

A Free Course on the History of Western Art

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17-02a Hogarth: His Life and Society

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Annibale Carracci
(1560-1609)
The Bean Eater
1580-90

This talk traces the origins and development of British social satire, from Annibale Carracci's unflinching scrutiny of ordinary life in late sixteenth-century Bologna, through the moral comedies of the Dutch Golden Age, to the career of William Hogarth — engraver, painter, theorist, and civic force. We follow his influence forward through Gillray, Rowlandson, and the Cruikshanks, charting how the printed image became Britain's sharpest instrument of social and political commentary.



Annibale Carracci (1560-1609)
The Bean Eater
1580-90
57 x 68 cm
Galleria Colonna, Rome

Annibale Carracci (1560-1609), *The Bean Eater*, 1580-90, 57 x 68 cm, Galleria Colonna, Rome

We begin this talk on Hogarth by stepping back more than a century to a painter whose work helps explain where the artistic appetite for everyday life really came from. **Annibale Carracci**, working in Bologna in the late sixteenth century, was among the first Italian painters to treat ordinary working people as worthy subjects in their own right. His painting **The Bean Eater**, dating from around **1580 to 1590**, shows a labourer mid-meal — beans, bread, and pig's trotters — painted with an unblinking objectivity that has no real precedent in Italian art. Annibale gives the man clean clothes and dirty fingernails, observed from life without condescension. That close attention to unglamorous physical detail actually predates Caravaggio's similar naturalism. The snapshot immediacy of the composition owes a debt to Flemish and Dutch genre painting, but in Italy the approach was genuinely radical. Annibale worked alongside his brother **Agostino Carracci** and their cousin **Ludovico Carracci** to found the **Accademia degli Incamminati** in **1582** — the Academy of Those Making Progress. Its explicit ambition was to challenge **Mannerism** by fusing the grace of Raphael, the muscularity of Michelangelo, and the rich colouring of Titian into a new, vigorous Baroque style. This institutional energy around training the eye on real life feeds directly into the tradition Hogarth will later inherit and transform.

Notes

The Italian artist Annibale Carracci (1560-1609, pronounced 'Ann-ee-baa-lay Ca-ra-chi') was known for and was one of the first artists in Italy to explore the appearance of everyday life. Here is a well-known painting called The Bean Eater. He is in the middle of a simple meal of beans, bread, and pig's feet. He is not shown as a caricature or as a comical or lewd figure but as a working man with clean clothes. The 'snapshot' effect is entirely unprecedented in Western art and he shows dirt under the fingernails before Caravaggio. Food suitable for peasants was considered to be dark and to grow close to the ground. Aristocrats would only eat light-coloured food that grew a long way from the ground. It is assumed that this painting was not commissioned but was painted as an exercise. The painting owes much to similar genre painting in Flanders and Holland but in Italy it was unprecedented for its naturalism and careful, objective study from life.

The Carracci were a Bolognese family that helped introduce the Baroque. Brothers Annibale (1560-1609) and Agostino (1557-1602) with their cousin Ludovico (1555-1619) worked together on art works and art theories pertaining to the Baroque, starting a school for artists in 1582. The school was called the Accademia degli Incamminati ('Academy of Those who are Making Progress'), and its main focus was to oppose and challenge Mannerist artistic practices and principles in order to create art that was avant-garde with a new modernist edge. It was one of the first academies in Italy and was sometimes called the Accademia dei Carracci. It was frequented by intellectuals, such as a doctor and an astronomer, and one of its aims was to elevate the status of artists. In the Accademia artists could draw from nude models which was prohibited by the Catholic Church. The aim was to create a style that combined the feminine grace of line of Raphael, the muscular strength of Michelangelo, the strong colours of Titian and the gentle colours of Correggio.

References

http://www.artble.com/artists/annibale_carracci/paintings/the_bean_eater



Jan Steen (1625/1626–1679)
*The world turned upside down / In
 Luxury, Look Out / Beware of Luxury
 ('In Weelde Siet Toe')*
 c. 1663
 105 × 145 cm
 Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Jan Steen (1625/1626–1679), *The world turned upside down / In Luxury, Look Out / Beware of Luxury ('In Weelde Siet Toe')*, c. 1663, 105 × 145 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

From the Carraccis' Bologna and their insistence on looking hard at real life, we move north to the **Dutch Golden Age** — the period stretching across the seventeenth century during which the newly independent Dutch Republic became the most commercially dynamic society in Europe, and its painters followed suit. Genre painting — scenes of everyday life, often loaded with moral commentary — became the defining cultural product of this moment. **Jan Steen** is its most exuberant practitioner. A canvas of around **1663** shows a household in delightful chaos: the housewife has fallen asleep and everyone else has taken the opportunity to misbehave. The image is not documentary realism; it illustrates an old Dutch proverb about idleness breeding disorder. The phrase **een huishouden van Jan Steen** — a Jan Steen household — entered the language as shorthand for domestic mayhem, which tells you how thoroughly his imagery embedded itself in popular culture. Steen produced around **800 paintings**, using his own family members as models with cheerful unselfconsciousness. Within Dutch genre painting there were recognised sub-types: tavern scenes, women at work, peasant festivities, market scenes, barracks interiors. In England these pictures arrived primarily as **engravings**, under the affectionate label **drolleries** — a route of transmission that will matter enormously when we turn to Hogarth.

Notes

The Dutch Golden Age is a period in Dutch history generally spanning the 17th century, during and after the later part of the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) for Dutch independence. There are many examples of genre scenes with a moral message.

This is a typical Jan Steen picture (c. 1663); while the housewife sleeps, the household play. These genre paintings were enormously popular but did not accurately represent life in Holland. The typically illustrated proverbs and sayings.

There were a large number of sub-types within the genre: single figures, peasant families, tavern scenes, 'merry company' parties, women at work about the house, scenes of village or town festivities (though these were still more common in Flemish painting), market scenes, barracks scenes, scenes with horses or farm animals, in snow, by moonlight, and many more.

Until the late 18th century the English often called such paintings 'drolleries'. The enormous popularity of genre painting is a feature of Dutch art of this period and it entered England in the form of engravings.

Notes

A "Jan Steen household", meaning a messy scene, became a Dutch saying (een huishouden van Jan Steen).

His paintings were intended as warnings and often reference old Dutch proverbs or literature. He often used members of his family as models, and painted quite a few self-portraits in which he showed no tendency of vanity. He produced some 800 paintings of which 350 survive. His work was valued and so he was reasonably well paid.



Anonymous

This Costly Fish Catcht In's Weil All These Desire To Tast As Wel As Feele. at All times in Season

c.1650

Engraving

Anonymous, This Costly Fish Catcht In's Weil All These Desire To Tast As Wel As Feele. at All times in Season, c.1650

The route those Dutch **drolleries** travelled — primarily as engravings — leads us directly into the world of **William Hogarth** and the broader culture of satirical printmaking that defined the first half of the **eighteenth century** in Britain. Before we reach Hogarth himself, consider an engraving using the metaphor of a fishing net or lobster pot to represent marriage as a trap. Various male types — monk, soldier, lawyer, a lecherous old man riddled with pox and gout — all strain toward the attractive woman caught in the net, illustrating folly through stock social characters. A less attractive woman standing alongside her pleads for rescue and is ignored, folding female jealousy into the indictment of male lasciviousness. Such images drew on Dutch and German satirical traditions and circulated over decades — one comparable print, **Cupid's Decoy**, was produced around **1710** and still sold in **1786**. Satire of this kind thrives when a society holds shared ideals against which behaviour can be measured. The early eighteenth century called itself the **age of reason** and prized common sense and good taste. After the trauma of the **Civil Wars of 1642 to 1651**, public enthusiasm — religious or political — became a social sin. Biting satirical wit replaced armed conflict as the weapon of choice, and a growing **middling class**, coffee shops, and an expanding print trade supplied exactly the market it needed.

Notes

There were many satirical engravings based on moral lessons. Some of these derived from Dutch and German sources.

This engraving uses the metaphor of a fishing net or lobster pot to represent marriage as a trap which, once entered, the husband can never escape. The various types of foolish man are shown lusting after the attractive woman in the net and they all want to join here.

The fisherman (A) says 'This Fish was such a goodly sight, Hee longed for it, with delight'. The monk (B) asks the fisherman to pull hard so that he can have the woman in his Convent, the soldier says, 'Young Robert, to get such spoil, His blood within his veins did boyl.', the lawyer (E) warns about the cost of a wife and the old man (F) with 'pox and gout' cannot give up his lust for the woman. The other character (D) is a woman who asks the fisherman to cut her free but she is less attractive and 'cut the cord; let her sink. You all strive to set her free, Not one of you will pull for mee'. The sin of female jealousy is thus added to that of male lasciviousness.

Why was satire the lifeblood of the first half of the eighteenth century?

Satire arises from a fall from the ideal so the ideal must be known and aspired to. The first half of the eighteenth century was called the 'age of good taste', 'the age of good sense' and the 'age of reason'. Most writers admire common sense, good taste and 'right reason'.

Following the Civil Wars of 1642-1651 the English were wary of enthusiasm in any form. Several Protestant sects of the 16th and 17th centuries were called Enthusiastic. During the years that immediately followed the Glorious Revolution, 'enthusiasm' was a British pejorative term for advocacy of any political or religious cause in public. Such 'enthusiasm' was seen in the time around 1700 as the cause of the previous century's civil war and its attendant atrocities, and thus it was an absolute social sin to remind others of the war by engaging in enthusiasm.

The English wariness concerning extremes of any form, whether religious or political, was born. Armed conflict was replaced by forceful, extreme biting satire.

This was at a time of growing wealth, a new 'middling' class and the growing power of the City of London and large towns. New money fuelled leisure time, coffee shops, new forms of publication and easier access to controversial views.

Political satire has a long tradition in England. At the end of the 18th century and the first two decades of the 19th century, James Gillray (1756/7–1815), Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), and George Cruikshank (1792–1878) established a tradition of political and social visual satire in Britain. Party politics was revived at the end of the 18th century (see Whigs and Tories below) and the revolutions in America and France opened up new wider political debates. The absence of an absolute monarch in Britain came with a relatively free press and victims of satire were more likely to buy all copies of the publication rather than resort to courts or murder. The new middling class provided the market, technological developments made visual satire possible, coffee shops provided the venue and a new distribution infrastructure for publications fed the market.

One of the first artists to exploit this new market was William Hogarth (1697-1762) although Arthur Pond (1705?-1768), Thomas Patch (1725-1782) and James Sayer (1748-1823) also produced caricatures. Hogarth was aware of Italian caricature, the exaggeration of human physical features found in the work of Annibale and Agostino Carracci in their Academy in Bologna founded in 1585. George Townshend (1724-1807), a soldier, brought back caricature from his Grand Tour and drew comic portraits with punning titles in the 1760s.

Notes

The date is assumed from the costumes worn.

Similar engravings were sold over a long period of time, Cupids Decoy or an Emblem of the state of Matrimony was produced in about 1710 and was still being sold in 1786.

Whigs and Tories

The political division between Whig and Tory indicated a deep division in society that developed with the 'Glorious Revolution' when James II was deposed and the power of parliamentary government increased. Both terms were terms of abuse. Whig derived from the Scottish Gaelic for 'horse thief' and later rioting Scottish Presbyterians and the term indicated nonconformity and rebellion and it was applied to those who believed they had the right to exclude the heir from the throne. Tory was an Irish term suggesting a papist outlaw and was applied to those who supported the hereditary right of James

despite his Catholic faith.

During the Exclusion Crisis (1679-81) Whigs wanted to exclude James II from the throne and Tories supported him. The Whigs therefore supported the primacy of Parliament above the rights of the monarch. The division there continued the division between Royalists and Parliamentarians during the Civil War. However, no one wanted another civil war and so both sides compromised and both sides saw some merits in the other position. Armed conflict was being replaced by rational discussion although William II came to England with an army and the Jacobites continued to attempt to overthrow the chosen monarchs.

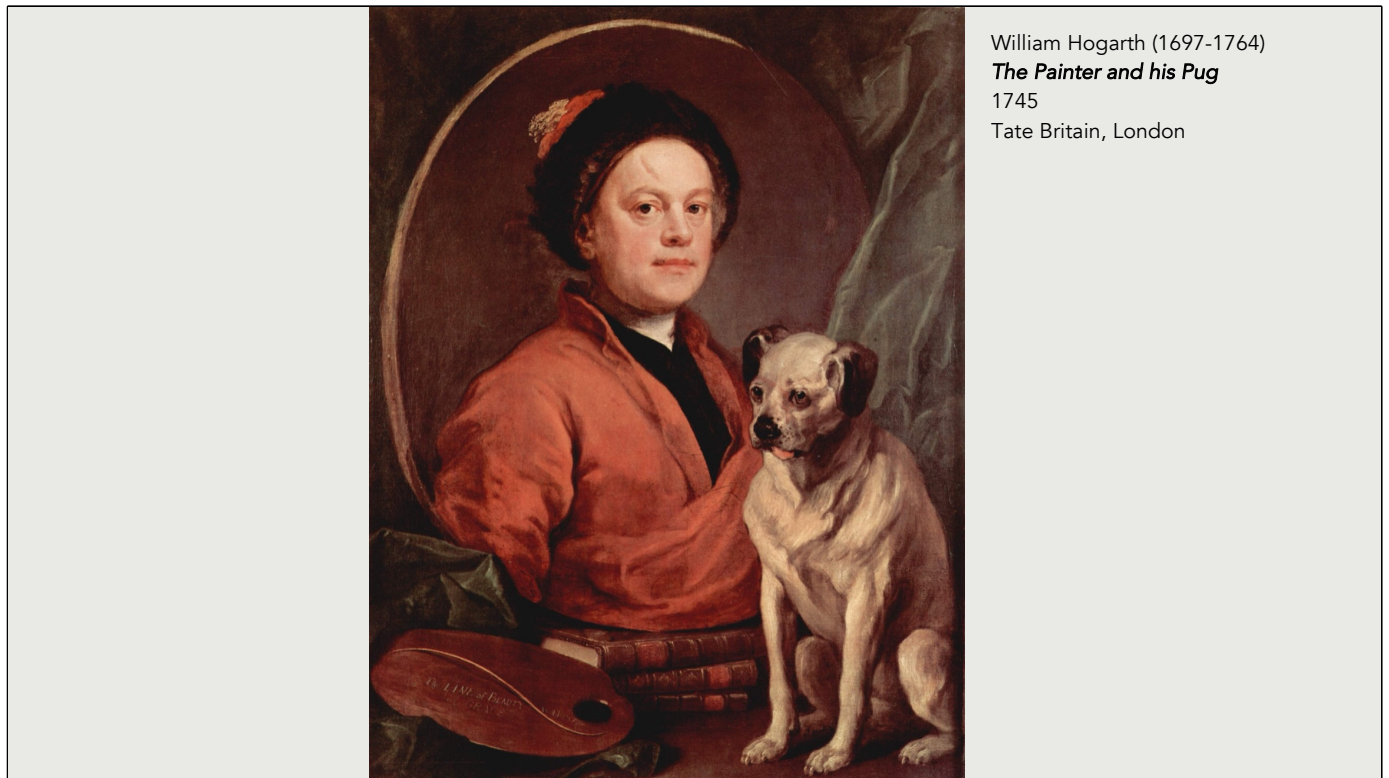
Before the 'Glorious Revolution' the Whigs were those who were seen to be revolutionaries and activists but after the Glorious Revolution it became the Tories who were the political malcontents wanting change.

