the women afraid, and the men fearful of false accusation – 'gloomy jealousy and dark distrust appeared on every female brow. The whole order of things was changed. It was not safe for a gentleman to walk the streets, unless under the *protection* of a lady.'[91] Indeed, it was a group of concerned and combative ladies

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[86] *Gazetteer,* 6 May 1790.
[87] *World*, 8 May 1790.
[88] *Court Chronicle*, 15 May 1790.
[89] *World*, 11 May 1790
[90] See, letter from Andrew Franklin, the *Morning Herald*, 16 April 1790.
[91] J. Angerstein, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

who had chosen the topic to be debated at the lauded Westminster Forum for May; 'Who is the Greater Disgrace to Humanity, the Monster, who has lately cut so many women in London, or the Slave-trading Wretches who drag the Unhappy Female African from her family and native country?'[92]   Matters worsened as the month progressed with assaults being reported at Bow Street with alarming frequency.

This situation led to ever more fanciful notions being suggested to explain the abject failure to apprehend the attacker. For some, the Monster was the creation of a deviant gentleman actor with an array of elaborate disguises and costumes at his disposal. This included stilts to change his height, and a collection of wigs and false noses to alter appearance, leading a reporter from the *Times* to direct 'all those hardy English Hercules's who are determined to rid London of such a wretch, to pull him hard by the nose!'[93]. For others, his shape shifting abilities suggested a more traditional folk devil from the realm of the supernatural. This would account for his phantom ability to appear and disappear at will, which according to the customarily stoic academic and publicist Johann von Archenholtz was 'sufficient to impress the most callous mind with horror!'[94]

Subsequently, the fanciful became tempered by the cynical, with the monster considered to be a *chimera* rather than a phantom, and Angerstein increasingly viewed as well-meaning but naïve to the seamier side of London street life. In this manifestation, the appearance of the 'Monster' was seen as the disagreeable product of a series of failed attempts at picking pockets, where the thief had cut clothing in an attempt to reach valuables.[95] This position was taken up by several newspapers, amongst them the *St James's Gazette* and the *Public Ledger* – with the latter being forced to issue a retraction and apologise to Angerstein after he challenged its editor in person accompanied by a large cohort of Monster victims offering deposition and scars. However, another newspaper, the *Gazetteer* swiftly issued another challenge to Angerstein's credibility suggesting that his intervention and offer of reward had

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[92] *Times,* 4 May 1790.
[93] *Times*, 8 May 1790.
[94] *British Mercury* (1790), 13, p. 212.
[95] Note the diary entry of Georg Forster, who had previously believed that Monster was a lone attacker – *op. cit*. pp. 297.

led to vigilantism and disorder which had impeded the authorities, which otherwise would have arrested the culprit within a matter of days.[96]

What was certainly true was that amidst the prevailing hysteria and mounting disorder, there was sport to be had in London - some of it unlawful, the majority commercial. Of the former, it was the ruffians, pickpockets, and fraudsters who appeared to profit the most from having a faceless fiend at large. At this point, a shout of 'The Monster' was sufficient to assemble a crowd ready and willing to restrain and attack the unfortunate target – compelled, perhaps, via a combination of fear, duty, and reward.[97] This tactic was put to use in settling disputes, and to provide a means of escape after theft or robbery. The *World* reported a terrifying case of this type on 10 May, which clearly illustrates the resentment and tension being felt in the city. Having robbed a man in Holborn, who resisted, the gang of thieves responsible pointed him out as 'the Monster.' This drew a mob which proceeded to attack and chase down their quarry as he ran for his life to avoid being lynched. This was ultimately saved by colleagues who carried him into a nearby coffee house. From there, seriously injured, he was taken to the Brown Bear pub, which his pursuers, by now a thousand strong, immediately laid siege to. This debacle only ended when the victim was deposited at Bow Street in disguise by his supporters to be placed under the protection of the magistrates.[98] Others were more subtle, harnessing the terror generated by the case for pecuniary gain or self-aggrandisement, painting themselves as victims or heroes – with elaborate hoaxes of this type involving *inter alia* cut dresses, self-inflicted injury and discharged pistols for dramatic effect.[99]

However, alongside the newspapers, it was the satirical print shops that were experiencing a bonanza as a by-product of the current panic. Much of this focussed on the ineptitude of the authorities alongside the risky investment brokered by Angerstein in terms of his reputation. A situation clearly enjoyed by the society diarist Hesther Thrale, who ridiculed the 'Ladies' Champion' mercilessly in her diary: 'the whole town a 'laughing at poor Angerstein, whose Quixotism was

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[96] *Gazetteer,* 17 May 1790.
[97] *Oracle,* 17 May 1790.
[98] *World*, 10 May 1790.
[99] See the *World,* 14 May 1790, and the *Times,* 15 May and 21 May 1790.

represented on the summer stages of London with great effect.'[100] Indeed, on the London stage a bawdy musical play entitled 'The Monster' had been playing to full houses at Astley's Theatre for several weeks. This provided a potted farce of the previous month's events, with the lead actor pursuing actresses with blade and nosegay whilst they vainly attempted to protect their backsides from assault[101].

The protection of female backsides was also proving a highly lucrative side-line for both blacksmith and satirist, with reports of the wealthy ordering bespoke copper cuirasses to wear beneath their skirts,[102] the poorer orders having to make do with additional layers of the customary cork.[103] This particular theme was used by to great effect by Isaac Cruikshank in his definitive double plate satire *The Monster Cutting a Lady. Copper Bottoms to Prevent Being Cut* (fig. 14.),[104] which had been released on 1 May. Cruikshank's first plate shows a young lady being attacked on a doorstep in Pall Mall by a man fitting the description of the Monster, a script stating that the illustrator had spoken about likeness to three of the victims beforehand. The man wears (especially phallic) blades attached to his knees as he slashes at her skirts with a knife. On the door is the misspelled name 'ANGERSTEEIN' with his infamous wanted poster adjacent. In the second plate the same lady is shown, semi-naked, having a copper petticoat fitted as a precaution against further attack, adjacent is a notice offering similar appliances for ages 15, 30, and 'very fat.' Thus, the print offers purchasers news, horror, and eroticism in equal measure. The postscript is that no woman of age or size is safe, a message which according to 'Humphrey Henpeck' writing in the *Diary* newspaper, was being used as a stratagem by the covetous men of London to confine their wives and daughters indoors.[105]

Cruikshank's print was to become the first in a steady stream of satirical Monster prints and posters, rather precipitously made available for public

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[100] Hester Lynch Thrale *Thraliana: The Diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs Piozzi), 1776-1809*, K. C. Balderston (ed.) (1942), Vols. 2, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 770.
[101] *St James's Gazette*, 6-8 May 1790. This report on 'The Monster' at Astley's demonstrates the speed in which the episode had gripped the London public, with clear signs of symbolisation in terms of the Monster as fully formed folk devil.
[102] *Times,*19 May 1790.
[103] M. D. George (1935) Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, vol. 5, London: British Museum, p. 242.
[104] I Cruikshank *The Monster Cutting a Lady. Copper Bottoms to Prevent Being Cut,* 1 May 1790, BM Satires 7726, BM Online Collection, www.britishmuseum.org, (viewed 30 June 2016).
[105] *Diary,* 31 May 1790.

consumption.[106]   Gillray was particularly industrious in May, with his *Monster disappointed of his Afternoon Luncheon, or Porridge Potts preferable to Cork Rumps* (fig. 15.) in tandem with *The Monster going to take his Afternoons luncheon.*[107]   In both prints, a rather fearsome bellowing Ogre is the Monster, knife and fork in hand as he lifts his terrified victim by her gathered skirts. In the first, his bellow is one of frustration as he finds the woman's backside protected by a large porridge pot, in the second, the image is identical but minus the pot, and the bellow thus becomes one of anticipatory lust! Lust is also apparent in the print that was issued next by *Gillray, Swearing to the Cutting Monster or a scene in Bow Street* (fig. 16.).[108]   Here however, in a courtroom scene, it is the magistrate Sir Sampson Wright leering at the backside of a young woman apparently presenting her wounds to the court that provides the central image. The Monster is shown in disgrace standing sheepishly at the Bar, bearing a clear likeness to Charles James Fox (a regular target for the artist), the provocative Whig politician and latterly a resolute supporter of the French Revolution.[109]   The image mocks the folly of Bow Street and of the government officialdom in their impotent handling of Monster affair. Gillray's courtroom is a pantomime scene, a ridiculous excuse for lechery, perhaps drawing on the Tuffing debacle of the previous month. The image also is symbolic, representing the frustration of a London public grown weary of panic and pandemonium, and as a consequence increasingly desperate for the apprehension of the cause.