By the time of Queen Anne's reign the Tories were, by and large, the old country gentry, the squires, who opposed religious toleration and foreign involvements and supported the Anglican High church against Dissenters. The Whigs were the new wealthy middle class, Dissenters and urban dwellers. The appointment of George I was a victory for the Whigs and it destroyed the political power of the Tories. For the next fifty years aristocratic groups were mostly Whig and the few (about 100) die-hard Tories were discredited as Jacobites but remained members of the House of Commons. By the reign of George III (1760-1820) there were no Whig or Tory parties as such. The King's Friends and advisors came from both traditions. Party alignments only took place after about 1784 when deep political issues were stirred up by the American Revolution. After 1784 William Pitt the Younger emerged as leader of a new Tory Party which represented the country gentry, merchants and administrative groups. In opposition, the revived Whig Party was led by Charles James Fox who represented religious dissenters, industrialists and others seeking reform. The French Revolution resulted in further dissention and a section of moderate Whigs deserted Fox and supported Pitt. After 1815 and a period of confusion the conservatism of Sir Robert Peel and Benjamin Disraeli and the liberalism of Lord John Russell and William Ewart Gladstone emerged. They were called Conservatives and liberals although the label 'Tory' was still used for the Conservative Party the term 'Whig' was dropped.

References

Encyclopaedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Whig-Party-England>

<http://www.bpi1700.org.uk/research/printOfTheMonth/february2007.html>



William Hogarth (1697-1764), *The Painter and his Pug*, 1745, Tate Britain, London

Into that world of satirical printmaking steps **William Hogarth**, born in London in **1697**, and there is no separating the man from the milieu that shaped him. His father Richard was an unsuccessful schoolmaster and writer who was imprisoned for debt for five years — a humiliation that left a permanent mark on Hogarth's sense of social injustice and his contempt for the pretensions of wealth without virtue. He began an apprenticeship as a silversmith in **1714**, abandoned it, and taught himself engraving, taking early commissions for trade cards and book illustrations. He registered at the **John Vanderbank Academy** in **1720** and later studied painting under **Sir James Thornhill**, whose daughter **Jane** he married in **1729**. The connection gave him access to the highest levels of British artistic life, though Hogarth was never comfortable as a court painter — his instincts pulled him always toward the street. His breakthrough came with **A Harlot's Progress** in **1731**, a sequence he described in his own terms: "I wished to compose pictures on canvas similar to representations on the stage." This was genuinely new — what Hogarth called **modern moral subjects**, narrative sequences that worked simultaneously as paintings, as engravings sold cheaply to a broad public, and as social indictments. The form was his invention, and it made him famous overnight.

Notes

Hogarth's mother was a shopkeeper and his father a schoolmaster and publisher. His youth was overshadowed by the chronic financial problems of his father, who was imprisoned for five years because of his debts. This humiliating experience formed Hogarth for the rest of his life.

Hogarth started an apprenticeship as a silversmith in 1714, but never finished it. He then became an independent engraver and his early commissions were for cards, book illustrations and single prints. In 1720, he registered at the John Vanderbank Art Academy. Around 1726 or earlier, he was taught painting by James Thornhill whose daughter he later married. He earned some reputation for theatre decoration paintings.

Hogarth experienced his first big financial success with *A Harlot's Progress*, a series of paintings from which he produced engravings in 1732. Only the engravings survived. The paintings were lost in a fire in 1755. It was a completely new kind of genre prints that were referred as moral history subjects.

After this success Hogarth published a male counterpart series, *A Rake's Progress* (1732-33) - a story in eight plates showing the decline of a promising young man into a life of drinking and immoral behaviour.

In 1743, the painting series *Marriage à la Mode* was completed. It is considered his masterpiece. In *Marriage à la Mode* Hogarth turned his satire on the follies of the upper classes. Although the prints of *Marriage à la Mode* sold well, the paintings did not. Therefore all prints designed afterwards, were created exclusively as print designs without any painted counterparts.

In 1747 followed the series *Industry and Idleness*, a moral story of an idle and an industrious apprentice in twelve plates.

In 1753 Hogarth wrote his book *The Analysis of Beauty*, a wrap-up of his artistic and aesthetic principles.

Hogarth was a controversial and individual character. Driven by a sense for justice, he missed no chance to get into a quarrel with his contemporaries. His most hated enemy was the British politician John Wilkes, whom he had ridiculed in one of his engravings.

Notes

Britain had relative freedom of the press. Victims were more likely to bribe the publisher not to print than go to the courts and technological developments resulted in a switch from textual to visual satire. The coffee

house and the club fostered a satirical, debating society and physiognomy provided a pseudo-scientific basis for revealing the mind through the face. Important precursors are found in the work of Thomas Patch, who painted caricatures, and James Sayer(s) (1748-1823), a caricaturist but William Hogarth (1697–1762) is the most significant early satirist. He satirised social institutions, such as arranged marriage, as in *Marriage à-la-mode* (1743–5), and these often became prints that were widely circulated.

Hogarth hit on a new idea: "painting and engraving modern moral subjects ... to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture was my stage"

He drew on the moralizing tradition of Dutch genre painting.

Hogarth married Jane Thornhill in 1729, daughter of Sir James Thornhill. They had no children.

A Harlot's Progress, 1731

A Rake's Progress, 1735

Industry and Idleness, 1747

The Gate of Calais, 1748, Tate

The Four Stages of Cruelty, 1751

Gin Lane and Beer Street, 1751

Portraits, David Garrick, Captain Coram, *The Shrimp Girl*

Marriage à-la-mode

The Analysis of Beauty, 1753

At the end of the 18th century and the first two decades of the 19th century, James Gillray (1756/7–1815), Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), and George Cruikshank (1792–1878) established a tradition of visceral political and social visual satire in Britain that continues to this day.

Hogarth was born in London, the son of an unsuccessful schoolmaster and writer from Westmoreland. After apprenticeship to a goldsmith, he began to produce his own engraved designs in about 1710. He later took up oil painting, starting with small portrait groups called conversation pieces. He went on to create a series of paintings satirising contemporary customs, but based on earlier Italian prints, of which the first was *The Harlot's Progress* (1731), and perhaps the most famous *The Rake's Progress*. His engravings were so plagiarised that he lobbied for the Engraving Copyright Act of 1734 (also known as Hogarth's Act) as protection for original engravers.

During the 1730s Hogarth also developed into an original painter of life-sized portraits, and created the first of several history paintings in the grand manner.

On 23 March 1729 Hogarth married Jane Thornhill, daughter of artist Sir James Thornhill.

Hogarth was initiated as a Freemason before 1728. Freemasonry was a theme in some of Hogarth's work, most notably *Night*, the fourth in the quartet of paintings (later released as engravings) collectively entitled the *Four Times of the Day*.

He lived in Chiswick from 1749, when he bought the house now known as Hogarth's House and preserved as a museum; he lived there for the rest of his life. The Hogarths had no children, although they fostered foundling children. He was a founding Governor of the Foundling Hospital. Hogarth died in London on 26 October 1764 and was buried at St. Nicholas Church, Chiswick, London. Hogarth influenced German and French book illustration throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.



William Hogarth (1697-1764)
Christ at the Pool of Bethesda
 1735–1736
 oil on canvas
 416 x 618 cm
 St Bartholomew's Hospital, London

William Hogarth (1697-1764), *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda*, 1735–1736, 416 x 618 cm, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London

The modern moral subjects that made Hogarth famous were not the whole of his ambition. He also harboured serious aspirations in history painting, the genre that ranked highest in the academic hierarchy of the day. His own words make this clear: "Before I had done anything of much consequence in this walk, I entertained some hopes of succeeding in what the puffers in books call 'the great style of history painting'." Those hopes found their most substantial expression at **St Bartholomew's Hospital** in London. In **1736 and 1737** Hogarth completed two enormous staircase murals there — **The Pool of Bethesda** and **The Good Samaritan** — donating the work entirely free of charge. The gesture was characteristically combative: he had heard that a foreign artist was being considered for the commission and refused to let the opportunity pass to a rival. The figures stand **seven feet high**, and the subject of Bethesda carried unexpected resonance. The pool described in **Saint John's Gospel**, surrounded by five colonnades near the Sheep Gate of Jerusalem, was long dismissed by scholars as metaphor rather than history — until **nineteenth-century archaeologists** excavated precisely such a structure on the site. Hogarth could not have known that, but his choice of a healing miracle for a working hospital shows his instinct for meaning was rarely accidental.

Notes

Hogarth painted portraits and "modern moral subjects" and conversation pieces but he also painted a few history paintings. One set of two paintings he painted early in his career were for St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

In 1736-7 Hogarth completed *The Pool of Bethesda* and *The Good Samaritan* on site at St Bartholomew's Hospital. He carried out the work free of charge as he was annoyed to hear a foreign artist was being considered to carry out the work.

Hogarth wrote, "Before I had done anything of much consequence in this walk (painting modern moral subjects), I entertained some hopes of succeeding in what the puffers in books call 'the great style of history painting'. So without having had a stroke of this grand business before, I quitted small portraits and familiar conversations, and, with a smile at my own temerity, commenced history painter, and on a great staircase at St Bartholomew's Hospital, painted two Scripture stories, 'The Pool of Bethesda' and 'The Good Samaritan', with figures seven feet high."

Notes

This painting depicts an episode in Saint John's Gospel, chapter 5, verses 1–15. The man who has lain long at the pool of Bethesda is reclining in the foreground, a bandage around his head. The Pool of Bethesda is a pool of water in the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem. The Gospel of John describes such a pool in Jerusalem, near the Sheep Gate, which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. It is associated with healing. Until the 19th century, there was no evidence outside of John's Gospel for the existence of this pool; therefore, scholars argued that the gospel was written later, probably by someone without first-hand knowledge of the city of Jerusalem, and that the 'pool' had only a metaphorical, rather than historical, significance. In the 19th century, archaeologists discovered the remains of a pool fitting the description in John's Gospel.

References

St. Bartholomew's Hospital, The Hogarth Murals,
<http://bartsgreathall.com/index.php/the-great-hall/the-hogarth-murals>

William Hogarth (1697–1764)
Portrait of Captain Thomas Coram
1740
239 × 147.5 cm
Foundling Hospital, London



William Hogarth (1697–1764), Portrait of Captain Thomas Coram, 1740, 239 × 147.5 cm, Foundling Hospital, London

The St Bartholomew's murals demonstrated that Hogarth's philanthropic instincts and his artistic ambitions could move together, and nowhere is that more visible than in his involvement with **Captain Thomas Coram** and the **Foundling Hospital**. Coram was a Lyme Regis-born sea captain who had spent decades in transatlantic trade before returning to London around 1720. What he found appalled him: infants abandoned in the gutters and dying in the streets. After seventeen years of campaigning, he secured a **Royal Charter from George II in 1739**, establishing a hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children in **Lamb's Conduit Fields, Bloomsbury** — widely regarded as the world's first incorporated charity. Hogarth was among the hospital's founding governors, and in **1740** he painted his celebrated portrait of Coram — a work that broke decisively with aristocratic convention by rendering a plain, red-faced old mariner with the full dignity normally reserved for dukes. The building itself, completed between **1742 and 1745**, became something extraordinary: Hogarth rallied fellow artists including **Francis Hayman**, **Thomas Gainsborough**, and **Richard Wilson** to donate works for the Governors' Court Room, effectively creating the first public art gallery in Britain. **George Frideric Handel** contributed in kind, conducting benefit performances of the Messiah and donating the manuscript of the Hallelujah Chorus to the hospital.

Notes

Captain Thomas Coram (c. 1668 – 29 March 1751) was a philanthropist who created the London Foundling Hospital in Lamb's Conduit Fields, Bloomsbury to look after abandoned children. It is said to be the world's first incorporated charity.

He was born in Lyme Regis and sent to sea before he was 12. He returned to England "an old man" aged 52 and became a successful merchant in London by about 1720. He was happily married for 40 years but never had any children. As a philanthropist Coram was appalled by the many abandoned, homeless children living in the streets of London. On 17 October 1739 he obtained a Royal Charter granted by George II establishing a "hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children."

In 1742-1745, the Foundling Hospital was erected in Bloomsbury. William Hogarth was among the first governors of the hospital. He painted this famous portrait of Thomas Coram (1740), and, together with some of his fellow artists, decorated the Governors' Court Room, which contains paintings by Francis Hayman, Thomas Gainsborough and Richard Wilson. He contributed paintings for the benefit of the Foundation, and the Foundling Hospital became the first art gallery open to the public.

Notes

George Frederic Handel allowed a concert performance of Messiah to benefit the foundation, and donated the manuscript of the Hallelujah Chorus to the hospital. He also composed an anthem specially for a performance at the Hospital, now called the Foundling Hospital Anthem. The Foundling Hospital charity continues today and is known as Coram, still delivering services which transform children's lives from the same historic site.

A portrait of a young woman, the Shrimp Girl, wearing a large, dark, floppy hat and a dark coat with a white collar. She is holding a basket of shrimps and mussels. The painting is characterized by its loose, almost percussive brushwork, with visible flickering strokes. The background is a soft, hazy greenish-brown.

William Hogarth (1697–1764)
The Shrimp Girl
c. 1740
63.5 x 52.5 cm
National Gallery, London

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *The Shrimp Girl*, c. 1740, 63.5 x 52.5 cm, National Gallery, London

The Foundling Hospital cemented Hogarth's reputation as a civic force in British art, but it is worth pausing on a painting that shows a quite different register of his talent — ***The Shrimp Girl***, now in the **National Gallery**. Painted in the **1740s or early 1750s**, when Hogarth was fully established and could command substantial portrait fees, it depicts a street vendor balancing a basket of shrimps and mussels on her head, a pewter half-pint pot tucked in for measure. Women like her were a fixture of **Billingsgate** and the surrounding streets, typically the wives and daughters of fishmongers. The subject was familiar from popular hawkers' prints of the period, but Hogarth transforms it entirely through technique. The handling is loose, almost percussive — flickering strokes that anticipate **Fragonard** more than anything being produced in London at the time. It is the finest British example of what we recognise as **rococo** sensibility: light, sensual, alive. The painting was never finished and remained in Hogarth's possession until his death. His widow **Jane Hogarth** would show it to visitors with a sharp retort: "They say he could not paint flesh — there is flesh and blood for you." The work only entered the market after Jane's death in **1789**, receiving its familiar title in the Christie's sale catalogue.

Notes

This is a comparatively late work and by this stage Hogarth was an established portrait painter who could command large sums.

This is one of several in which he experimented with a loose, almost impressionistic style comparable to the work of Fragonard. William Hogarth is usually thought of as a satirist, but this sensual tour de force shows why he is the greatest British exemplar of the playful 18th-century baroque style known as rococo. In its subject matter, it resembles the prints of hawkers and traders popular in Hogarth's day.

The painting depicts a woman selling shellfish on the streets of London, typically a job for the wives and daughters of fishmongers who owned stalls in markets such as Billingsgate. The subject balances a large basket on her head, bearing shrimps and mussels, together with a half-pint pewter pot as a measure. Its size suggests that it was intended as a portrait, rather than a sketch for a larger work.

It is not strictly finished and was still in Hogarth's estate after his death. His widow Jane was said to have told visitors on showing the picture to them: "They say he could not paint flesh. There is flesh and blood for you."

It was only sold after his wife's death in 1789, and first received its title *The Shrimp Girl* in a Christie's sale catalogue.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
David Garrick as Richard III
c. 1745
190.5 x 250.8 cm
Walker Art Gallery

William Hogarth (1697–1764), David Garrick as Richard III, c. 1745, 190.5 x 250.8 cm, Walker Art Gallery

From the luminous spontaneity of **The Shrimp Girl**, we turn to a work on an altogether grander scale — Hogarth's portrait of **David Garrick as Richard III**, painted around **1745** and now in the **Walker Art Gallery** in Liverpool. Hogarth was paid **£200** for it, and he noted with satisfaction that this was more than any English artist had ever received for a single portrait. The moment depicted is the conscience scene from Act Five of **Shakespeare's Richard III**, the king waking in his tent at **Bosworth Field**, tormented by the ghosts of his victims, facing the realisation that he is utterly alone. Garrick had made his name in precisely this role, and his approach was revolutionary. Where the prevailing stage style was declamatory and rigid, Garrick insisted on psychological naturalism — a quality Hogarth recognised and shared. Beyond performance, Garrick transformed the theatre as an institution: he introduced footlights and painted backdrops, cleared spectators from the stage, stopped customers entering halfway through on a reduced ticket, and drove out the drinking and gambling that had made playhouses disreputable. He made theatre a serious artistic pursuit. **Garrick** and Hogarth moved in overlapping circles, both intimate with **Dr Samuel Johnson**, and both committed to raising the professional standing of their respective arts in British cultural life.

Notes

William Hogarth (1697–1764), David Garrick as Richard III, c. 1745, 190.5 x 250.8 cm, Walker Art Gallery

Have mercy, Jesu! Soft! I did but dream. O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me! – Shakespeare's Richard III Act V, Sc. 3. David Garrick in 1745 as Richard III just before the battle of Bosworth Field, his sleep having been haunted by the ghosts of those he has murdered, wakes to the realisation that he is alone in the world and death is imminent.

Hogarth was also a popular portrait painter. In 1746 he painted actor David Garrick as Richard III, for which he was paid £200, 'which was more,' he wrote, 'than any English artist ever received for a single portrait.'

David Garrick (1717-1779) was an English actor, playwright, theatre manager and producer who influenced nearly all aspects of theatrical practice throughout the 18th century, and was a pupil and friend of Dr Samuel Johnson. He appeared in a number of amateur theatricals, and with his appearance in the title role of Shakespeare's Richard III, audiences and managers began to take notice. His father was a French Huguenot who fled France in 1685 when the Edict of Nantes revoked the rights of Protestants. Garrick had a number of troublesome love affairs before he married Eva Marie Veigel, a German dancer, and they were inseparable for the next 30 years but had no children. He bought the palatial Garrick Villa in Hampton in 1754 and built a Temple to Shakespeare to house his memorabilia. Legend has it that he broke a leg during a performance of Richard III but he was so engrossed in the part he did not notice, giving rise to the theatrical expression of good luck, 'Break a leg!' He promoted realistic acting rather than the bombastic style that had become entrenched and although it was not appreciated by all the critics, it became popular with the public and he became the greatest actor of his time and the dominant force in the history of British theatre.

Garrick put in footlights, cleared the front of the stage of spectators, introduced backdrops and stopped customers strolling in on a cheap ticket halfway through the performance. Drinking in the stalls was stopped. Playhouses had been full of prostitutes and gambling, but Garrick cleaned them up, making theatre an artistic pursuit, rather than a drunken circus. Audiences were stopped from throwing half-sucked oranges at the actors. Garrick was what we would call a professional PR man who used the growing

readership of the London newspapers to promote himself as a celebrity and he became, after the king, the best-known figure in London.

References

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William Hogarth (1697-1764)
The Gate of Calais or O, the Roast Beef of Old England
 1748
 Oil on canvas
 80 x 96 cm
 Tate Britain, London

William Hogarth (1697-1764), *The Gate of Calais or O, the Roast Beef of Old England*, 1748, 80 x 96 cm, Tate Britain, London

The shared world of theatre and portraiture that connected Hogarth and Garrick also fed directly into one of Hogarth's most politically charged paintings. **The Gate of Calais**, subtitled **O, the Roast Beef of Old England**, was completed in **1748**, the year after Hogarth had visited France and been arrested while sketching the harbour gate at Calais, suspected of espionage. He was briefly detained before being released, and the painting is his revenge. The composition is a sustained piece of national propaganda. A vast **English sirloin** is carried through the gate while gaunt French soldiers and a corpulent friar eye it with barely contained longing. The friar's bulk serves a pointed double purpose: he is personally greedy while the people around him starve, and his obesity stands for the corruption of the **Catholic Church** as an institution. A wretched **Jacobite** exile crouches in the right foreground over an onion and a crust — the bitter reward for backing the **1745 rebellion** and fleeing to Catholic France. Hogarth himself appears to the left of the gate, pencil in hand, just as an officer's hand descends on his shoulder. The title comes from **Henry Fielding's** patriotic ballad, composed for **The Grub-Street Opera** in **1731**, and by **1748** it was sung in theatres across the country before and after performances — a ready-made anthem for Hogarth's anti-French satire.

Notes

The Gate of Calais or O, the Roast Beef of Old England is a 1748 painting by William Hogarth, reproduced as a print from an engraving the next year.

Hogarth had a very low opinion of the French and the painting was produced after his return from his second visit to France, where he had been arrested as a spy while sketching in Calais. The scene depicts a side of beef being transported from the harbour to an English tavern in the port, while a group of undernourished, ragged French soldiers and a fat French friar look on hungrily. The friar's fatness demonstrates gluttony and the corruption of the Catholic Church.

In the right foreground, a starving Jacobite sits with his pathetic meal of an onion and a piece of bread, his overturned cup beside him. The Jacobites were Scotsmen who fled to France after the unsuccessful Scottish rebellion of 1745. Through the gate a white dove hangs on an inn sign above the cross making fun of the Catholic Church. The fish-wives in the left foreground laugh at a skate whose unpleasantly human features resemble the friars. To the left of the gate, framed by vegetables, sits Hogarth himself. As he sketches the drawbridge, the arresting officer's hand clasps his shoulder.

The title is taken from a popular tune of the day. 'The Roast Beef of Old England' is an English patriotic ballad. It was written by Henry Fielding for his play *The Grub-Street Opera*, which was first performed in 1731. The lyrics were added to over the next twenty years. The song increased in popularity when given a new setting by the composer Richard Leveridge, and it became customary for theatre audiences to sing it before, after, and occasionally during, any new play. It is used by both the Royal Navy and the US Marine Corp.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
Hogarth's Servants
mid-1750s
62 × 75 cm
Tate Britain

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *Hogarth's Servants*, mid-1750s, 62 × 75 cm, Tate Britain

From the sharp nationalist theatre of Calais, we move to something altogether more intimate. **The Servants**, now in the **Tate**, is one of the most unusual group portraits of the eighteenth century. Six heads — probably a coachman, valet, boy, housekeeper, and two maids — are arranged with quiet symmetry across the canvas, lit consistently from the upper left. Hogarth almost certainly kept it for himself; it hung in his studio, where it functioned as a demonstration of his unrivalled skill in characterisation. **Samuel Ireland** recorded that Hogarth's household included an old servant called **Ben Ives**, who may be the elderly man in the upper right. None of the sitters look at the same point, yet the composition holds together with remarkable coherence. Lawrence Gowing wrote that there is nothing in Hogarth's work, or anyone else's, quite like this picture — the only work ever united solely by what humanity has in common. Andrew Graham Dixon connects Hogarth's sympathy here to autobiography. The son of an impoverished schoolteacher, Hogarth had risen from a silver-engraver's apprenticeship, and he understood proximity to servitude. He and **Jane** were childless, which lends a particular tenderness to the young boy's face. After Hogarth's death in **1764**, the painting passed to Jane, and when her own collection was sold some twenty-five years later, it fetched just **five pounds fifteen shillings**.

Notes

This unusual group portrait originally hung in Hogarth's studio where it must have served as an advertisement for the artist's unrivalled skill in characterisation. The picture consists of a series of unrelated studies. Hogarth has achieved a unified composition through a symmetrical arrangement of the heads and a consistent light source coming from the upper left. Hogarth's decision to paint his own servants together, outside the confines of their daily routine is quite unique. Perhaps the most striking aspect of this picture is the collective sense of dignity and humanity displayed by this assemblage of unassuming individuals.

We do not know who they are but Samuel Ireland mentions Hogarth had an old servant called Ben Ives who could be the old man in the top right. He also had a servant called Samuel and a housemaid called Mrs Chappel who lived to be a centenarian.

It could be seen to represent, loosely, the seven ages of man. Another head was laid into the lower left but the canvas was cut to remove half of it. None of the heads look at the same point giving the overall composition a sense of balance.

After his death in 1764 the work passed to his wife Jane, and following her death some 25 years later it was put up for sale with the rest of her collection, fetching £5 15s.

It may have been part of an experiment he conducted to see if he could paint a portrait quickly to minimise the sitter's time. He allowed four quarter-hour sittings and completed a portrait of a friend Saunders Welch.

Lawrence Gowing (1918-1991, English artist and writer) once remarked, "there is nothing in Hogarth's work, or anyone else's, quite like the isolated masterpiece of his servants, the only picture that was ever solely and sufficiently united by what it is that humanity has in common."

Notes

At the end of the eighteenth century there were 910,000 domestic servants in England and Wales, out of a population of nine million, over 10%. A clergyman earning £300 to £700 would have six servants and a lawyer would be expected to have around eleven.

The servants are probably a coachman, valet, boy, housekeeper and two maid servants.

Andrew Graham Dixon writes, "Hogarth's attitude to his servants is impossible to determine for certain, although he had a reputation as a fair and benevolent employer. He and his wife were childless, which may help to explain the almost paternal tenderness with which Hogarth seems to observe the young boy, in particular, in this painting. The artist took a charitable interest in children, and orphans in particular, contributing generously for much of his life to the foundling hospital set up by his friend Thomas Coram. Like orphans, servants were among the "Nobodies" of eighteenth-century society, and Hogarth's manifest sympathy for such people reflects his sense of himself as a 'Nobody' made good (he even adopted the nickname of 'Mr Nobody' on occasion, as a dig at the pretensions of the 'Somebodies' of the world). The son of an impoverished schoolteacher and coffee-house proprietor, he had worked his way up from the lowly position of a silver-engraver's apprentice to become one of the most celebrated artists of his time. The eighteenth century was a period of increased social fluidity, and Hogarth had benefited from that. But he never forgot where he came from, and when he looked at his servants he knew that had things turned out just a little differently he himself might have been in their ranks. The sense of fellow feeling is almost palpable."



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
The Analysis of Beauty
 1753
 Book

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *The Analysis of Beauty*, 1753

From that extraordinary intimacy of the servant portraits, we turn to Hogarth the theorist. In **1753**, he published **The Analysis of Beauty**, and the ambition of the project was clear from the outset. This was, as **Ernst Gombrich** put it, the intellectual centrepiece of Hogarth's "grim campaign against fashionable taste" — what Hogarth himself called his "War with the Connoisseurs." What made the book genuinely radical was its rejection of academic authority as the basis for aesthetic judgement. Rather than deferring to continental theorists or the authority of the ancients, Hogarth grounded beauty in common experience. It stands as the first sustained anti-academic treatise on aesthetics in the English tradition. Central to the whole argument is the **Line of Beauty** — an **S-shaped serpentine curve** that Hogarth believed excited the eye by implying movement and liveliness. He built the treatise around **six principles**: fitness, variety, regularity, simplicity, intricacy, and quantity. Of these, intricacy is perhaps the most distinctively Hogarthian — the idea that beauty sustains attention precisely because it rewards pursuit, drawing the eye through a composition rather than fixing it. His sixth principle, quantity, edges toward what later writers would call the **sublime**, though Hogarth himself preferred the word **greatness**, writing some years before **Edmund Burke** formalised that distinction.

Notes

The Analysis of Beauty is a book written by William Hogarth and published in 1753, which describes Hogarth's theories of visual beauty and grace in a manner accessible to the common man of his day.

Hogarth's book is the first sustained anti-academic treatise on aesthetics as it appeals to common experience rather than to academic authority.

Prominent among Hogarth's ideas of beauty was the theory of the Line of Beauty; an S-shaped curved line (serpentine line) that excited the attention of the viewer and evoked liveliness and movement. The Analysis of Beauty formed the intellectual centrepiece of what the historian Ernst Gombrich described as Hogarth's "grim campaign against fashionable taste", which Hogarth himself described as his "War with the Connoisseurs".

The 'Line of Beauty'. Prominent among Hogarth's ideas of beauty was the theory of the Line of Beauty; an S-shaped curved line (serpentine line) that excited the attention of the viewer and evoked liveliness and movement.

In Analysis of Beauty Hogarth describes six principles that create beauty:

Fitness, not a source but a material cause of beauty, an improperly applied form cannot be a source of beauty.

Variety, the contrary of "sameness", the ear is offended by one continued note and the eye with being fixed on one point.

Regularity, or composed variety.

Simplicity, which enhances variety by tempering it.

Intricacy, the whirling game of pursuit as we uncover or grasp new aspects of a picture it enhances its beauty.

Quantity, is associated with the sublime which was not fully distinguished from beauty until after Hogarth's book was published. Hogarth talks of greatness rather than the sublime.



William Hogarth (1697-1764)
Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme
 1721

William Hogarth (1697-1764), Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme, 1721

From the theorist, we turn to the satirist — and to the work that, for John J. Richetti in the Cambridge History of English Literature, marks the true beginning of English graphic satire. **The Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme** was drawn in **1721**, when Hogarth was just twenty-three, barely a year out of his apprenticeship with the engraver **Ellis Gamble**. He struggled to find a publisher and eventually sold it through Mrs Chilcott and R. Caldwell for one shilling a print. The **South Sea Bubble** of **1720** was one of the great financial catastrophes in British history. The **South Sea Company**, founded in 1711 as a public-private partnership to manage national debt, had been granted a trading monopoly with South America — a monopoly that was largely fictional, since Spain controlled the continent. Insider dealing, parliamentary bribery, and orchestrated public excitement drove share prices to absurd heights before the inevitable collapse ruined thousands. Hogarth's print crowds this disaster into a single teeming scene. The **Monument to the Great Fire** is reinscribed as a monument to the South Sea's destruction, dwarfing **St Paul's** behind it. The satire's debts are literary as much as visual — Hogarth saw himself working in the tradition of **Jonathan Swift** and **Henry Fielding**, not following other painters.

Notes

One of his earliest published works concerns the South Sea Bubble. It caricatures the financial speculation, corruption and credulity that caused the South Sea Bubble in England in 1720–1. Although it had been caricatured abroad "English graphic satire really begins with Hogarth's Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme" (John J. Richetti, in *The Cambridge history of English literature*, 1660–1780).

He drew it when he was 24, a year after completing his apprenticeship with Ellis Gamble and becoming an engraver in his own right. At first he could not find a publisher but after a failed attempt at self-publishing he found Mrs Chilcott and R Caldwell who sold it for one shilling a print.

Hogarth was following in the footsteps not of other artists but of the many satirical publications of the period and the works of writers such as Henry Fielding (1707-1754, author of *Tom Jones*, a *Foundling*, 1749 and joint founder of the *Bow-Street Runners*) and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745, author of *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726).