Capture, censure, and the machinations of trial by media

Only one further Monster attack would occur. This, in Westminster on 10 June, when an unnamed woman was pursued and threatened by a stranger with a nosegay. In all, since March 1788 there had been fifty seven attacks attributed to the London

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[106] Many anonymous, of particular note *Old Maids Dreaming of the Monster*, 16 May 1790; *Glaucus and Scylla, or The Monster in Full Cry*, May 1790; and, *The Monster Detected*, 29 May 1790.

[107] J. Gillray The *Monster disappointed of his Afternoon Luncheon, or Porridge Potts preferable to Cork Rumps*; and, *The Monster going to take his Afternoons luncheon, 10 May 1790.*

[108] James Gillray *Swearing to the Cutting Monster or a scene in Bow Street, 20 May 1790, BM Satires 7648,* BM Online Collection, www.britishmuseum.org, viewed 2 July 2016.

[109] On hearing of the storming of the Bastille the previous year, Fox had remarked 'How much the greatest event it is that ever happened in the world! And how much the best' L. G. Mitchell (1971) *Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, 1782-1794*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 154-157; see also more generally (1992) *Charles James Fox*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Monster, forty three of these occurring in the preceding four months. Finally, on 13 June, Bow Street had a positively identified suspect in custody at Clerkenwell - a man named Rhynwick Williams. Williams had been identified by Anne Porter, the younger of the two sisters followed and assaulted on their doorstep on the night of the Queen's birthday five months earlier. On the evening of the 13th, Anne had gone for a walk in St James's Park with some family members and a young suitor named John Coleman.[110] During the walk Anne Porter had seen a man who she stated was her attacker, with Coleman following him in a somewhat nervous and protracted pursuit around the West End streets. Eventually Williams was brought to the Porter residence in St James's Street, identified by both sisters, and held whilst the Bow Street Runners were summoned to arrest him.[111]

Rhynwick Williams was a twenty three year old Welshman, an artificial flower maker by trade, who at the time of his arrest was living in a small room above the George alehouse in Bury Street, a rather seedy establishment, where he shared three beds with five other male lodgers.[112] The release of this initial information to an eager public caused sensation and consternation in equal measure. If the press reports were correct, London had been terrorised for two years by a rather slight man who made his living in an effeminate trade, whilst sharing his nightly bed with other men.[113] However, like a great many young men in his situation, communal living was commonplace, and Williams's domestic arrangements were almost certainly related to poverty and necessity rather than sexuality or choice.

This however, was not a consideration for much of the press, with latent homosexuality providing a convenient assumption as a backdrop for the ensuing trial process, von Archenholtz describing the bed-sharing as 'inference of horrid propensities, only too consentaneous with his recent practice.'[114] In the absence of an Ogre, the Monstrous sodomite was readily accepted as an appropriate folk

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[110] John Henry Coleman, aged 20 in June 1790 was a fishmonger with a shop in Gray's Inn Passage, *Bailey's London Directory; or, Merchants' & Traders' Useful Companion, for the year 1790*, Warrington, Birmingham & London: William Bailey, p. 103.
[111] *World,* 15 June 1790. See also, E. Hodgson (1790) *The Trial at Large of Rhynwick Williams*, London, p. 5.
[112] *World*, 15 June 1790; and, the *Morning Herald*, 15 June 1790.
[113] *Oracle,* 17 June 1790.
[114] *British Mercury*, 14, 1790.

devil.[115] The *Times* on the other hand preferred a Mohock *motif,* and had Williams painted as a self-indulgent rake within twenty four hours of his arrest. Describing him as a 'young man of genteel appearance…[living] in very dissipated habits, which have led him into expenses amongst women, and a line of conduct extremely injurious to his own character.'[116] Over the coming weeks, these polar themes percolated in the press, alongside potted biographies of Williams's (outwardly respectable) family, education, employment, and recent dissolution.

Rhynwick Williams's first public appearance following his arrest was before the magistrates at the Bow Street public office on the 14 June. Alongside the Porter sisters and Coleman, a large cohort of Monster victims were also present at the initial hearing, many willing and able to confirm the suspect as their attacker. Standing in the centre of the office, Williams, stated that he had a solid alibi to counter the accusations of the Porters. He had been working alongside colleagues in Dover Street until one a.m. on the night of the Queen's birthday at the artificial flower factory of his employer, Mr Amabel Mitchell (here, using an anglicised version of his French name, Aimable Michelle).[117] At the end of the first day of the hearing, despite precautions and a considerable police presence, a large mob attempted to charge the van returning the Williams to Clerkenwell, leaving the prisoner shaken, terrified and fully aware of the intense vitriol of the public.

He returned to Bow Street on 16 June, to face additional victims keen to confirm the identity of their assailant, in turn providing additional protestations of innocence to counter. The atmosphere was charged, with the *World* describing the crowds gathered in the streets outside as 'immense.'[118] Williams's final appearance for committal was on 18 June. This included an intense debate over which charges he should face. The public consensus was for the Monster to be tried for a felony offence (as opposed to a 'misdemeanour'), which with a guilty verdict, permitted capital punishment or transportation. This position had been garnered by a predominantly hostile press and reinforced within popular culture, with the hit show

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[115] For contemporary representations, note amongst others: *A Full and Genuine Narrative of the Confederacy* (1751); and, *The Trial of Richard Branson* (1760), both cited from I. McCormick *op. cit.* pp. 106-116.
[116] *Times*, 15 June 1790.
[117] *World,* 15 June 1790; and, the *St James's Gazette*, 12-15 June.
[118] *World*, 17 June 1790.

at Astley's Theatre closing to a rousing anti-Monster anthem which included the lines:

> When the Monster is taken in the fact,
> We'll have him tri'd by the Coventry Act,
> The Black Act,
> The Coventry Act.[119]

This posed a thorny decision for the magistrates, with neither the desired Black Act[120] or the Coventry Act[121] directly applicable at law to the offences committed. Conversely, the thought of allowing the very public crimes of the London Monster to pass as a misdemeanour was clearly untenable, and contrary to the interests of both justice and practicality, particularly with many misdemeanour offences settled at the hands of the public at the pillory, a potential outcome that would have undoubtedly seen Williams butchered. Thus, jurisdictive creativity was required and a middle way was found. This saw Williams committed to stand trial on seven indictments under an obscure law from 1721, which had been drafted to prevent weavers from damaging imported clothing.[122] Under this previously unemployed statute it was a felony offence to intentionally 'assault any person in the public streets, with intent to tear, spoil, cut, burn, or deface, the garments or cloaths of such person.' If found guilty on all seven indictments as the Monster, Williams would face transportation with a term of forty seven nine hard labour - a notion that was gleefully received, almost universally,[123] by London press and public alike.