The print shows the Guildhall with its statue of Gog (or Magog) on the left, the column to the Great Fire on the right and St Pauls rising in the background. The inscription on the monument reads, "This monument was erected in memory of the destruction of the city by the South Sea in 1720", while foxes fight above. The monument, a symbol of the City's greed, dwarfs St Paul's, a symbol of Christian charity. In the centre is a financial merry-go-round with a whore, a clergyman, a boot black, a hag and a Scottish nobleman on a horse with a fat face. On top is a goat and the slogan "Who'll Ride" and below in the crowd a short pickpocket goes through the pockets of two gentlemen, Alexander Pope, who profited from the bubble and John Gay who lost everything. The women on the balcony are queueing to enter a building with the sign "Raffleing for Husbands with Lottery Fortunes in Here". Further elements of the satire are explained by allegorical figures with letters. To the left, a blindfolded Fortune hangs by her hair from the balcony of the Guildhall (the devil's shop) while a winged devil cuts off parts of her body with a scythe and throws the bloody chunks into the baying crowd. In the bottom left corner, distinctive clothing identifies a Catholic, a Jew and a Puritan, who are ignoring the tumultuous scene to concentrate on their game of chance. To their right, the naked figure of Honesty is broken on the wheel by Self-interest while an Anglican priest looks on; further right, Villainy – who has removed his fair mask which now hangs upside down between his legs –

scourges Honour beneath the column. Standing nearby is a monkey (a symbol of mimicry or "aping") who wears a gentleman's sword and a baronial hat, and wraps himself in Honour's cloak. In the lower right corner, the figure of Trade lies asleep or dead, ignored by all.

Notes

Verse below the Engraving

See here ye Causes why in London, So many Men are made, & undone, That
Arts, & honest Trading drop, To Swarm about ye Devils shop, (A) Who Cuts out
(B) Fortunes Golden Haunches,

Trapping their Souls with Lotts and Chances, Shareing em from Blue Garters
down To all Blue Aprons in the Town. Here all Religions flock together, Like
Tame and Wild Fowl of a Feather,

Leaving their strife Religious bustle, Kneel down to play at pitch and Hussle;
(C) Thus when the Shepherds are at play, Their flocks must surely go
Astray; The woeful Cause yt in these Times

(E) Honour, & (D) honesty, are Crimes, That publicly are punish'd by (G) Self
Interest, and (F) Vilany; So much for monys magick power Guess at the Rest
you find out more.

South Sea Bubble

The South Sea Company was a British joint-stock company founded in 1711, created as a public-private partnership to consolidate and reduce the cost of national debt. The company was also granted a monopoly to trade with South America. At the time it was created, Britain was involved in the War of the Spanish Succession and Spain controlled South America. There was no realistic prospect that trade would take place and the company never realised any significant profit from its monopoly. Company stock rose greatly in value as it expanded its operations dealing in government debt, peaking in 1720 before collapsing to little above its original flotation price; this became known as the South Sea Bubble. A few wealthy men became richer as a result but many were ruined by the share collapse, and the national economy greatly reduced as a result. The founders of the scheme engaged in insider trading,

using their advance knowledge of when national debt was to be consolidated to make large profits from purchasing debt in advance. Huge bribes were given to politicians to support the Acts of Parliament necessary for the scheme. Company money was used to deal in its own shares, and selected individuals purchasing shares were given loans backed by those same shares to spend on purchasing more shares. The expectation of vast wealth from trade with South America was used to encourage the public to purchase shares, despite the limited likelihood this would ever happen. The only significant trade that did take place was in slaves, but the company failed to manage this profitably. The company was restructured and continued to operate until the end of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) but managing government debt rather than trading. It continued to manage government debt until 1853 when it was consolidated.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
A Harlot's Progress
 1731 (paintings, now lost); 1732 (engravings)
 Oil on canvas (paintings, lost);
 engravings

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *A Harlot's Progress*, 1731 (paintings, now lost); 1732 (engravings)

From the South Sea catastrophe, Hogarth turned his eye from collective folly to individual fate — and produced the work that made him famous across Britain almost overnight. **A Harlot's Progress**, first exhibited as six paintings in 1731 and then engraved and sold by subscription in 1732, follows **Moll Hackabout** from her arrival in London to her death at twenty-three. Hogarth arrived at the series back-to-front: he had already painted a prostitute in her garret on **Drury Lane** and then conceived the idea of extending her story both backwards and forwards in time. The title's debt to **John Bunyan** is deliberate — this is a pilgrim's progress through a fallen city. The first plate concentrates everything. Moll, dressed in white and carrying a pincushion that marks her out as someone seeking honest work as a seamstress, is being appraised by **Elizabeth Needham**, the real and notorious procuress. Behind them stands **Colonel Francis Charteris**, a convicted rapist, already aroused. A clergyman on horseback looks the other way. The composition mirrors the Visitation from the Gospel of Luke — Mary greeting Elizabeth — which makes Needham's inspection of Moll a grotesque inversion of sacred encounter. The paintings were destroyed by fire at **Fonthill House** in 1755, but the engravings sold **1,240 subscription sets** at a guinea apiece, and piracy was so rampant that Hogarth lobbied Parliament directly, securing the **Engravers' Copyright Act of 1735**.

Notes

A Harlot's Progress (also known as The Harlot's Progress) is a series of six paintings (1731, now lost) and engravings (1732) by the English artist William Hogarth. The series shows the story of a young woman, M. (Moll or Mary) Hackabout, who arrives in London from the country and becomes a prostitute. The series was developed from the third image: having painted a prostitute in her boudoir in a garret on Drury Lane, Hogarth struck upon the idea of creating scenes from her earlier and later life. The title and rich allegory are reminiscent of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The complete story: in the first scene, an old woman praises her beauty and suggests a profitable occupation, procuring her for the gentleman shown towards the back of the image. She is a mistress with two lovers in the second, has become a common prostitute on the point of being arrested in the third, and is beating hemp in Bridewell Prison in the fourth. By the fifth, she is dying from venereal disease, and she is dead aged only 23 in the last.

The name: The protagonist "M. (Moll or Mary) Hackabout" (see Plate 1, Plate 3, and the coffin-lid in Plate 6, which reads: "M. Hackabout Died Sepr 2d 1731 Aged 23") is either named after the heroine of *Moll Flanders* and Kate Hackabout or ironically after the Blessed Virgin Mary. Kate was a notorious prostitute and the sister of highwayman Francis Hackabout: he was hanged on 17 April 1730; she was convicted of keeping a disorderly house in August the same year, having been arrested by Westminster magistrate Sir John Gonson.

The business: the series of paintings proved to be very popular and Hogarth used his experience as an apprentice to a silversmith to create engravings of the images, selling a "limited edition" of 1,240 sets of six prints to subscribers for a Guinea. Pirate copies of the engravings were soon in circulation, and Hogarth procured a 1735 Act of Parliament (8 Geo. II. cap. 13) to prohibit the practice. Soon after, Hogarth published his second series of satirical and moralistic images, *A Rake's Progress*, followed some years later by *Marriage à-la-mode*. The original paintings were destroyed in a fire at Fonthill House in 1755.

The picture: Moll has arrived in London. Moll carries scissors and a pincushion hanging on her arm, suggesting that she sought employment as a seamstress. Instead, she is being inspected by the pox-ridden Elizabeth Needham, a notorious procuress and brothel-keeper, who wants to secure Moll for prostitution. The notorious rake and convicted rapist Colonel Francis Charteris and his pimp, John Gourlay, look on, also interested in Moll. The two stand in front of a decaying building, symbolic of their moral bankruptcy. Charteris fondles himself in expectation.

Londoners ignore the scene, and even a mounted clergyman ignores her predicament, just as he ignores the fact of his horse knocking over a pile of pans.

Moll appears to have been deceived by the possibility of legitimate employment. A goose in Moll's luggage is addressed to "My loving cosen in Tems Stret in London": suggesting that she has been misled; this "cousin" might have been a recruiter or a paid-off dupe of the bawdy keepers. Moll is dressed in white, in contrast to those around her, illustrating her innocence and naiveté. The dead goose in or near Moll's luggage, similarly white, foreshadows Moll's death as a result of her gullibility.

The inn sign, with a picture of a bell, may refer to the belle (French for beautiful woman) who has newly arrived from the country. The teetering pile of pans alludes to Moll's imminent "fall". The goose and the teetering pans also mimic the inevitable impotence that ensues from syphilis, foreshadowing Moll's specific fate.

The composition resembles that of a Visitation, i.e. when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visits her relative Elizabeth, pregnant with John the Baptist, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke 1:39–56. The presence of Jesus in Mary's womb cleanses John of original sin and he 'leapt in my womb for joy'.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
A Harlot's Progress, Plate 2
 1732

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *A Harlot's Progress, Plate 2*, 1732

Plate Two finds Moll established as a kept mistress — a step up from the street, but not the safety it appears. The **Jewish merchant** whose household she inhabits is signalled immediately by the Old Testament paintings that dominate the back wall, and Hogarth uses them as a commentary on the scene unfolding beneath. Those paintings repay close attention. **Jonah outside Nineveh** — the prophet who delivered warnings no one wished to hear — hangs alongside **David dancing before the Ark**, in which **Uzzah** is struck down for touching what was forbidden him. One figure punished for presumption, another rebuked for indecency: Hogarth is projecting the fates of both the merchant and the unseen lover onto the wall above their heads. Moll herself is surrounded by the apparatus of fashionable deception: cosmetics, a masquerade mask, a **West Indian serving boy**, a monkey whose expression Hogarth aligns pointedly with the merchant's. Behind her, small portraits of **Samuel Clarke** and **Thomas Woolston** identify the space as one touched by fashionable freethinking. At this moment she kicks over a tea table — a gesture of calculated distraction — while a second lover slips silently out the door. It is a performance of infidelity staged with the precision of theatre, and the merchant suspects nothing.

Notes

Moll is now the mistress of a wealthy Jewish merchant, as is confirmed by the Old Testament paintings in the background which have been considered to be prophetic of how the merchant will treat Moll in between this plate and the next (see below).

She has numerous affectations of dress, such as revealing her arms and breast, and she keeps a West Indian serving boy and a monkey (whose expression resembles the merchant). The boy and the young female servant, as well as the monkey, may be provided by the businessman. She has jars of cosmetics, a mask from masquerades, and her apartment is decorated with paintings illustrating her sexually promiscuous and morally precarious state. She pushes over a table to distract the merchant's attention as a second lover tiptoes out.

Behind her hang small portraits of two contemporaries held to be atheists, Samuel Clarke and Thomas Woolaston. Above the whole scene are two large paintings, one of Jonah outside Nineveh seated next to an ivy plant, the other of David dancing before the Ark while Uzzah, attempting to touch it, is knifed in the back. The picture of Jonah may be a warning to heed the prophet's message to reform. The painting of David and Uzzah, one of whom is killed for his sacrilege, the other rebuked by his wife for indecency, seems to foreshadow the fates that await the two characters in the scene.



William Hogarth (1697–1764), *A Harlot's Progress, Plate 3*, 1732

The merchant's household offered a kind of insulation. **Plate Three** strips that away entirely. Moll now occupies a single squalid room, her bed the only significant piece of furniture — a detail Hogarth makes count. A cat in the foreground mimics her posture with unmistakable deliberateness. It is nearly noon and she is only now rising for tea, the indolent hour underscoring how completely her life has contracted. The walls do the interpretive work. A witch's hat and birch rods hang prominently, invoking both popular superstition and the familiar moral equation between prostitution and the devil's work. Beside them are portraits of **James Macheath** from *The Beggar's Opera* and the firebrand cleric **Henry Sacheverell**, and above both hang two advertisements for syphilis cures — Hogarth compressing admiration, religion, and disease into a single glance. The wig box of the hanged highwayman **James Dalton**, stored above the bed, hints at a romantic attachment to criminality she cannot quite relinquish. Into this room strides **Sir John Gonson**, the magistrate notorious for prosecuting prostitutes, flanked by armed bailiffs. He has come for Moll, but his eye is caught by the witch's hat rather than the woman herself. The whole composition — angel, transgressor, sudden reckoning — deliberately echoes an **Annunciation**, the announcement grotesquely inverted.

Notes

Moll has gone from kept woman to common prostitute. Her bed is her only major piece of furniture, and the cat poses to suggest Moll's new posture. Moll rises at 11:45am to take morning tea.

The witch hat and birch rods on the wall suggest either black magic, or more importantly that prostitution is the devil's work. Her heroes are on the wall: Macheath from *The Beggar's Opera* and Henry Sacheverell, (a controversial divine of the period) and two cures for syphilis are above them. Above the room's broken windows hangs a cheap print portraying an angel stopping Abraham from sacrificing Isaac; it seems to warn of the girl's impending fate at the hands of the law.

The wig box of highwayman James Dalton (hanged on 11 May 1730) is stored over her bed, suggesting a romantic dalliance with the criminal. The magistrate, Sir John Gonson (a well-known prosecutor of prostitutes), with three armed bailiffs, is coming through the door on the right side of the frame to arrest Moll for her activities. Moll is showing off a new watch (perhaps a present from Dalton, perhaps stolen from another lover). Gonson, however, is fixed upon the witch's hat and 'broom' or the periwig hanging from the wall above Moll's bed.

The composition satirically resembles that of an Annunciation, i.e. the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Son of God, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke 1:26–39.

Notes

The Bideford witch trial of 1682 resulted in what was probably the last hangings for witchcraft in England. Temperance Lloyd, Mary Trembles and Susannah Edwards were tried in the town of Bideford in Devon. The Salem witch trials were 1692-3.



William Hogarth (1697-1764)
A Rake's Progress, Plate 4 (Moll in Bridewell)
 1732

William Hogarth (1697-1764), *A Rake's Progress, Plate 4 (Moll in Bridewell)*, 1732

The Annunciation has become an arraignment, and **Plate Four** follows Moll directly into **Bridewell Prison**, the house of correction where London's most wretched were sent to beat hemp into rope — rope used, with grim circularity, to hang criminals like the ones Moll has kept company with. Hogarth arranges the prisoners across the composition in strict order of declining wealth, a social ladder now running firmly downward. Moll herself stands near the left, still dressed in fine clothes, barely able to lift the mallet. The jailer threatens her with a leg iron; his wife, behind him, is quietly pocketing Moll's stolen garments. Moll's own servant stands smiling, apparently already wearing her mistress's shoes. Loyalty, like everything else here, has a price. The inmates include a card-sharp with an extra card slipping from his coat, a pregnant African woman who almost certainly pleaded her belly to avoid transportation, and, at the stocks, an ironic inscription: "Better to Work than Stand thus." Nobody is being reformed. The graffito of **Sir John Gonson** hanging from the gallows, scratched onto the end wall, is the prisoners' only form of justice. Gonson, who died in **1765**, spent nearly fifty years on the bench championing the **Society for the Reformation of Manners**. He and Hogarth were, without irony, both founding governors of the Foundling Hospital.

Notes

Moll has been sentenced to Bridewell Prison. She beats hemp for hangman's nooses but wears fine clothes and can hardly lift the mallet. The jailer threatens her with a leg iron and cane and points to the task. The jailer's wife steals clothes from Moll, winking at theft.

The prisoners go from left to right in order of decreasing wealth. Moll is standing next to a gentleman, a card-sharp whose extra playing card has fallen out, and who has been allowed to bring his dog with him. The inmates are in no way being reformed, despite the ironic engraving on the left above the occupied stocks, reading "Better to Work/ than Stand thus." The person suffering in the stocks apparently refused to work.

Next is a woman and a child who may suffer from Down Syndrome or perhaps an older woman resting her mallet while keeping watch on the jailer. Finally a pregnant African woman who presumably "pleaded her belly" when brought to trial, as pregnant women could not be executed or transported. Moll's servant smiles as Moll's clothes are stolen, and the servant appears to be wearing Moll's shoes. Beside her, a woman kills vermin on her body. On the end wall is a graffito image of Sir John Gonson hanging from the gallows. On the left wall stands a whipping post with the warning "The Wages of Idleness."