Rhynwick Williams appeared at the Old Bailey on 8 July, running a fearsome gauntlet of public hatred in his journey by van from Clerkenwell. Prior to trial Williams had struggled to find counsel willing to represent the probable London Monster, eventually engaging a barrister named Newman Knowlys on the 7 July.[124] His defence mounted a plea of not guilty to all charges. Pre-trial the judiciary at the Bailey were also hesitant. This was due to the rather spurious nature of the

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[119] *World,* 22 April 1790.
[120] The Black Act (9 Geo. 1. C.22). Primarily concerned with being armed in disguise.
[121] The Coventry Act (22 & 23 Chas. II, c.1). Primarily concerned with malicious mutilation.
[122] Extant as a form of statutory assault (6 Geo. 1.), see J. Chitty (1819) *A Practical Treatise on the Criminal Law in Two Volumes*, Vol. II. Part II., London: G. L. Austin, p. 598.
[123] The only dissenting newspaper appears to be the *Morning Chronicle*, which questioned Williams's guilt and whether he had been part of a larger gang. See J. Angerstein *op. cit*. p. 127.
[124] *Times* 9 July 1790; World, 9 July 1790; Oracle 9 July 1790.

indictment, realising that the imposition of a felony charge was feeble and would likely result in a challenge.[125] The Judge appointed was Sir Francis Buller, with Arthur Pigot prosecuting for the Crown.

Pigot's fearlessly hyperbolic opening speech referred to the crimes of the Monster as 'unnatural to the honour of human nature…the most extraordinary case that ever called for the attention of a Court of Justice.'[126] However, in the early exchanges in the trial, Knowlys, the defence counsel appeared to readily endorse the views of the Crown in a feeble cross-examination of the prosecution witnesses - fatally undermining his case at the very outset. Prior to the examination of the witnesses for the defence William's made a speech to the court begging for his side to be heard and for due process to be applied. During this, he perceptively attempted to highlight the prejudice he had faced at the hands of the media, particularly in terms of the lavacious visual imagery, arguing:

> I revere the law of my country, which presumes every man to be innocent till proved guilty, yet I must reprobate the cruelty with which the Public Prints have abounded, in the most scandalous paragraphs, containing malicious exaggerations of the charges preferred so much to my prejudice, that I already lie under premature conviction, by almost a universal voice.[127]

Following Williams's plea, his employer Aimable Michelle, the French owner of the anglicised *Mitchell's Artificial Flowers*, provided evidence through an interpreter, confirming both good character and confirming his alibi for the 18 January. However, during the increasingly frenetic cross-examination of Michelle that followed, Pigot accused the bewildered witness of being the Monster himself or a knowing accomplice, closing with the words 'Let that witness not go out of court!' The other alibi witnesses included Aimable's sister Raines Michelle her forewoman, Catherine Alman, and Frances Beaufils representing three other co-workers. Williams also provided seventeen character witnesses, many of them women, but all

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[125] *World*, 3 July 1790.
[126] Edward Hodgson (1790) *The Trial at Large of Rhynwick Williams*, London: R. Butters, pp. 9-11. This source provides a full transcript of the trial.
[127] *Ibid*. pp. 25-26.

derided in a one-shilling pamphlet as 'the inferior kind.'[128] Amongst them was the 'plain' and 'unfashionable' Sarah Seward, a longstanding friend, who during her testimony stated that the accused was honest and had on one occasion saved her from drowning, information that was met with immediate derision by the prosecution, amid laughter and ruthless jeers from the public benches.[129] After a reserved summary, perhaps mindful of the prejudicial felony charge, Judge Buller sent out the jury. They quickly returned to found Rhynwick Williams guilty, with sentencing deferred until the December Sessions when the 'Twelve Judges of England' would determine his punishment.[130]

This enforced procedural interlude allowed another deluge of material from the press and the printers,[131] victorious in their role in bringing the Monster to the notice of the public, and ultimately to justice. However, the apparent victory was not universally celebrated.[132] Significant amongst the sceptics was Angerstein, who having met and taken testimony from every victim, held strong reservations about severe discrepancies in the various physical descriptions of the Monster and the man now in Newgate prison, together with the obvious strength of Williams's alibi. A further vocal cynic was a former acquaintance of Williams, the barrister Theophilus Swift, who was outraged over what he considered as a miscarriage of justice. Swift promptly produced a critical pamphlet, *The Monster at Large*,[133] in which he defended Williams whilst attacking the personal conduct of his ineffectual counsel, the unreliable prosecution witnesses (principally the Porters and Coleman whom Swift savaged),[134] and the spurious indictment upon which he had been charged. Swift wisely couched his pamphlet as a quest for truth and justice rather than a defence of the Monster, he stated 'To what country is our Virtue Fled? Where has

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[128] L. Williams (1790) *The Trial of Renwick Williams (Commonly Called the Monster)*, London: D. Brewman, p. 15. Conversely, the journalist from the *Oracle* observed Williams's female witnesses to be 'very beautiful' and testament to his virility, *Oracle*, 9 July 1790.
[129] R. Williams, *op. cit*, p. 19-20.
[130] Hodgson *op cit*. pp. 49-55.
[131] Alongside the official trial report by Edward Hodgson were numerous copy transcripts sold as verbatim, such as Nathaniel Jenkins's Full Account of the Trial of Rhynwick Williams. The new wave of prints included apparent life drawings of Anne Porter, Williams in court, and yet more savage caricature, such as the gruesome *Representation of Rynwick Alias Renwick Williams commonly called the Monster*, 12 July, London: W. Dent.
[132] See for instance, the editorial, *Rambler's Magazine*, 8. 1790.
[133] Theophilus Swift (1790) *The Monster at Large; or the Innocence of Rhynwick Williams Vindicated*, London: J. Ridgway.
[134] *Ibid.,* p. 110-115.

Humanity taken her flight? Has Reason, has Religion altogether forsaken us?'[135] Pointing out that the only place Williams had been afforded safety was in the abyss of Newgate - this 'virile' man was certainly no saint, but he was also no monster.

Swift's literary interjection as the Monster fury abated was timely, with sections of the press and public already expressing concern over the inconsistencies in the arrest and trial of Rhynwick Williams.[136] Similar disquiet was also becoming apparent within the judiciary, in that the obscure statue relied upon to convict Williams as a felon was inapplicable, and as such would warrant a retrial on a misdemeanour - requiring imprisonment rather than transportation. This was to be the case when England's senior judges convened on 10 November, ordering Williams to stand retrial at the Hick's Hall sessions - the energetic Swift was to be his advocate.[137]

Williams attended at the sessions on 13 December, before Judge William Mainwaring; Pigot appeared once again for the Crown, supported by Fielding, Shepherd, and Garrow.[138] Once again the Crown strongly asserted that Williams was the London Monster, but this time met a wholly unorthodox and antagonistic defence in Swift, who in ruthless cross-examination clearly believed the best form of defence was to attack - relentlessly! An approach which led to a series of violent 'uproars' in the court.[139] This was followed by a closing address in which he described the Porters as the 'Nuns of the Bagnio' and the newly enriched Coleman (by now the recipient of the Angerstein reward), as a 'puppy' and 'Dastardly Fishmonger turned Catamite.'[140] Despite the best efforts of Swift, at the close of the second day of the trial the jury retired for a mere 15 minutes,[141] and once again found Rhynwick Williams guilty as charged. He was immediately sentenced by

[135] *Ibid.*, p. 212.
[136] For example, see the *Times*, 12 July 1790; *Diary*, 27 July 1790; *New Lady's Magazine*, 5, 1790; *Oracle,* 9 August 1790; *World,* 17 October 1790; and, the *Morning Herald*, 12 November 1790.
[137] *Court Chronicle*, 20 November 1790.
[138] The *Lawyer's and Magistrate's Magazine* (1790-91), 2, pp.345-360; also, the notes of Judge Mainwaring, *op. cit.*
[139] R. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp.20-22.
[140] *Lawyer's and Magistrate's Magazine*, *op. cit.* pp. 355-360.
[141] *World*, 17 December 1790.