Sir John Gonson (died 1765) was a British judge for nearly 50 years in the early 18th century. He was a supporter of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, and was noted for his enthusiasm for raiding brothels and for passing harsh sentences. He and Hogarth were both founding governors of the Foundling Hospital for abandoned children, many the children of prostitutes.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
A Harlot's Progress, Plate 5
 1732

William Hogarth (1697–1764), A Harlot's Progress, Plate 5, 1732

Plate Five brings Moll to her end. She is dying of syphilis in a squalid rented room, and Hogarth gives us the full theatre of her abandonment. Two physicians attend — **Dr. Richard Rock**, dark-haired on the left, and **Dr. Jean Misaubin**, white-haired on the right — and they are arguing with each other rather than treating their patient. Rock favoured bleeding; Misaubin favoured cupping. Neither method would have saved her, and Hogarth makes the point brutally plain. Both men were real London figures, widely satirised quacks who grew rich on the desperation of the syphilitic poor. While the doctors dispute, a woman — almost certainly Moll's former bawd — rifles her possessions. She has already claimed the most loaded items: the witch's hat, the dancing shoes, and a black mask with a fan grotesquely thrust through its eyes, death reading as costume. Moll's maid holds the dying girl with one arm and tries to stop the looting with the other. Moll's young son sits by her side, entirely absorbed in picking lice from his hair and attempting to cook for himself. He does not know his mother is dying. A **Passover cake**, used as a flytrap, suggests her former Jewish keeper is still paying the rent. The irony is theological as well as social: Moll will not, unlike the Israelites, be passed over. Her teeth lie near the **pipe and spittoon** — loosened by mercury treatments. Her laundry hangs above her like shrouds already.

Notes

Moll is now dying of syphilis. Two expensive doctors, Dr. Richard Rock on the left (black hair) and Dr. Jean Misauvin on the right (white hair) argue over their medical methods, which appear to be a choice of bleeding (Rock) and cupping (Misauvin), while Moll dies. A woman, possibly Moll's bawd and possibly the landlady, rifles Moll's possessions for what she wishes to take away. She has already selected for herself the most ominous articles of Moll's wardrobe: her witch's hat, her dancing shoes and her mask (now a black death mask) with a fan stuck grotesquely through its eyes. Moll's maid, with one comforting arm around the dying girl, attempts to stop the looting and the turmoil. Moll's son sits beside his mother, oblivious to her death, struggling with the lice in his hair and attempting to cook for himself.

The only hint as to the apartment's owner is a Passover cake used as a flytrap, implying that her former keeper is paying for her in her last days and ironically indicating that Moll will, unlike the Israelites, not be spared. Several opiates ("anodynes") and "cures" litter the floor. Moll's clothes seem to reach down for her as if they were ghosts drawing her to the afterlife.

By the pipe, spittoon and old punchbowl, lie Moll's teeth; loosened by the fruitless use of mercury as a cure of venereal disease, they have come out. Over the expiring figure of Moll hang the limp, ghostly forms of her laundry.



William Hogarth (1697–1764)
A Harlot's Progress, Plate 6
 1732

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *A Harlot's Progress, Plate 6*, 1732

Plate Six closes the series with a wake, and Hogarth makes it a scene of almost unbearable irony. Moll is dead at twenty-three — the coffin lid tells us so, with the date **2 September 1731** — and every figure in the room is engaged in something other than mourning her. The parson, whose spiritual duty was to Moll in life and now in death, has his hand up the skirt of the woman beside him. She appears entirely pleased by this. **Moll's maid**, who held her dying mistress in the previous plate with the only genuine tenderness in the series, now glares at the parson with controlled fury — Hogarth's most damning structural rhyme in the sequence. The madam weeps on the right, clutching a jug of **Nants brandy** with a ghastly grinning face painted on it. She is the sole figure expressing grief, yet Hogarth implicates even her tears in the general degradation. Moll's son plays with his spinning top beneath her coffin, oblivious. He has been innocent throughout, which is precisely Hogarth's point: innocence survives in this world only through ignorance, and it will not survive long. The **white hat** from Plate One hangs on the wall beside a coat of arms bearing three spigots — spilling liquid, expiring life, and moral vacancy unified in a single heraldic joke.

Notes

In the final plate, Moll is dead, and all of the scavengers are present at her wake.

A note on the coffin lid shows that she died aged 23 on 2 September 1731. The parson symbolically spills his drink as he has his hand up the skirt of the girl next to him, and she appears pleased. Moll's maid glares angrily at the parson.

Moll's son plays ignorantly. Moll's son is innocent, but he sits playing with his top underneath his mother's body, unable to understand (and figuratively fated to death himself).

Moll's madam drunkenly mourns on the right with a ghastly grinning jug of "Nants" (brandy). She is the only one who is upset at the treatment of the dead girl, whose coffin is being used as a tavern bar, although her howls may be inspired by the brandy. The undertaker assists a girl (another prostitute) with her glove while she steals his handkerchief. Another prostitute shows her injured finger to her fellow whore, while a woman adjusts her appearance in a mirror in the background, even though she shows a syphilitic sore on her forehead. The house holding the coffin has an ironic coat of arms on the wall displaying a chevron with three spigots, reminiscent of the "spill" of the parson, the flowing alcohol, and the expiration of Moll. The white hat hanging on the wall by the coat of arms is the one Moll wore in the first plate, referring back to the beginning of her end.

William Hogarth (1697-1764)
Industry and Idleness
 1747
 Engravings (series of 12)
 British Museum, London



William Hogarth (1697-1764), *Industry and Idleness*, 1747, British Museum, London

Sixteen years after *Moll Hackabout's* wake, Hogarth returned to the moral series format — but with a fundamentally different audience in mind. **Industry and Idleness**, published in 1747, is twelve engravings sold at one shilling apiece, designed not for the drawing rooms of gentlemen collectors but for the workshops and counting houses of London's labouring poor. Where **A Harlot's Progress** and **Marriage à-la-mode** were painted first and engraved afterwards, *Industry and Idleness* was conceived entirely in print, and that distinction matters: the medium is the message. The series follows two apprentice weavers from a shared starting point in **Spitalfields** — one diligent, one dissolute — and drives them by opposite routes to the Lord Mayor's coach and the Tyburn gallows respectively. Their names, **Francis Goodchild** and **Thomas Idle**, announce their fates before a single plate has been examined. Hogarth loads the opening image with everything the viewer needs: Goodchild's loom is running, his copy of the **Prentice's Guide** sits at his feet intact; Idle snores against a silent loom, his own guide shredded on the floor. The biblical verses beneath each figure seal the covenant — Proverbs on industry making rich, Proverbs on drunkenness clothing a man in rags.

Notes

Industry and Idleness is the title of a series of 12 plot-linked engravings created by William Hogarth in 1747, intending to illustrate to working children the possible rewards of hard work and diligent application and the sure disasters attending a lack of both. Unlike his earlier works, such as *A Harlot's Progress* (1731) and *Marriage à-la-mode* (1743), which were painted first and subsequently converted to engravings, *Industry and Idleness* was created solely as a set of engravings. Each of the prints was sold for 1 shilling each so 12 for the entire set, which is equivalent in purchasing power to approximately £80 (as of 2005). It may be assumed that these prints were aimed for a wider and less wealthy market than his earlier works. The originals currently reside at the British Museum.

Notes

- The Fellow 'Prentices at their Looms,
- In plate 1 the two protagonists are introduced: both are "'prentices" on equal terms with their master, and doing the same work. Beyond this framework, the two characters display their respective traits: Francis is busy at work with his loom and shuttle, with his copy of "The Prentice's Guide" at his feet and various wholesome literature tacked up on the wall behind him such as "The London Prentice" and (portentously) "Whittington Ld Mayor". Tom Idle leans snoring against his still loom, probably as a result of a huge mug labelled "Spittle Fields" sitting on his loom. A clay pipe is wedged into the handle and a cat is busy interfering with the shuttle. Tacked to the post that he is sleeping against is "Moll Flanders"; his "Prentice's Guide" is also lying on the ground, but in a filthy and shredded state. To the right their master, with a thick stick in his hand, looks disappointedly at Thomas. The future courses of the two apprentices are marked off for them by the imagery surrounding the frame of the painting: To the left, representing Idle's future, a whip, fetters and a rope; to the right, over Goodchild, a ceremonial mace, sword of state and golden chain. The master's sword segues exactly into the shaft of the mace: more foreshadowing for the second encounter of the two in plate 9. Idle's verse: "Proverbs Chap: 23 Ve: 21, The Drunkard shall come to Poverty, & drowsiness shall cloath a Man with rags". Goodchild's: "Proverbs Ch:10 Ver:4, The hand of the diligent maketh rich".
- The Industrious 'Prentice performing the Duty of a Christian.

- Plate two occurs at some point on a Sunday, when their master has given them part (or all) of the day to attend church service. Francis Goodchild is shown taking good advantage of this, attending St. Martin-in-the-Fields, standing in a pew with his master's daughter, singing out of a hymnal. Their piety is contrasted with the sleeping man in the pew and the vain woman at the far right, and complements the quiet devotion of the old pew opener, the woman who has the keys to the pew, who is facing away from the service to spot new arrivals. Significantly, since this is the first in the series of images of Francis' fortune, his career is literally shown to start with his devotion. Note the tricorns hanging everywhere. "Psalm CXIX Ver:97, O! How I love thy Law it is my meditation all day".
- The Idle 'Prentice at Play in the Church Yard, during Divine Service
- In this case, Tom Idle is shown doing the exact opposite: gambling and cheating with some pence on top of a tomb in the churchyard. The foreground is strewn with spare bones and skulls, and behind him a beadle is about to strike him with a cane for his insolence and tardiness. Curiously, the beadle looks to be winking at the viewer of this work. Also note that the frame is reversed: Now the mace, etc. are on the left of the engraving. "Proverbs CH:XIX. Ve:29., Judgments are prepared for scorers & stripes for the back of Fools".
- The Industrious 'Prentice a Favourite, and entrusted by his Master
- Clearly Goodchild's industry and piety are paying off. He's now no longer working a loom, but rather keeping his master's business: He holds the "Day Book", keys to the house and a pouch of money. His master is also present and using the greatest familiarity with him, further testifying to his advanced state. On the desk before them two gloves shaking hands illustrate the friendship and foreshadow their ultimate harmony and agreement in plate 6. Behind them are a row of women at looms and one at a spinning wheel and to the left, a man wearing the symbol of the Corporation of London and carrying material in labelled "To Mr West". Both show that the business is a going concern. To the lower right a copy of the "London Almanack" is tacked up, headed by an allegorical figure of the genius of Industry assaulting Father Time. A dog stands by the carrier, annoying a cat up on the platform West and Goodchild stand on. "Matthew CHAP:XXV. Ve:21., Well done good and faithfull servant thou

hast been faithfull over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things”.

- The Idle 'Prentice turn'd away, and sent to Sea
- On the other hand Tom Idle's useless ways have finally gotten their reward: His master (possibly with the consultation of or incitement by Francis) either throws him out or orders him away to sea. In either case, Tom clearly feels that his authority over him is at an end and has cast his indenture into the boat's wake in the lower left-hand corner. Judging by his companions' antics, his reputation of laziness and disobedience have preceded him: One tries to tease him with the frayed end of a rope (i.e. a cat o' nine tails), the other points towards a man hanging from a gallows at the waterline for some nautical crime (It is also possible he's pointing at their ship). The sky also grows noticeably darker in the direction their boat is pointed. For the first time, we learn his name from the wooden crate next to him labelled "Tho Idle his Chest". An old woman, dressed as a widow, tearfully remonstrates with him, while he ignores her. The verse at the bottom clearly indicates this is his mother. In the background, on low land, are a number of Dutch windmills. "Proverbs CHAP:X. Ve:1., A foolish son is the heaviness of his Mother”.
- The Industrious 'Prentice out of his Time, & Married to his Master's Daughter
- The next plate shows that Francis Goodchild has been improving his time, as usual. He has also escaped his apprenticeship, but in the intended manner: having served his time, he is free and a journeyman weaver. Beyond that even, the sign of "WEST and GOODCHILD" under their trademark of a lion rampant shows that his former master has taken him into partnership (not an unreasonable step given that he previously kept the accounts). The other significant change is that Miss West, last seen in Plate 2, has become Mrs. Goodchild. The scene here is likely the day after, when they distribute the remnants of the feast to various poor people. Francis is at the window holding a teacup (without a handle) and giving a coin. In the foreground at the door a footman gives away a plate. To the left, a legless man in a tub, probably invalided from the Army or Navy, holds out a sheet of paper containing "Jesse or the Happy Pair. a new Song". Behind him a Frenchman with a base viol is forced out of the line by

a (British) butcher. The background shows the London Monument when it contained the lines "by the treachery of the Popish Faction." "Proverbs CH:XII. Ver:4., The Virtuous Woman is a Crown to her Husband."

- The Idle 'Prentice return'd from Sea, & in a Garret with common Prostitute
- For reasons unknown (but probably related to his namesake vice), Tom Idle is back on land again. If he was callous enough to throw out his indenture leaving land, he certainly doesn't feel bound by any law on his return as he has gone so far as to turn highwayman (more likely footpad) and take up a (dismal) residence with "a common Prostitute". In contrast to the luxury of Francis in plate 8, Thomas and his companion are shown living in complete squalor somewhere in London. The sole article of furniture in the room is the broken down bed that Tom and his woman are lying on. She is busy examining the various nonmonetary spoils from his thefts on the highway, including an earring that looks like a gallows. The bottles on the fireplace mantel are suggestive of venereal disease, similar to those of plate 3 in *A Harlot's Progress*. The broken flute and bottle, together with the pair of breeches discarded on the bedclothes, suggest they've been spending their time in drunken debauchery. Samuel Ireland suggests that he was doing this to drive away his fears of the law. The principal event of the scene is a cat falling down the chimney with a few bricks (which strongly suggests the quality of the house they are lodging in), which causes Tom Idle to start up with all the fear of the law on him. The extremely dilapidated condition of the building, lack of any obvious source of light or fire, and covering over of the window by a hoop petticoat suggest that Idle is in hiding and sparing no pains to keep his location a secret. "Leviticus CHAP:XXVI. Ve:30., The Sound of a Shaken Leaf shall Chace him."
- The Industrious 'Prentice grown rich, & Sheriff of London
- Plate 8 shows the opulence that industry has produced (or rather, allowed to be procured): the couple sit at the far end of the table (Just to the left of the man in the foreground with the staff) on chairs, apparently in state. His chair has the sword of state on its right arm and on her left the crowned mace. A significant portion of this plate is taken up with a related satire of gluttony, which takes place in the left foreground. In particular, the two on the far right warn that even earned riches are as susceptible to squander and waste as any other. To the upper left, an orchestra on a balcony

provides musical accompaniment. The chamberlain (the man with the staff of office) examines a paper addressed "To the worshi^pl Fraf Goodchild Esq Sher[...] Lond" while a crowd of people mills at the bar. This is the first time we find out his first name. "Proverbs CH:IV. Ver:7, 8., With all thy getting get understanding Exalt her, & she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost Embrace her