Mainwaring to six years in Newgate, and thereafter bound over a period of seven years with substantial sureties.[142]

A further puff of press activity followed the conviction of the London Monster, but this was significantly more subdued than previously - lacking the thrill of the chase, perhaps.[143] Williams drew some paying visitors to Newgate over the following year, who would watch him making artificial flowers, and whilst at Newgate he wrote a pamphlet giving his version of the events of 1790, entitled *An Appeal to the Public*. This was published in July 1792 as a work of self-pity, by which time the London public had lost interest in the plight of Rhynwick Williams and evidently exorcised the London Monster, the attacks having ceased in June 1790.

Concluding thoughts

An initiation to the London Monster episode implies the supernatural and introduces what appears to be a chimerical comic villain menacing dark London streets. A bawdy cultural relic. For Londoners in 1790, however, finding a monster in their midst, had the effect of inducing intense fear. Such fear, at a distance, can sometimes be regarded as inconsequential or ridiculous, but approval is irrelevant when seeking to identify moral panic within historical models. As Goode and Ben-Yehuda clarify 'It does not matter whether we sympathise with the concern or not. What is important is that the concern locates a folk devil.' Cohen in his final version of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* reminded that those labelled monsters possess cultural currency. Moreover, that monsters are socially real. He illustrates this via the device of a *News of the World* newspaper 'crusade' which occurred in July 2000, coming in the aftermath of a predatory paedophile panic in Britain. The banner headline screamed 'DOES A MONSTER LIVE NEAR YOU?' A signifier,

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[142] For the complete transcript of the trial, see 'ON Monday morning, the 13th of December, 1790, at ten o'Clock, RHYNWICK, otherwise RENWICK WILLIAMS, was brought from Newgate to the new Sessions-house on Clerkenwell-green, to take his trial for several assaults,' www.oldbaileyonline.org, (viewed 22 May 2015).

[143] See for example, *World* 14 and 17 December 1790; *Argus*, 14, 15, and 21 December 1790; *Public Advertiser*, 16 December 1790; and, the *British Mercury*, 15, 1790.

according to Cohen, that predatory sex offenders are '*pure* candidates for monster status.'[144]

It is clear that the term also carries cultural weight as a *pure* folk devil, a founding analysis missing from previous readings of the London Monster case.[145] Such monstrosity alludes to a flavour of deviance, an unnatural appetite beyond normal moral comprehension. In the mid-century decades that had directly proceeded the London Monster panic in 1790, three pure 'monsters' had been stoned to death at the pillory in London.[146] Two decades after Rhynwick Williams's conviction, six homosexual men known as the Vere Street gang narrowly missed a similar fate whilst en route to Bow Street, only saved by the heavy police presence, leaving a thwarted newspaper editor raging at their escape: 'The monsters must be crushed or the vengeance of Heaven will fall upon the land…is it not dreadful to have female delicacy and manly feeling shocked and the infant mind perhaps polluted.'[147] Thus, the London Monster panic of 1790, whilst coloured by the media, can be argued to have its foundations in grassroots social concerns over immorality and predatory sexual deviance - part of society's perpetual hunt for *pure* monsters.

Cohen's salient point on socio-cultural currency is echoed by Clark in terms of eighteenth century social historiography, when she argues that: 'sexual morality was so controversial and debated; no consensus could be reached. Popular attitudes towards sex contrasted with those of the authorities, who tried in vain to stem a growing tide.'[148] Indeed, London in the late eighteenth century, though seemingly riddled with vice, could be described as swimming against the tide in terms of sexual enlightenment. For example, Britain retained the death penalty for sodomy and continued to hang suspected sodomites until 1861, the offence having ceased to be a capital offence in much of Europe seventy years earlier.[149] Furthermore, in the prelude to the French Revolution sexuality had become politicised. It was a mob of

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[144] Cohen, *op. cit.,* p. xvi. This headline clearly echoing the press use of capitalisation to denote terror throughout the London Monster episode.
[145] Bondeson (2000), Shoemaker (2004), and McCreery (2009).
[146] P. Bartlett 'Sodomites at the Pillory in Eighteenth-century London' *Social and Legal Studies*, 6, pp. 553-572.
[147] Newspaper editorial (1810) press cuttings in *British Library Cup*, 364, p.12, cited in Fry *op. cit.*, p. 145.
[148] A. Clark 'Female Sexuality' in D. Simonton (ed.) (2006) *The Routledge History of Women in Europe Since 1700*, London: Routledge, p. 59.
[149] Repealed In Austria 1787, France 1791, Prussia 1794.

armed women who had marched on Versailles, and petitioned the National Assembly for equal rights in the autumn of 1789. Their activism translated to many as a form of defiant deviance, they were regendered as depraved 'women-men.'[150] Consequently, the timing of the London Monster panic coincided with a highly charged political period, where a propensity for deviance in sex, and gender, was frequently used as a media and political theme to deride the French, a metaphor for perverted disorder (fig. 17.).[151] This point is made by Benedict, who suggests that the Monster panic was viewed at the time as decidedly foreign, a product of the 'French disease' with intensified homophobia and a renewed focus on the need for female sensibilities.[152]

These nationalistic, sexualised and gendered cues are evident throughout the Monster panic, and especially during the trial of Rhynwick Williams. Here, following his exposure in the press as a probable sodomite, his French colleagues at the artificial flower factory are suspected as insouciant, unreliable, or complicit to his excesses. Similarly, the validity and honesty of the female witnesses for prosecution and defence are judged primarily upon their looks, their manners and their class, ultimately their social value. The early impact of the French Revolution was polarising British society, combined with a renewed emphasis on middle class manners and a call for standards of 'self-control' fueled by religious evangelicalism.[153] The period can thus be viewed as one of intense socio-political change and instability, even by eighteenth century standards. With strong evidence of deviancy amplification as a result, the customary catalyst for intense and volatile episodes of moral panic.

Within this crucible, the media, of course, came to the fore, and perhaps the difference between the London Monster episode and those that preceded it in the eighteenth-century is what might be termed reactive intensity. Here it is not the discovering public, the politicians, the judiciary or the worthy who attempt to set the

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[150] L. Beckstrand (2009) *Deviant Women of the French Revolution and the Rise of Feminism*, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, pp. 11-18, 70-88.

[151] See appendix, James Gillray (1792) *Un Petit Souper a la Parisienne*, London: H. Humphrey, as perhaps the most stark example of its genre, appearing two years after the Monster debacle, with a group of lusty sans culottes shown literally trouser-less as depraved cannibals.

[152] B. M. Benedict 'Making a Monster: Socializing Sexuality and the Monster of 1790' in H. Deutsch and F. Nussbaum (eds.) (2000) *'DEFECTS': Engendering the Modern Body*, Ann Arbour: MI, pp. 127-153.