- The Idle 'Prentice betrayed (by his Whore), & taken in a Night-Cellar with his Accomplice
- Idle has now gone from highway robbery to out and out murder for petty gain. He's shown here examining the effects of the dead man in a hat (probably his!) between them, while another man pitches the body down a trap door. In the process, they are all totally oblivious not only to the men of the Law coming down the stairs with lit lanterns, but Idle's prostitute being paid (one coin) for her information! Clearly Idle is caught without any means of escape. The background shows his most congenial surroundings to be the most lawless and depraved possible: playing cards are strewn in the right foreground, men are murdered with no hue and cry, a rope hangs ominously from one of the beams in the ceiling, a syphilitic woman with no nose serves a mug of something, presumably liquor and/or gin, and a massive drunken brawl occupies half of the room, while the others unconcernedly ignore it. "Proverbs CHAP:VI. Ve:26., The Adulteress will hunt for the precious life". Note that in some versions the title is "The Idle 'Prentice betrayed by his Whore, & taken in a Night-Cellar with his Accomplice", whereas others remove "by his Whore".
- The Industrious 'Prentice Alderman of London, the Idle one brought before him & Impeach'd by his Accomplice
- Having led their separate lives for four plates each, the two apprentices meet again, considerably further down their paths of life. Again, Tom is on the left, Francis, the right (Interestingly, the frame is reversed, so the rope, etc. is above Francis). Idle is now completely lost: his accomplice readily turns King's evidence, a man behind him holds up the two pistols and sword used in the commission of the murder in one hand and points to Idle with the other, and he's being arraigned before his former fellow-apprentice, who remembers his earlier inclinations and could well imagine him turning footpad. While he turns away, either struggling with his

feelings (as implied by the quote at the bottom of the frame) or disgustedly spurning his entreaties, the clerk next to him writes out the warrant of admission "To the Turnkey of Newgate". To the right of Idle, his mother again tearfully pleads with an officer who dismisses her. The bailiff administering the oath has put his quill pen behind his ear facing forward, making him look ridiculous, so that he might take a bribe from the woman next to him, who is paying him to not notice that the oath he's administering is being sworn with the wrong hand and hence worthless. Fire buckets labelled "SA" hang from the balcony behind the crowd. "Pfalm IX. Ver:16., The Wicked is snar'd in the work of his own hands" "Leviticus CH:XIX Ve:15., Thou shall do no unrighteousness in Judgement

- The Idle 'Prentice Executed at Tyburn
- Idle now comes, like Tom Nero in *The Four Stages of Cruelty*, to the reward of his depredations and malice: a felon's death on the gallows. The procession from left to right shows a detachment of soldiers riding behind the tumbrel, which contains a preacher with a book labelled Wesley, a reference to Methodism. The cleric vigorously discourses to a now hairless Thomas Idle, who is leaning on his own coffin (marked by the initials "T.I."). The coach ahead carries the Official clergyman (who will actually preside at the execution). Beyond looms the Tyburn Tree. The executioner lays unconcernedly along one of the crossbeams, smoking his pipe and apparently inured to the nature of his work. In the right background, more or less well behaved spectators wait. One releases a bird that will fly back to Newgate and give the news that (by the time it's arrived) the malefactor is dead. Around and in the midst of the semi-orderly procession, chaos reigns. In the front center, a woman with a baby is advertising "The last dying Speech & Confession of—Tho. Idle." although the condemned has not yet arrived at the gallows. To the left, a brawl involves two to four people. To her left, a drunken sot attempts to court her with ridiculous airs, notwithstanding his holding a dog up by the tail. The suspended dog, positioned directly below the gibbet in the picture, prefigures another "cur" who is about to be hanged. Behind them a massive riot goes on while a woman assaults the man pushing over her cart of fruit. A man to the far right peddles something. In one corner are two boys, one pickpocketing and the other resisting temptation, possibly echoing Idle and Goodchild. The frame of the picture shows Thomas' ultimate fate,

hung on a gibbet for his highway collecting or anatomised, for his murder. Finally, the verse at the bottom completes Idle's doom. "Proverbs CHAP I. Verf:s 27, 28., When fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction cometh as a Whirlwind; when distress cometh upon them, they shall call upon God, but he will not answer."

- The Industrious 'Prentice Lord-Mayor of London
- Now that the Idle 'Prentice met his reward, industry gets its turn: The industry and morality of Francis Goodchild result in his being chosen the Lord Mayor of the City.
- He is here shown riding in the Lord Mayor's carriage, holding the sword of state and wearing an outsized top hat. From the balcony on the right, a genteel crowd observes his passing, as do people in all the windows fronting on the street. Meanwhile the crowd drunkenly near-riots around him. In the far lower right, a boy holding "A full and true Account of ye Ghost of Tho Idle. Which [...]" shows the final fate of Thomas Idle's memory: an entry in The Newgate Calendar. Nearby members of an escort of disorganised militia accidentally discharge their muskets or drink from mugs. The frame is now surrounded by cornucopias, referring to the verse at the bottom: "Proverbs CHAP: III. Ver:16., Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour".
- Unfinished parts
- Hogarth sketched out at least three other scenes that never got made into engravings: one of the inside of Goodchild's place after his marriage (Presumably to go after or instead of 6) and a set of him giving money to his parents while Idle swipes a tankard of his mother's (Meant to follow 7).



James Gillray (1756-1815), *Fashionable Contrasts;—or—The Duchess's little Shoe yeilding to the Magnitude of the Duke's Foot*, 1792

The moral clarity of Hogarth's world — vice punished, virtue rewarded — gave way, in the generation that followed, to something far more turbulent. The **French Revolution** upended the political order of Europe, and with it came an explosion of graphic satire unprecedented in scale and ferocity. In Britain, where censorship laws remained far looser than in revolutionary France, the print shop window became a battlefield of competing visions of power, patriotism, and corruption. Three artists dominated this moment: **Isaac Cruikshank**, **Thomas Rowlandson**, and above all **James Gillray**, whose work from the **1790s** onward set the terms for political caricature across the continent. Each had a distinct register — Rowlandson favoured ribald social comedy, Gillray a savage, almost hallucinatory distortion — but all three returned repeatedly to images of gluttony and bodily excess as metaphors for monarchical exploitation and economic misery. Gillray was also capable of devastating precision. His **1792** print **Fashionable Contrasts** targeted the sycophantic press coverage of **Frederica Charlotte**, Duchess of York, and her supposedly dainty feet. Gillray showed only the feet and ankles of the Duke and Duchess in an unmistakably copulatory arrangement — the Duke's feet grotesquely enlarged, the Duchess's absurdly small. It ended that particular strain of royal flattery at a stroke.

Notes

During the late 18th century, there was an enormous amount of propaganda due to changes of power in Europe, the main being French Revolution. The British Monarchy was also being highly criticized of debauchery during this time, as it was a period of economic hardship and debt. Political caricature and graphic satire became a prominent outlet for mass propaganda to express competing perspectives on political and economic issues. The revolution also triggered feelings and expressions of patriotism towards artists' home countries which they depicted by shedding a grotesque light on their countries' enemies.

Isaac Cruikshank, James Gillray, and Thomas Rowlandson were considered the leading caricaturists during this period and produced many popular sketches and graphics to be published to citizens. These three prominent artists' distinct styles and subject matter let them to be notable and widespread and Europe, although they also adapted and changed images from smaller artists. The three artists were sometimes considered rivals as their ideas often took different positions and angles on matters, despite sometimes collaborating on works. A common theme in all three artists' works were the portrayal of gluttony and cannibalism to represent exploitation of the monarchy sparked by the economical effects of the French Revolution. These artists, however, were all publishing their work in Britain, as in France censorship laws were at an all time high.

As well as being blatant in his observations, Gillray could be incredibly subtle, and puncture vanity with a remarkably deft approach. The outstanding example of this is his print *Fashionable Contrasts;—or—The Duchess's little Shoe yeilding [sic] to the Magnitude of the Duke's Foot*. This was a devastating image aimed at the ridiculous sycophancy directed by the press towards Frederica Charlotte Ulrica, Duchess of York, and the supposed daintiness of her feet and elegant footwear.. The print showed only the feet and ankles of the Duke and Duchess of York (Frederick, Duke of York and Albany 1763-1827, son of George III, and Frederica Charlotte Ulrica 1767-1820, his wife), in an obviously copulatory position, with the Duke's feet enlarged and the Duchess's feet drawn very small. This print silenced forever the sycophancy of the press regarding the union of the Duke and Duchess.



James Gillray (1756/7–1815)
*L'Assemblée Nationale; —or —
 Grand Co-operative Meeting at St.
 Ann's Hill.— Respectfully Dedicated
 to the admirers of "A Broad-
 Bottom'd Administration"*
 1804
 Etching, hand-coloured
 33.7 × 46.3 cm

James Gillray (1756/7–1815), *L'Assemblée Nationale; —or —Grand Co-operative Meeting at St. Ann's Hill.— Respectfully Dedicated to the admirers of "A Broad-Bottom'd Administration"*, 1804, 33.7 × 46.3 cm

Gillray's **L'Assemblée Nationale** of **1804** is among the most densely populated political prints ever published, and Wright and Evans, writing in **1851**, had no hesitation in calling it the most talented caricature that had ever appeared — high praise in a tradition that included Hogarth himself, whom Gillray revered deeply. The conceit is a revolutionary fantasy: **King George III** has been executed, a republic proclaimed, and **Charles James Fox** holds court as First Consul at his house at **St Anne's Hill**. Fox stands at the centre with his wife, whose fan bears a portrait of **Napoleon** and whose pocket contains a bottle of French Brandy — two details that compress Gillray's charge against the Whig opposition into a single glance. Fox was the most formidable parliamentary opponent of **William Pitt the Younger**, a man who had evolved from conventional Whig politics into the most radical positions of the age, championing American independence, the French Revolution, and religious tolerance in equal measure. The print's crowded room gives Gillray licence to skewer an entire political world. **Maria Fitzherbert** lounges on the sofa holding a fan bearing the Prince's feathers, while **the Prince of Wales** himself appears cropped at the far right, Shakespearean quotation tucked in his pocket — a man already rehearsing his future role.

Notes

James Gillray (1756/7–1815), *L'Assemblée Nationale; —or —Grand Co-operative Meeting at St. Ann's Hill.— Respectfully Dedicated to the admirers of "A Broad-Bottom'd Administration"*, the print shows a reception given by Charles James Fox and wife for various groups and friends of the Prince of Wales, all opposed to the government, etching, hand-coloured, plate size 33.7 × 46.3 cm, published by H. Humphrey, 1804, June 18.

After a very chequered early career James Gillray was admitted to the Royal Academy and supported himself engraving (actually mostly etching). He was a great admirer of Hogarth. Hogarth died in 1764 and Gillray's first work was published in 1779. His satire was directed at both politics and society and his main thrust was directed at George III and the French. He produced over 1,000 caricatures, some say as many as 1,600 or 1,700.

This print is very rare, and may have been suppressed for a large sum of money, because it gave offense to the Prince.

The King forbade Pitt to include Fox in a 'broad-based coalition', and given the King's fragile mental health, Pitt did not press the issue. Once again there was the possibility of a Regency. Grenville, who refused to join Pitt without Fox, aligned himself with the Foxites, the Prince's friends, and other members of the Opposition. The Prince met regularly with his 'Cabinet', while making plans for a 'cooperation' led by Fox and Grenville.

Gillray imagines an elaborate soirée, which brings together members of various factions loyal to the Prince's interests. M. Dorothy George and others believe that Gillray also intended to suggest a scenario in which Fox appears as First Consul after the execution of the King and the proclamation of a republic.

Among those whom Gillray depicts attending this political 'who's who' are:

In the centre, Mr. and Mrs. Fox, her fan decorated with a portrait of Napoleon and with a bottle labelled 'French Brandy' in her pocket. Charles James Fox (1749-1806) was a prominent Whig politician who was the arch rival of William Pitt the Younger. He was a forceful and eloquent speaker with a colourful private life who started with conservative and conventional views but they evolved into the most radical views of the day. He became a staunch opponent of George III whom he regarded as a tyrant and he supported the American patriots and the French revolution. He was anti-slavery, an advocate

of religious tolerance and individual liberty.

They greet the "three Grenvilles," bespectacled Buckingham, Baron Grenville, and his nephew, Temple. Baron Grenville, the son of Prime Minister George Grenville, himself became Prime Minister from 1806-7 in the 'Ministry of All the Talents'.

Behind Mrs. Fox are the Duchess of Devonshire (with the open fan), her brother, Lord Spencer (a defector from the government party, along with Baron Grenville and Windham) and Lady Bessborough wearing a miniature of Nelson. Earl Spencer became Secretary of State for the Home Department in the 'Ministry of All the Talents'

Following the Grenvilles on the left is former actress Lady Derby (Elizabeth Farren, painted by Thomas Lawrence, c. 1790), who towers over Lord Derby. Behind them are the hideous Nicholls holding a double eye-glass to his single eye and Lady Buckinghamshire, who advances impassively. The Duchess of Gordon is in tartan with tartan drapery attached to her head by a thistle. Advancing through the archway are the stiff and clumsy Salisbury holding a broken wand of office, with his wife, wearing a plumed helmet (or hunting-cap) and dishevelled hair and high collar

Seated in the left corner, the Dukes of Bedford and Norfolk chat over Whitbread's brew, and behind them politician and playwright Sheridan offers Windham some snuff. Bedford holds a book entitled 'Scheme for improving of the Old English Breed \ French Rams.'

In the right background, Thomas Erskine and Charles Grey hold up a document referring to a 'Broad-bottomed Administration', Gillray's take on a 'broad-based coalition', which also refers to the impressive girths of the three Grenvilles.

Mrs. Fitzherbert, now toward the end of her long alliance with the Prince, lounges on the sofa on the right holding a fan with the Prince's feathers and 'Ich Dien' on it, taking a ticket from Lord Carlisle labelled 'Coalition Masquerade'. The Prince stands in the far right foreground, easily recognizable though cropped in half. Tucked in his pocket is a quotation from Shakespeare's Henry IV, which alludes to Henry's readiness to give up the follies of his youth when it serves his interests.

According to Wright & Evans, *Historical and Descriptive Account of the Caricatures of James Gillray* (1851, OCLC 59510372), p. ix, 'This we have no hesitation in asserting to be the most talented caricature that has ever

appeared. The king is supposed to have been executed, the republic proclaimed, and Fox, as first consul, is holding his levée at his house at St. Anne's Hill. All the leading Whigs are present, of whom the likenesses are most admirable, and in the right corner is seen a portion of the figure of the Prince of Wales. This caricature gave so much offence to the prince that he offered a large sum of money for its suppression, which being accepted, he ordered the plate to be destroyed. It was the misfortune of the prince and those by whom he was surrounded to place reliance on each other; the plate was not destroyed, it was secreted, and still exists. It will be found in the collection published by Mr. Bohn.'

According to the National Portrait Gallery those depicted include:

Sir Robert Adair (1763–1855)

Francis Russell, 5th Duke of Bedford (1765–1802)

Henrietta (Spencer), Countess of Bessborough (1761–1821)

Richard Grenville, 1st Duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1776–1839)

George Nugent Temple Grenville, 1st Marquess of Buckingham (1753–1813)

Albinia, Countess of Buckinghamshire (died 1816)

Sir Francis Burdett, 5th Bt (1770–1844)

Frederick Howard, 5th Earl of Carlisle (1748–1825)

George James Cholmondeley, 1st Marquess of Cholmondeley (1749–1827)

Edward Smith Stanley, 12th Earl of Derby (1752–1834)

Elizabeth (née Farren), Countess of Derby (1759?–1829)

Georgiana (Spencer), Duchess of Devonshire (1757–1806)

Thomas Erskine, 1st Baron Erskine (1750–1823), Lord Chancellor

Maria Anne Fitzherbert (née Smythe) (1756–1837), morganatic wife of George IV

Charles James Fox (1749–1806)

Elizabeth Bridget Fox (née Cane) (1750–1842)

Frederick, Duke of York and Albany (1763–1827), Son of George III;
Commander-in-Chief of the Army

George III of the United Kingdom (1738–1820)

George IV of the United Kingdom (1762–1830), Regent 1811–1819

Jane (Maxwell), Duchess of Gordon (1749?–1812)

William Wyndham Grenville, 1st Baron Grenville (1759–1834), Prime Minister
Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey (1764–1845), Prime Minister
Francis Rawdon-Hastings, 1st Marquess of Hastings (1754–1826)
Thomas Tyrwhitt Jones (1765–1811)
Dorothea Jordan (née Bland) (1761–1816)
John Macmahon (circa 1754–1817)
Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), Emperor of France
John Nicholls (1745?–1832)
Charles Howard, 11th Duke of Norfolk (1746–1815)
James Cecil, 1st Marquess of Salisbury (1748–1823), Lord Chamberlain
Mary Amelia, Marchioness of Salisbury (1750–1835)
Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816)
George John Spencer, 2nd Earl Spencer (1758–1834), First Lord of the Admiralty
Michael Angelo Taylor (circa 1757–1834)
George Tierney (1761–1830)
John Horne Tooke (1736–1812)
George Walpole (1758–1835)
William IV of the United Kingdom (1765–1837)
William Windham (1750–1810)

Elizabeth Farren

Farren was the actress daughter of an Irish surgeon and apothecary (pharmacist). She started acting when she was young and first appeared in London when she was 18. She played many parts including Portia (Merchant of Venice), Olivia (Twelfth Night), Juliet (Romeo and Juliet) and Hermione (The Winter's Tale) in Shakespeare's plays. She later married Edward Smith-Stanley, the 12th Earl of Derby and although she was the subject of satire no imputation was ever cast on her morals. Horace Walpole described her as the most perfect actress he had ever seen. One critic wrote, 'We have seen a great variety of pictures of Mrs. Farren, but we never saw her mind and character on canvas. It is completely Elizabeth Farren: arch, spirited, elegant and engaging'.

She was at the height of her career when this canvas was shown at the Royal Academy in 1790. Seven years later, she married the twelfth earl of Derby. This beautiful portrait helped to secure for Lawrence the role of successor to the elderly Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792).



James Gillray (1756–1815)
**The Plumb-pudding in danger, or,
 State epicures taking un petit souper**
 1805
 Etching, hand-colored

James Gillray (1756–1815), *The Plumb-pudding in danger, or, State epicures taking un petit souper*, 1805

From the packed satirical canvas of *L'Assemblée Nationale*, Gillray moves to something altogether more concentrated — and this single image has proved so durable that it has been reproduced and reworked more than almost any other caricature in the British tradition. **The Plumb-pudding in Danger**, published in **1805**, shows **William Pitt the Younger** and **Napoleon Bonaparte** seated together at a table, carving up a vast globe-shaped pudding mapped with the continents. Pitt takes the ocean; Napoleon the land. Wright and Evans describe it as a commentary on Napoleon's overtures for reconciliation with England in January of that year, though Gillray treats diplomacy as pure theatre. Pitt appears in regimental uniform — a pointed reminder that this statesman had been directing the war machine since returning to office in **1804**. He had first become Prime Minister in **1783** at just twenty-four, the youngest ever to hold the office, and his entire career was shaped by the collision between British interests and French power. **William Wilberforce**, his close friend, called him unequalled for personal purity and love of country. **Asa Briggs** noted that Pitt was too solitary and too austere to inspire popular warmth, yet that very self-containment made him the indispensable organiser of national resistance. Gillray renders him sharp-eyed and ravenous — not a hero, but a player.

Notes

Perhaps, the most famous caricature of all time. It has been reused and modified many time.

According to Wright and Evans, *Historical and Descriptive Account of the Caricatures of James Gillray* (1851), p. 240, "The new Emperor, and his opponent the English Minister, helping themselves—one taking the land, the other the sea. On the overtures made by the new Emperor for a reconciliation with England in the January of 1805."

William Pitt is wearing a regimental uniform and hat and is sitting at a table with Napoleon. They are each carving a large plum pudding on which is a map of the world. Pitt's slice is considerably larger than Napoleon's.

Notes

William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806) became the youngest Prime Minister in 1783 at the age of 24. He left office in 1801, but was Prime Minister again from 1804 until his death in 1806. He is known as "the Younger" to distinguish him from his father, William Pitt the Elder, who had previously served as Prime Minister. The younger Pitt's prime ministerial tenure was dominated by major events in Europe, including the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Pitt is often referred to as a Tory, or "new Tory" but he called himself an "independent Whig" and was generally opposed to the development of a strict partisan political system. Pitt was an outstanding administrator who worked for efficiency and reform. He raised taxes to pay for the great war against France and cracked down on radicalism. To meet the threat of Irish support for France, he engineered the Acts of Union 1800 and tried but failed to get Catholic Emancipation as part of the Union. Pitt created the "new Toryism", which revived the Tory Party and enabled it to stay in power for the next quarter-century.

Historian Asa Briggs points out that his personality did not endear itself to the British, as he was too solitary, too colourless, and often exuded superiority. His greatness came in the war with France as his integrity and industry and his role as defender of the threatened nation allowed him to inspire and access all the national reserves of strength. William Wilberforce said that, "For personal purity, disinterestedness and love of this country, I have never known his equal." Historian Charles Petrie concludes that he was one of the greatest prime ministers "if on no other ground than that he enabled the

country to pass from the old order to the new without any violent upheaval....He understood the new Britain." For this he is ranked highly amongst British Prime Ministers.



James Gillray (1757-1815)

Connoisseurs Examining a Collection of George Morland's

1807

hand-coloured etching

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

James Gillray (1757-1815), *Connoisseurs Examining a Collection of George Morland's*, 1807, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

From Gillray's razor-sharp political theatre, we turn to a print that trains the same satirical eye on the art world itself. ***Connoisseurs Examining a Collection of George Morland's***, published in **1807**, mocks the booming market for rustic painting — and specifically for the work of **George Morland**, who had died three years earlier, in **1804**, at just forty-one. Morland was extraordinarily prolific, and by the time of this print the market was glutted with what the trade frankly called pot-boilers: hurriedly painted cottage scenes, fat pigs, and buxom milkmaids. Gillray populates his print with identifiable figures. On the left stands **John Julius Angerstein**, the businessman and collector whose own holdings would go on to form the founding nucleus of the **National Gallery**. Beside him are a banker named Mitchell, **Caleb Whitefoord** peering through a glass, and the patron **George Baker**. On the right, a picture dealer named Mortimer spits on a canvas depicting an enormous boar — a gesture of authentication as much as contempt. The deeper joke is about cultural aspiration. By **1807**, collecting was no longer the exclusive preserve of the aristocracy. The expanding middle class was buying paintings, and that democratisation of taste made anxious comedy possible. Morland's subjects — genuine rural poverty, travellers stopping at cottage inns — were largely ignored in favour of their picturesque surface.

Notes

James Gillray (1757-1815), *Connoisseurs Examining a Collection of George Morland's*, 1807, publisher Hannah Humphrey (1740-1818), hand-coloured etching, V&A.

George Morland (1763-1804, died age 41), *A Traveller Resting at a Cottage with a Boy Burning Weeds to the Left or Door of a Village Inn*, date not known, Tate Britain

V&A website: This satire by James Gillray mocks the popular demand for rustic paintings by the artist George Morland. The 'connoisseurs' of the title appear to be rustic and uneducated, more interested in the fat pigs and buxom women in Morland's works, than in the paintings' artistic value. By the later eighteenth century, collecting art was no longer the preserve of a wealthy elite, and the growing middle-class interest in painting caused both concern and amusement in some artistic circles.

Said to be a satire on puffed sales of the many pot-boilers by Morland (1763-1804) with which the market was glutted.

The connoisseurs have been identified as, on the left, John Julius Angerstein (1732-1823), a businessman and collector whose collection helped found the National Gallery, Mitchell (a banker), Caleb Whitefoord (looking through a glass), behind him George Baker (a patron of watercolour painters) and on the right a picture dealer and restorer called Mortimer who spits on the picture of an enormous boar.

There were very few artists representing the real conditions in the countryside. Most paintings showed an idyllic, pastoral scene. But there were other ways of seeing the land. A few artists, such as George Morland saw rural poverty and created popular art by representing the lives of the poor.

This is an genre painting, that is one showing a group of people engaged in some activity. Often the activity has a moral lesson but that was rare with Morland, here a traveller has stopped at a cottage or an inn for a pint of ale.

References

V&A

Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827)
Vauxhall Gardens
1785



Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), Vauxhall Gardens, 1785

Gillray's close contemporary **Thomas Rowlandson** was born in London in **1756**, the same year as Gillray, and his early life mixed genuine privilege with repeated disaster. His father was a declared bankrupt, yet Rowlandson attended the school of Dr Bevis in Soho Square, where one of his classmates was the son of **Edmund Burke**. He was already drawing caricatures of his master and fellow pupils before he turned ten. In **1772** he enrolled at the newly founded **Royal Academy Schools**, won a silver medal, and spent two years studying in Paris — a formation that gave his line an ease and fluency that set him apart. What prevented a more conventional career was a ruinous inheritance. An aunt left him seven thousand pounds, which he lost almost entirely to gambling. **Gillray** — his friend as well as his rival — reportedly suggested caricature as a practical rescue, and Rowlandson took the advice decisively (note that no primary source can be identified for this claim). The result that announced him publicly was **Vauxhall Gardens**, shown at the **Royal Academy** in **1784**. The pleasure gardens had been transformed from a notoriously disreputable space into a venue for polite society by **Jonathan Tyers**, who took them over in **1728**, cleared out the prostitutes, laid broad lit avenues, and hired orchestras and singers to attract respectable crowds.

Notes

Born in the same year as Gillray, Thomas Rowlandson was born in London. Although his father was a declared bankrupt his son went to a well-known school, that of Dr Bevis in Soho Square where one of his classmates was the son of Edmund Burke. As a schoolboy, Rowlandson 'drew humorous characters of his master and many of his scholars before he was ten years old'. In 1772, aged 16, he became a student in the then newly founded Royal Academy (December 1768) and spent two years at a drawing school in Paris. He won a silver medal at the Royal Academy and may have become a painter but he inherited £7,000 on the death of his aunt which he dissipated all away on vices including gambling. It seems James Gillray, his friend, suggested caricature as a way of making some money. His drawing of Vauxhall Gardens was shown at the Royal Academy in 1784 and the print was a success.

When Jonathan Tyers took over Vauxhall Gardens in 1728 it was known as an outdoor brothel. He banned prostitutes and wandering musicians and created broad, well-lit avenues with colonnades and statues. He encouraged polite society to visit by hiring an orchestra and well-known London singers to perform.

The two women in the centre are Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire and her sister Lady Duncannon. The man seated at the table on the left is Samuel Johnson, with James Boswell to his left and Oliver Goldsmith to his right. To the right the actress and author Mary Darby Robinson stands next to the Prince of Wales, later George IV

Rowlandson's designs were usually done in outline with the reed-pen, and delicately washed with colour. They were then etched by the artist onto copper, and afterwards aquatinted—usually by a professional engraver, the impressions being finally coloured by hand. As a designer he was characterised by his facility and ease of draughtsmanship. He dealt less frequently with politics than his fierce contemporary, Gillray, but commonly touching, in a rather gentle spirit, the various aspects and incidents of social life. His most artistic work is to be found among the more careful drawings of his earlier period; but even among the exaggerated caricature of his later time we find hints that this master of the humorous might have attained to the beautiful had he so willed.

His work included a personification of the United Kingdom named John Bull who was developed from about 1790 in conjunction with other British satirical artists such as Gillray and George Cruikshank.

Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827)
Tour of Dr Syntax in Search of the Picturesque
 1813
 British Library



Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), *Tour of Dr Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, 1813, British Library

Vauxhall Gardens announced Rowlandson to polite society, but it was a very different kind of public space — the rugged, rain-soaked British countryside — that gave him his most enduring comic vehicle. **The Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of the Picturesque** began appearing in Rudolph Ackermann's periodical **The Poetical Magazine** from **1809**, with verses by **William Combe** and plates by Rowlandson. The bumbling, impoverished clergyman Syntax became an immediate popular figure, and Combe eventually extended the joke across three separate tours. The target throughout was **William Gilpin**, the clergyman and writer who had popularised the very concept of **the picturesque** through a series of illustrated travel books from the **1780s** onwards. Gilpin's rules for judging landscape were precise to the point of absurdity. In one notorious passage he suggested that a mallet, judiciously applied, might render the gable end of **Tintern Abbey** sufficiently ruinous to qualify as picturesque — an invitation to ridicule that satirists could hardly refuse. **Jane Austen** took the same bait. In **Pride and Prejudice**, Elizabeth Bennet declines to walk with Darcy and the Bingley sisters on the grounds that a fourth would spoil the picturesque grouping — a neat joke that assumes a readership already fluent in Gilpin's vocabulary. That fluency existed because Gilpin published at precisely the right moment. Improved roads and wartime restrictions on continental travel drove an explosion

of British domestic tourism through the 1790s, and his books were written exactly for that new travelling public.

Notes

Rowlandson's most famous work was a series of plates issued as the Tour of Dr Syntax in Search of the Picturesque. They were used as illustration for William Combe's The Three Tours of Dr. Syntax a comic poem satirising William Sawrey Gilpin. This has become Combe's most well-known work.

Gilpin was originator of the term 'picturesque' and his rules for interpreting nature were much lampooned. In one much-quoted passage, Gilpin takes things to an extreme, suggesting that "a mallet judiciously used" might render the insufficiently ruinous gable of Tintern Abbey more picturesque. Such passages were easy pickings for satirists such as Jane Austen demonstrated in Northanger Abbey as well as many of her other novels and works. Elizabeth Bennet, in Pride and Prejudice, notably refuses to join Mr. Darcy and the Bingley sisters in a stroll with the teasing observation, "You are charmingly group'd, and...The picturesque would be spoilt by admitting a fourth."

Although he came in for criticism, Gilpin had published at exactly the right time. Improved road communications and travel restrictions on continental Europe saw an explosion of British domestic tourism in the 1780s and 1790s. Many of these picturesque tourists were intent on sketching, or at least discussing what they saw in terms of landscape painting. Gilpin's works were the ideal companions for this new generation of travellers; they were written specifically for that market and never intended as comprehensive travel guides.



Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827)
Box Lobby Loungers
 1786
 British Museum

Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), *Box Lobby Loungers*, 1786, British Museum

The picturesque craze that Rowlandson lampooned attracted a very particular social world, and this print drops us squarely into the heart of it. At the centre stands **George Hanger**, later the **4th Baron Coleraine**, one of the most colourful figures on the fringes of the **Prince Regent's** circle. Hanger's life reads like a Rowlandson composition in itself: Prussian service, a commission in the **Footguards**, a marriage to a gypsy who absconded with a tinker, and then a distinguished, if irregular, career in the **Hessian Jägers** during the **American Revolutionary War**. Back in England, his irreverent wit made him a favourite companion of the future **George IV**, who appointed him Equerry in **1791**. **James Gillray** found him irresistible — the **National Portrait Gallery** holds twenty Gillray prints satirising him alone. The scene around Hanger is equally knowing. The theatre, as contemporaries understood perfectly well, functioned simultaneously as entertainment venue and sexual marketplace. To the right, a respectable woman keeps her guard; to the left, a negotiation over a young lady is already under way. Hanger himself provided the sharpest summary of the world Rowlandson drew: "I was early introduced into life," he wrote, "from the drawing-room to the dust cart." That sentence is almost a caption for the image.