[153] R. B. Shoemaker (1998) *Gender in English Society 1650-1850*, London: Longman, pp.72-73.

pace of the panic, it is the press. As soon as the cutting attack on the Porters is uncovered in mid-January 1790 a monster industry leaps into action. The coiled media are waiting for a London Monster, and know how to harness interest and garner consensus. Within this competitive commercial hub there is an increasing need to stand-out. This allows for the release of ever more salacious headlines and spurious claims to sell copy, alongside ever more jarring visual imagery to force stares. The social satires of Hogarth and Gillray are only half a century apart, but in such an environment they appear as alike as wine and whisky. Media reach at this juncture had also been greatly enlarged. With the marketplace for shocking stories and images reaching national and international audiences within unprecedented timeframes, allowing the London Monster to achieve notoriety in Europe in real time, and globally soon after.[154]

Alongside fear, the recurrent theme in the press around the time of the London Monster is despair over public order, and this permeates editorial comment throughout. Placing what passes for a reactive force at Bow Street under intense scrutiny in an attempt to join up the dots of an embryonic criminal justice 'system' – a system showing desire to move towards organisation and consistency. Indeed, it could be argued that the greatest symbolic value of the London Monster panic lies in exposing the contradictions of the city that hosted it. At his first trial Rhynwick Williams asks the court for mercy, stating his reverence for the law of his country, the presumption of innocence. This request is met with boos and hisses from the public benches, and derision when repeated by his supporters. Despite obvious prejudice in terms of public perception of his criminality allied to his lowly social status, the law finds Williams guilty, but ultimately saves his life against the public will – he is a recipient of procedural justice. As Davis convincingly argues in the context of political and economic anxieties: 'During the stress of the 1790s, it was seen as important that the strength and authority of the state was imposed on society.'[155] Thus, we are able to recognise a degree of developing paternalism in a government that on this occasion has not seen it necessary to send out the guard or

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[154] For instance, the Monster case provided a compendium of material for the *Annalen der Brittischen Geshichte* (1791), 7, pp. 175-183. Similarly, most of the original Monster pamphlets were available for purchase in the United States by 1791, the most popular being a revised edition of Hodgson, which was published by Thomas Greenleaf.

[155] M. T. Davis, *op. cit*. p. 230.

offer reward, amidst the public panic and press furore. Desirous of Foucault's *docile bodies* under its gaze, perhaps?[156]

These complex variables allow us to identify significant social change in London in terms of the public sphere during the 1790s. With the fear and uncertainty created by the London Monster closely followed by that attributed to the English-Jacobins, leading to calls for stability and security from all sections of society. In this regard, the melodrama of the Monster hunt might be seen as having influenced moves towards the state as protector and keeper of the peace, arguably triggering a reappraisal of Fielding's calls for organised public police patrols under Wright[157] and the reform of the magistracy in its aftermath.[158] Consideration of such elements posits the London Monster affair as a performed progression, a thoroughly modern moral panic. This considerably extends McCreery's conclusion of the case as being press instigated.[159] Arguing instead for the episode to be seen fundamentally as a bottom-up *grassroots* model founded upon deep rooted fears, felt by all Londoners, with the various stages delineated as concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality, and closure. Essentially, the public discover the threatening folk devil; the press create a monster for their consumption, and the authorities are left to unmask him.

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[156] M. Foucault (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, p. 138.
[157] L. Radzinowicz, (1956) *A History of English Criminal Law, vol. III,* London: Stevens & Sons, p. 135.
[158] Under the Middlesex Justices Act 1792.
[159] C. McCreery (2009) *op. cit.*, 215.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to utilise the device of moral panic theory, conceived by Stanley Cohen, and developed by Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, to explore the discovery of, and social response to, perceptions of crime and deviance in eighteenth-century London, in order to evaluate whether the city, and its media, should be identified as the historical catalyst for what might now be termed public order moral panics. Allied to the rigorous analysis of three historical case studies chosen to replicate enduring folk devils within Cohen's typology, the research has furnished a substantial body of evidence which proves this to be the case. As such, the present thesis considerably advances and expands this important subject area within the historiography of crime and deviance.

London emerges as the central character within this thesis, its history revealing the city as truly unique, the cradle of Habermas's public sphere. Close study of the eighteenth-century city has assembled a plethora of material to inform concepts of, *inter alia*, morality, mass media, labeling, demography, social strain, social control, and panic. Media development, particularly at the start of the century, has frequently been linked to the drive towards burgeoning capitalism and consumerism, often omitting observable enthusiasm, indeed joy, in the new technology and the possibilities for communication it presented. Thus press activity, particularly that of the newspaper industry, can be seen as an instrument of modernisation, and felt as a tribal drumbeat to the mood of the city – always intensifying when folk devils appear on the horizon. This, in a place already steeped and proficient in methodologies of oral culture as its traditional means for spreading news and gossip. Print should therefore be seen as a supplement to the literate, rather than as a handicap to the illiterate. Moreover, it can be seen that during the eighteenth century, London possessed a discernible 'social media' within the reach of all social classes, a complex web of communication perfectly able to generate folk devils and support moral panics.

Similarly, this thesis has highlighted the importance of visual imagery and print culture in shaping sensibilities and informing mass morality. Hogarth and Gillray,

geniuses both, capturing and tormenting many of the century's folk devils, the former referring to them in his moralising works as protagonists in 'dumb shows.'[1] These dumb shows, then as now, were able to literally stop people in their tracks, providing graphic imagery comparable in form and power to contemporary photojournalism. Williamson refers to this rare ability within art as the 'Strangelove effect.'[2] Hogarth and Gillray (like Kubrick) are exponents, able to use a combination of absurdity and emotional cues to crystallise morality, harness empathy, and rationalise panic.

The term folk devil, crucial to the discourse of moral panic theory, but so often missing from the scholarly analysis of it across disciplines, appears fully at home in eighteenth-century London. With the people who populated the city's busy streets closer to the folkways that shaped its origin, willing and able to identify the devils amongst them, this, within a grumbling hive of change, commerce and social contrast - which pitched rich alongside poor, finery alongside filth, and sensibility alongside struggle. A place jammed with traffic, where falling houses might thunder on your head, amidst a moving forest of masts. Such flux ensured that this London was also highly criminogenic, but reliant on custom to provide criminal justice and terror to function as social control. With its public often engaged as the arbiters of deviance, guardians or order, and agents of censure, but able to distinguish pantomime from panic, as the analysis of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, indicates. You do not need to dig to find intense social change in this extraordinary society, it is on the surface, it is pervasive.

Upon this tableau the three chosen case-studies, the Mohocks, Madame Geneva, and the London Monster, all reveal folk devils and represent moral panics, whilst exhibiting important socio-historical similarities as well as differences. The Mohocks episode has its folk devil roots in the socialisation of the privileged, the materialisation of a rake subculture that had developed in London since the Restoration in 1660. A select group drifting away from the hedonism of libertinism, towards the sadism of hooliganism. It should be seen as the originating case of public order panic in eighteenth-century London. It exposes a rudimentary

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[1]William Hogarth (1833) *Anecdotes of William Hogarth: Written by Himself*, London: J. B. Nicholls.
[2] Williamson (1999) *op. cit.*, pp. 80-95.

processual moral panic - top down and elite press led. In this sense, consensus is conferred, and wider public involvement is inconsequential beyond victim status. Running for just ten weeks it is marked by its volatility and brevity, marking the episode out as analogous to many studies of youth violence within the theoretical sphere, including Cohen's original study.

Conversely, Madam Geneva, is a multi-faceted case that spans thirty one years, appearing as a state-stimulated social problem, exacerbated by both technological advance and economic necessity. Longevity allows for the evaluation of three distinct stages which follow elite crusader discovery, the first of which centred on a crusading period of problematisation over social harm, with both media and political attention split, sporadic, and controversial. The second witnessed crusading moral prediction and symbolism, with a partisan media, and a hardening view of gin addicts. The third stage brought moral entrepreneurialism and clear social pragmatism, which finally garnered consensus over threat and brought closure, with the mass media defecting en masse to the reform cause. London gin took thirty one years to achieve what might be termed moral panic status, with the period of crusading debate and policy wrangling lasting for twenty eight years. This crusade was played out on the streets of London, with both the substance and its victims, at turns, observable as folk devils, overriding fiscal policy finally giving way to concerns over public health and public order in 1751. This final phase between 1748-1751 is certainly processual in nature, but allows for a much more complete treatment of moral panic than the Mohocks episode which reveals concerted activism, determined moral entrepreneurship, middle class consensus, and media solidarity.

The London Monster provides the most obvious *prima facie* folk devil of the three episodes, at first sight a bogie, and this should be the starting point for interpretation. With predatory sexuality a perennial theme, Cohen posits sex offenders as 'pure monsters' – provocative folk devils. Historical response suggests that he is correct in doing so. With the anxious London public, the victims, making the discovery and leading the subsequent hunt for the offender in this instance - a connected moral entrepreneur in tow. The media response is proactive, supportive, and embedded in recognisable forms of news and entertainment – it amounts to a

deluge. Alongside a great deal of morality play on sexuality, gender, and sensibility, concerns are raised regarding inadequate public security and insidious political influence. Arrest is met with an outpouring public emotion and violent posturing, but the clamour fades quickly after trial and due process. The pieces of this episode assemble as a complex grassroots moral panic, with observable variables of concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality, and unpredictability. The London Monster is unmasked as a thoroughly ancient folk devil, the affair appearing as a thoroughly modern public order moral panic.

Taken together these distinct episodes of moral panic chart the historical development of concepts of public morality, mass media, social control, public fear, public spirit, and crucially public order in London over the course of the eighteenth century. This permits the conclusion that the Mohocks, Madam Geneva, and London Monster episodes, whilst representative of novel moral panics, possess common lineage, a lineage which is indicative of a progressive awareness of the social problems that influenced consciousness of public order and bestowed public voice. These themes percolated, and would inform the social policy narratives of the metropolis in the century that followed, a movement towards a recognisable governmentality.

The *combined* concept of folk devils and moral panic is a gift to the historical researcher from Stanley Cohen. The theory characterises media and public reaction, whilst framing the agents of social control and the deviants that they pursue. As such it provides a historiographical research device that is able to tease out norms and moralities to determine loci of *power* – a discourse which Michel Foucault recognised as critical to an understanding of early-modern society.[3] Indeed, for the crime historian the concept is one of empowerment, which can reveal societal fear, deprivation, struggle and confusion – going well beyond the realm of the bawdy story-telling which is often assigned to obscure episodes of historical unorthodoxy.

The present thesis shows that understanding the current phenomenon of moral panic can undoubtedly be assisted, extended, and enhanced through the exploration of the moral crises of earlier centuries, utilising such social histories to inform the present,

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[3] M. Foucault (1979) *The Will To Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, vol. 1,* London Penguin, pp. 15-20.

by highlighting continuities and exposing differences. In doing so this thesis has provided both an enhanced understanding of the socio-historical context of moral panic in eighteenth-century London, and presented extended historical analysis of the important Mohock, Madame Geneva, and London Monster episodes.

Appendix. Illustrations

Fig. 1. William Hogarth (1734) *The Rake's progress* [final frame, Bedlam], London: Baldwin & Cradock.

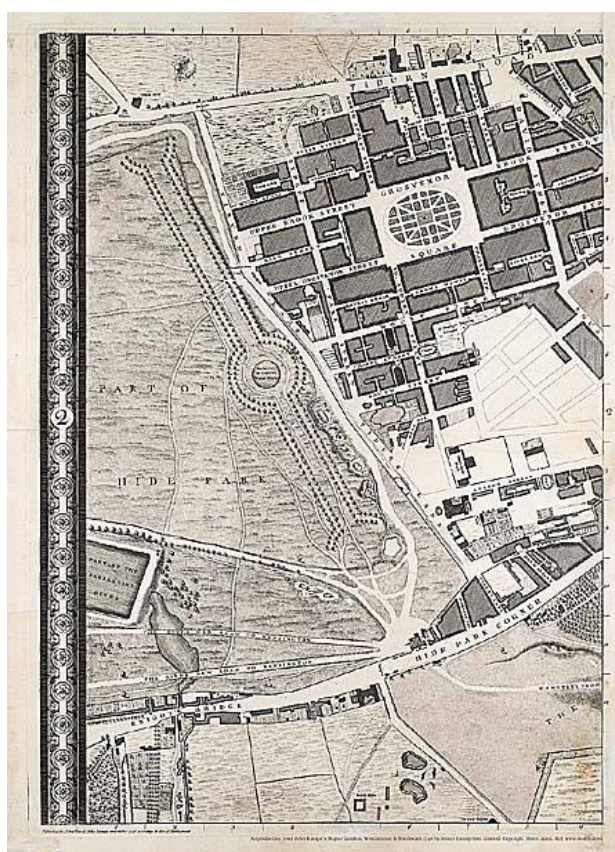Fig. 2. James Gillray (1808) *Very Slippy-Weather*, London: Printed for H.Humphrey.
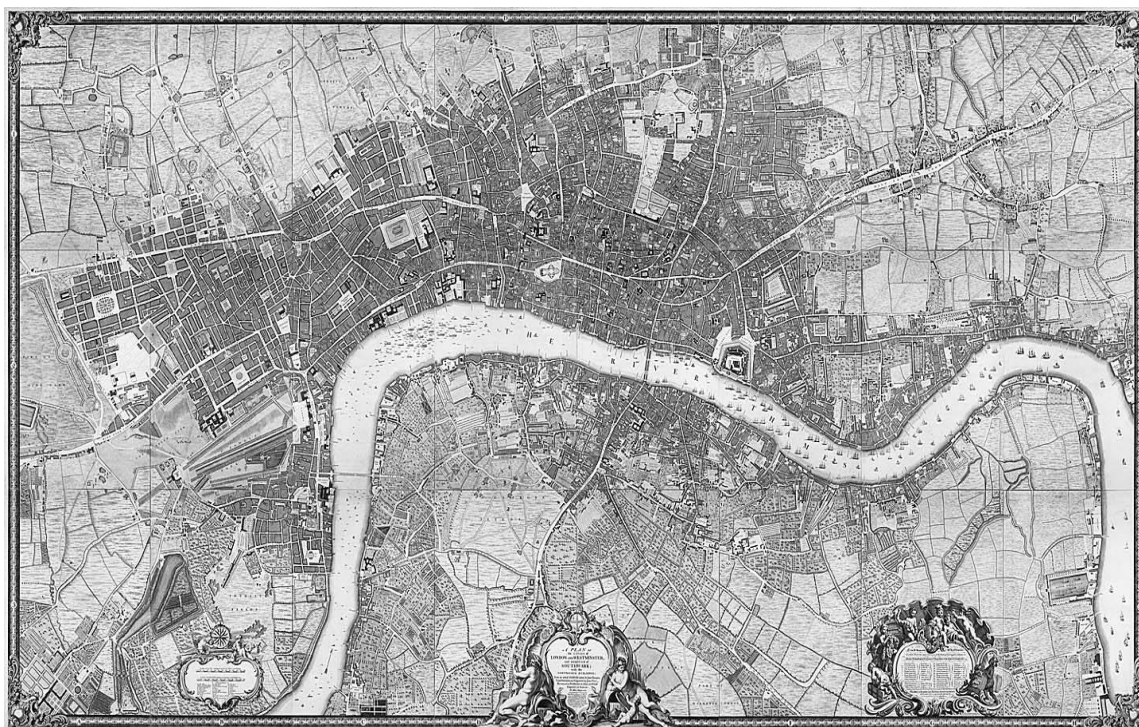
Fig. 3. John Rocque (1746) *A plan of the cities of London and Westminster, and borough of Southwark* [detail showing Hyde Park and Tyburn], London: John Pine.