Notes

Thomas Rowlandson

In the centre is the notorious George Hanger (1751-1824). He was the third son of seven children and never expected to become Baron but his two elder brothers died before him and he became 4th Baron Coleraine. As a younger son his career was in the army. He joined the Prussian army, returned to England and in 1771 purchased a commission in the Footguards. He married his first wife, a gypsy who soon ran off with a tinker.

In the army Hanger gained the reputation of being a womaniser to the detriment of his military duties. In 1776 he purchased a lieutenancy, but he retired in disgust after a more junior officer purchased promotion over him. He then purchased a captaincy in the Hessian Jägers and served throughout the American Revolutionary War. After returning to England, he became a companion of the Prince Regent (later King George IV). They became great friends, the Prince apparently admiring Hanger's sense of humour and his exploits, both military and with women, and appointing him Equerry in 1791. The only surviving painting of Hanger comes from this period. Commissioned by the Prince, it remains in the Royal Collection. Hanger was also the butt of caricaturists and many prints of him survive. The National Portrait Gallery in London has a collection of twenty prints by James Gillray satirising him.

In this period, the theatre was a place to meet prostitutes and so a respectable woman had to be on her guard as we see on the right. On the left the representative of a wealthy young man is negotiating a price for the young lady.

Hanger died aged 73 and his title died with him. He said, "I was early introduced into life, and often kept both good and bad company; associated with men both good and bad, and with lewd women, and women not lewd, wicked and not wicked; — in short, with men and women of every description, and of every rank, from the highest to the lowest, from St. James's to St. Giles's; in palaces and night cellars; from the drawing-room to the dust cart....Human nature is in general frail, and mine I confess has been wonderfully so."



Isaac Cruikshank (1756–1811), *Too Much and Too Little*, 1796

From Hanger's raffish world we move to a different but equally sharp satirical eye — that of **Isaac Cruikshank**, the Edinburgh-born caricaturist who spent his working life in London and whose two sons, **Isaac Robert** and **George Cruikshank**, would carry the family's graphic wit well into the nineteenth century. This print from **1796**, titled "**Too Much and Too Little, or Summer Cloathing for 1556 and 1796**", was engraved by Isaac Cruikshank after a drawing by **George Moutard Woodward**, and the joke is built on pure visual contrast. On the left, a woman dressed in the heavy, voluminous fashion of the mid-sixteenth century stands swathed in fabric from chin to floor. On the right, her counterpart wears the barely-there **Directoire style** — the neoclassical silhouette then sweeping in from revolutionary France, gossamer-thin and body-revealing in a way that genuinely alarmed conservative commentators. The single vertical feather rising from the **1796** woman's hair is a precise satirical detail: fashionable, studied, and slightly absurd. Notice too the portraits on the wall behind them, showing male equivalents of each era — the artist has constructed the whole room as a visual argument. The contrast says everything about how rapidly clothing could become the primary language of cultural anxiety.

Notes

Isaac Cruikshank (1764–1811), Scottish painter and caricaturist, was born in Edinburgh and had most of his career in London. Cruikshank is known for his social and political satire. His sons Isaac Robert Cruikshank (1789–1856) and George Cruikshank (1792–1878) also became artists, and the latter in particular achieved fame as an illustrator and caricaturist.

A satirical 1796 contrast between old 16th-century and cutting-edge Directoire clothing styles: "TOO MUCH and TOO LITTLE, or Summer Cloathing for 1556 & 1796", a caricature engraved by Isaac Cruikshank after a drawing by George M. Woodward, published February 8th 1796.

In 1796, the strongly neoclassically-influenced styles satirized on the right were still very new in England. Notice the single vertical feather springing from the hair of the 1796 woman. The portraits on the wall behind the two ladies show corresponding male clothing styles for the two eras.



George Cruikshank (1792-1878), *Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room*, 1818, 25.1 x 35.4 cm, British Museum

George Cruikshank, born in 1792, grew up inside the trade — his father Isaac was his first and essentially his only teacher. He received his first commission at twelve, and what he lacked in formal academic training he made up for in sheer observational instinct. Where his father's generation used caricature as a weapon of political satire, George tilted toward comedy, and that shift in register proved enormously influential on the artists who would later draw for **Punch**, the **London Charivari**, founded in 1841 and dominant through the following two decades. The **London and Westminster Review** summed up his gift precisely: "the quality of his success is the extraordinary earnestness and good faith in which he executes all he attempts — the ludicrous, the polite, the low, the terrible." That earnestness is visible in a print like this one — a crush at a **Drawing-room** held by **Queen Charlotte** at **Buckingham House**. An enormously obese man jams against an equally obese woman in the doorway; an officer slits a lady's train underfoot; a hussar drives his sabre against a distressed guest. Cruikshank peoples the scene with precisely observed detail — the bag-wigs, the gold lace, the fallen shoe-buckle — in the manner that earned him the title the "**modern Hogarth**", a comparison his friend **Charles Dickens** would have understood immediately.

Notes

George Cruikshank was born in 1792, the son of a caricature artist, Isaac. He received little training but received his first commission aged 12. His depictions of the human form were simplistic but he captured the personality and enhanced it by placing his characters in a suitable setting. His work was less satirical and more comic paving the way for the artists who drew for Punch, the London Charivari, which was established in 1841 and was most influential in the 1840s and 50s.

'the quality of his success ... is the extraordinary earnestness and good faith in which he executes all he attempts—the ludicrous, the polite, the low, the terrible.' The London and Westminster Review, Vols 33-24, p. 19.

Cruikshank was a friend of Charles Dickens and illustrated three of his works. He was praised as the 'modern Hogarth'. In 1863 the artist held an exhibition at Exeter Hall featuring the work product of sixty years from 1799 to 1863. The exhibit included "upwards of one hundred oil-paintings, water-colour drawings, and original sketches, together with over a thousand proof etchings from popular works, caricatures scrap-books, song-headings &c.'

A crush at the reception at Buckingham House held by Queen Charlotte. The scene is a Drawing-room in the court sense held at the Queen's House (now Buckingham Palace): the men wear court-suits with gold lace and bag-wigs or uniform; above the doorway appears the lower part of a portrait of the Queen enthroned, with one foot on a footstool. On the right is a portrait of the Prince Regent in hussar uniform standing by a charger. In the doorway, which is the centre of the design, an enormously obese man is jammed against an equally obese woman, their paunches dovetailing; she stands on one toe on his gouty foot. Behind them is the inner room, where heads are seen crammed together. In the foreground an officer steps on a lady's train (left) slitting her gown. A hussar officer (right), amused at the struggle in the doorway, drives his sabre against a much-distressed lady. He has a moustache, and is perhaps a German in attendance on the Prince of Hesse-Homburg. Behind is another officer, also with a moustache. On the floor lie fans, a shoe-buckle, the bag from a wig, &c.

Notes

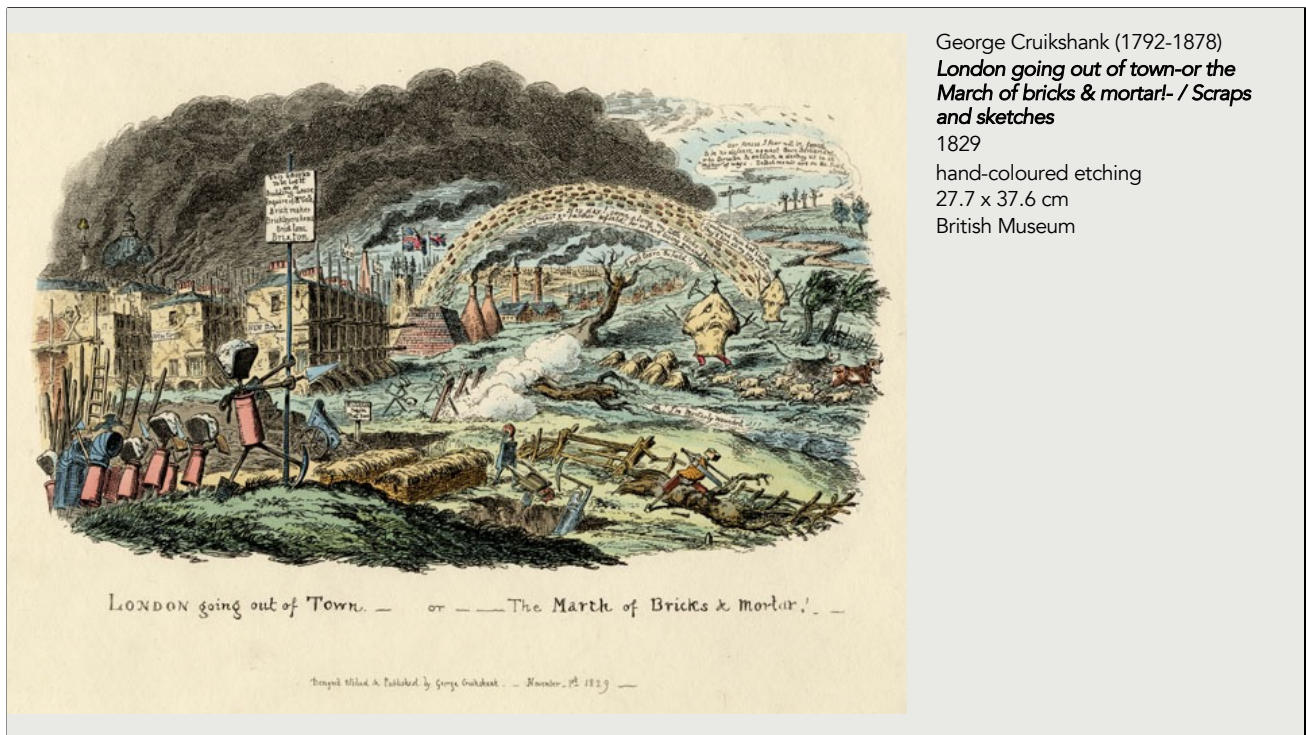
Princess Elizabeth (22 May 1770 - 10 January 1840) was the seventh child and third daughter of King George III and Queen Charlotte. She was a gifted artist and married Prince Frederick of Hesse-Homburg at the age of 47. She was allowed little freedom, the Queen had to approve every book she read. She

visited the seaside at Weymouth with the Royal Family almost every year from 1789 to 1805 for the sake of the King's health and she visited Bath with her mother in 1817, a visit which ended abruptly because of the death of Princess Charlotte.

Buckingham Palace was originally Buckingham House, the town house of the Duke of Buckingham built in 1703 on a site that had been in private ownership for 150 years. It was acquired by George III in 1761 as a private residence for Queen Charlotte and became known as the 'Queen's House'. It was enlarged in the nineteenth century by John Nash and became the official residence of the royal family on the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837.

References

British Museum website



George Cruikshank (1792-1878), *London going out of town-or the March of bricks & mortar!- / Scraps and sketches*, 1829, 27.7 x 37.6 cm, British Museum

That comparison to **Hogarth** was no idle compliment, and this print from **1829** shows exactly why it stuck. Living in Myddelton Terrace, Islington, Cruikshank watched the building boom consume the fields around him in real time, and his response was one of his most inventive images. Across a devastated landscape — a fantastical composite stretching from **St Paul's Cathedral** to the green hills of **Hampstead** — marches a robotic army of bricks and mortar. Its soldiers carry chimney pots for bodies, cowls and hod-filled heads, and picks and shovels for limbs. Their commander levels his trowel like a sword beneath a placard reading "This ground to be lett on a building lease — enquire of Mr Goth, Brickmaker, Brick Lane, Brixton." This is Cruikshank deploying what became one of his most distinctive devices: the animation of inanimate objects. Haystacks flee the advancing dust, crying "Hay day! Come along, we must go further afield." Trees protest "I must leave the field" and "I'm mortally wounded." The comedy is sharp, but the anxiety beneath it is genuine — **Hampstead Heath** was at that precise moment threatened by an enclosure bill promoted by its Lord of the Manor. Cruikshank lived long enough to see that battle partly won, dying at **eighty-five** in **1878**, though revelations after his death — eleven secret children with **Adelaide Attree** — somewhat complicated his legacy.

Notes

In 1829 if George Cruikshank looked out of the windows of his house in Myddelton Terrace, Islington he would have seen the extensive building work taking place in the Camden/Islington area. In this print he satirises the extensive building work taking place at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It represents a geographical amalgam encompassing St Paul's Cathedral in the far left (actually over a mile away) and in the other direction the green fields of Hampstead. The latter was in danger of losing its country feel as the Lord of the Manor was trying to push through a bill to enclose it.

Across a devastated landscape march an army of bricks and mortar led by one with a sign saying 'Mr Goth brickmaker in Brixton'. Chimneys are seen smoking in the distance and kilns also emit thick dark smoke while haystacks run away, fences are broken and trees uprooted.

The print illustrates one of Cruikshank's favourite devices which was to animate inanimate objects and give them human characteristics and actions.

The etching's power lies in its fantastically rich details. From the left, the direction of London, a robotic army advances into the countryside. Its soldiers have chimney pots for bodies, cowls and mortar-filled hods for heads, and picks and shovels for limbs. Their leader points his trowel forward like a sword and carries a placard that reads, "This ground to be lett on a building lease. Enquire of Mr. Goth, Brickmaker, Bricklayers Arms, Brick Lane, Brixton." A small sign in front says, "Rubbish may be shot here". The large sign is in line with two Union Jacks which could be seen as providing the last line of defence for the countryside or leading a new form of British invasion. In the background are rows of houses in an unfinished state, technically termed "carcasses". To the right is a summer-rick in a field, scampering away from the dust and mortar that threatens to destroy it, and followed by a number of hay-cocks, to whom it cries, "Hay day! Come along my little cocks, we must go further afield for we are losing ground here." A tree says, "I must leave the field" and another tree says "I'm mortally wounded". One hayrick says, "Confound these hot bricks, they'll fire all my Hay ricks". In the background trees say, "Our fences I fear will be found to be no defence against these barbarians who threaten to enclose and destroy us in all manor of ways. Detachments are on the road already". The houses are labelled "New Street".

George Cruikshank's work suffered as he aged due to health problems and

the development of a palsy. He died at age 85. It was revealed after his death that he had another family with a mistress named Adelaide Attree. Miss Attree went by the name "Mrs. Archibold" and lived near to the Cruikshank's. Cruikshank fathered eleven children with Adelaide.



17-02a Hogarth: His Life and Society

DR. LAURENCE SHAFE

WWW.SHAFE.UK

Isaac Cruikshank
*Too Much and
Too Little*
1796

We have traced the art of the everyday and the satirical impulse from Annibale Carracci's Bologna through the Dutch Golden Age, arriving at Hogarth — a man who invented a new form, fought for artists' rights, built Britain's first public gallery, and theorised beauty on his own terms. From his moral narratives to Gillray, Rowlandson, and the Cruikshanks, we have followed a tradition of sharp, unsparing observation that defined British visual culture for two centuries.

Thank you for your interest and goodbye for now.



A spiral collage of various artworks, including classical portraits, modern abstracts, and pop art, arranged in a circular pattern. The spiral starts from a small central point and expands outwards, featuring a diverse range of styles and subjects. Notable pieces include a classical portrait of a man with a mustache, a modern abstract with a large eye, a pop art figure with a gun, and a classical landscape painting. The overall composition is a circular arrangement of art history and contemporary expression.

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