Fig. 4. William Hogarth (1734) *Gin Lane*, London: Baldwin & Cradock.

Fig. 5. Louis Phillipe Boitard (1757) *The Imports of Great Britain from France*, London: John Bowles & Son.
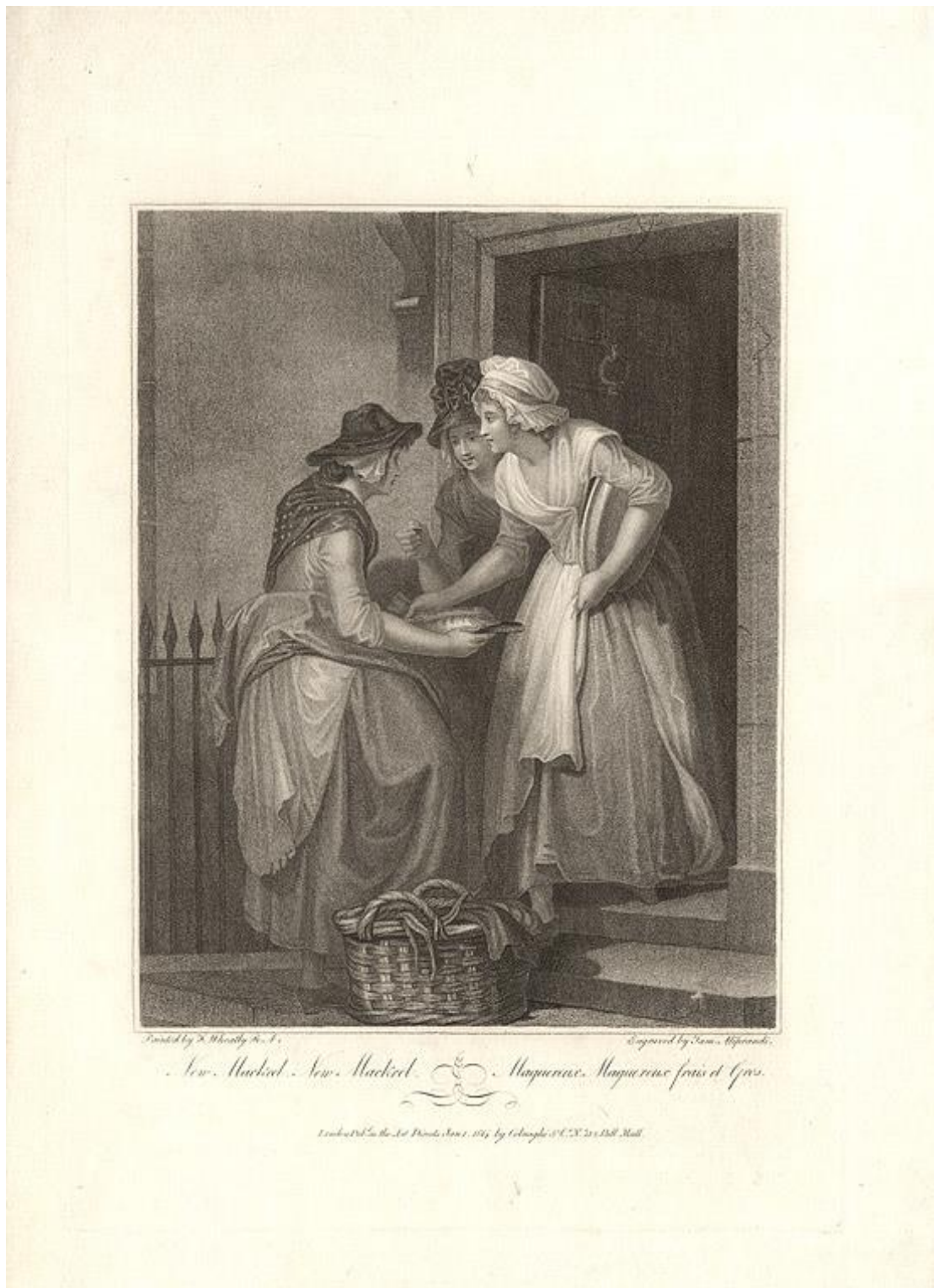
Fig. 6. Francis Wheatly (1792) *New Mackerel, New Mackerel*, *Cries of London*, no. 5., London: Colnaghi & Co.

Fig. 7. Anon. (1725) *Gallows ticket to the execution of Jonathan Wild*, London.

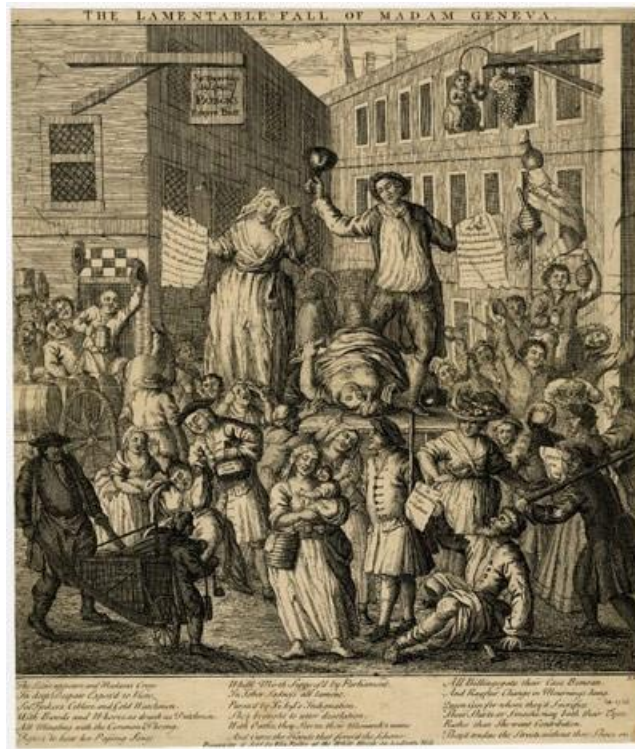Fig. 8. After John Verelst (1711) *Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow*, London: John Simon.

Fig. 9. Anon. (1736) *The Lamentable Fall of Madam Geneva*, London: Eliz. Foster.

Fig. 10. Anon. (1736) *The Funeral Procession of Madame Geneva*, London: John Clark.
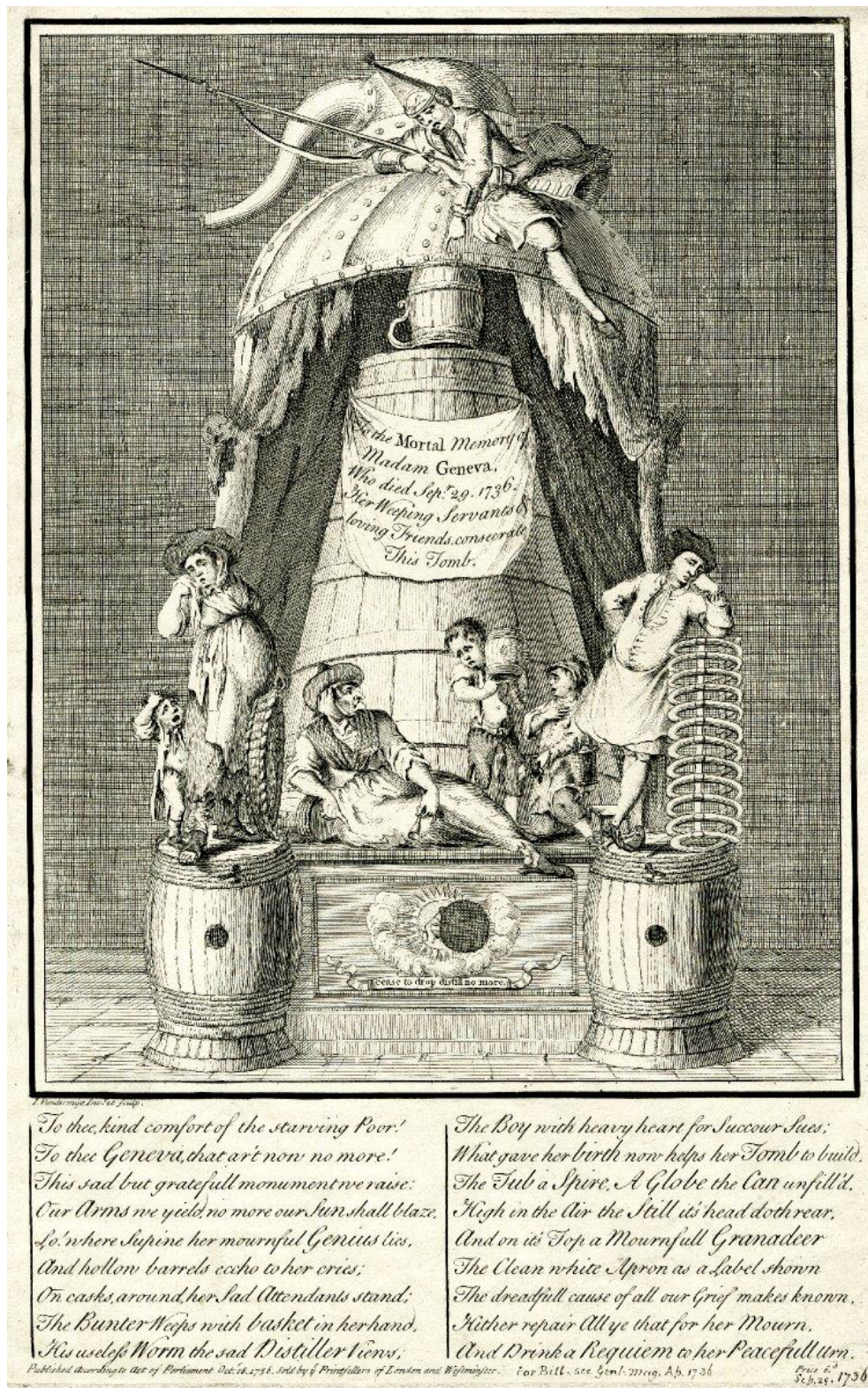
To the Mortal Memory of
Madam Geneva,
Who died Sep.r 29. 1736.
Her Weeping Servants &
loving Friends consecrate
This Tomb.

Cease to drop distil no more.

To thee, kind comfort of the starving Poor!
To thee GENEVA, that art now no more!
This sad but gratefull monument we raise:
Our Arms we yield, no more our Sun shall blaze.
Lo' where Supine her mournful Genius lies,
And hollow barrels eccho to her cries;
On casks, around, her Sad Attendants stand;
The Bunter Weeps with basket in her hand,
His useless Worm the sad Distiller Views;

The Boy with heavy heart for Succour Sues;
What gave her birth now helps her Tomb to build,
The Tub a Spire, A Globe the Can unfill'd,
High in the Air the Still it's head doth rear,
And on it's Top a Mournfull Granadeer
The Clean white Apron as a Label shown
The dreadfull cause of all our Grief makes known,
Hither repair All ye that for her Mourn,
And Drink a Requiem to her Peacefull Urn.

Published according to Act of Parliament Oct. 18. 1736. Sold by ÿ Printsellers of London and Westminster. for Bill. see Gent. Mag. Ap. 1736   Price 6.d Sep. 29. 1736.

Fig. 11. Anon. (1736) *To the Mortal Memory of Madam Geneva*, London: Heroman van der Mijn.

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Fig. 12. William Hogarth (1733) *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, London: Baldwin & Cradock.

Fig. 13. William Hogarth (1751) *Beer Street*, London: Baldwin & Cradock.

Fig. 14. Isaac Cruikshank (1790) *The Monster Cutting a Lady. Copper Bottoms to Prevent Being Cut,* London: S. W. Fores.

Fig. 15. James Gillray (1790) *The Monster disappointed of his Afternoon Luncheon, or Porridge Potts preferable to Cork Rumps,* London: H. Humphrey.
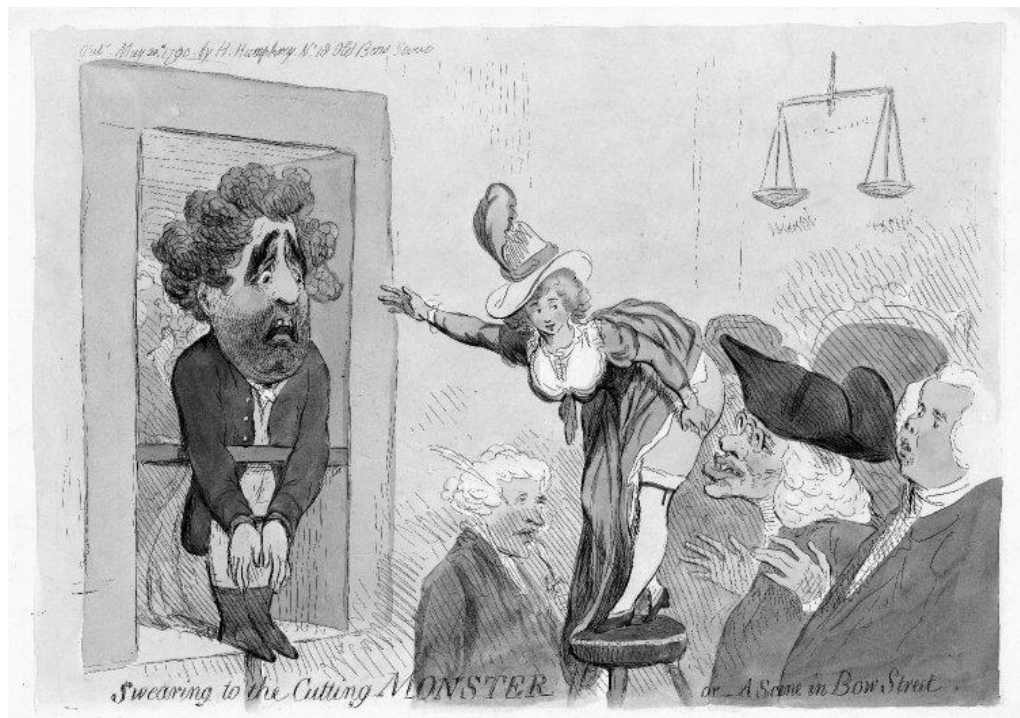
Fig. 16. James Gillray (1790) *Swearing to the Cutting Monster or a scene in Bow Street,* London: H. Humphrey.

Fig. 17. James Gillray (1792) *Un Petit Souper a la Parisienne,* London: H. Humphrey.

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- COL/CA Repertories of the Court of Aldermen, Rep 116/132 March 1712.
- MJ/SP Middlesex Justices Sessions Papers April 1712, and draft of warrant for petty constables, 28 March 1712, folios 3-26, 4- 27. Sessions File (SF) 545, SF nos. 20, 26, 33, 49.
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