



HOGARTH'S WORLD

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William Hogarth (1697-1764), *Beer Street and Gin Lane*, 1751

- Welcome to 'Hogarth's World'. I would like to **take you back** to early eighteenth-century London when Hogarth was one of the leading artists of the day. It was the century the **modern world was born**. I will use Hogarth's prints and paintings to take you into that world. They say human nature doesn't change but, as we shall see, what is important does.
- In 1707 England and Scotland united. The War of the Spanish Succession had ended in 1714 leaving Britain relatively well off and at peace for the next 25 years. It was a time of **rapid growth, it was the beginning of the industrial revolution** but there were **many social problems**.
- **Gin**. We see here a detail from Hogarth's *Gin Lane* of 1751. The gin craze was, according to one magistrate, the "**principal cause of all the vice and debauchery committed among the inferior sort of people**".
- Gin, and gin meant **any spirit**, was mainly an addiction of the poor but **the poor made up over 80%** of the population. At the

other end of the spectrum the **aristocracy, the gentry and the very wealthy** who made up about 2-3% of the population. They lived in a world of their own with the men gambling their family fortune away and duelling at the slightest perceived insult to their honour. In between were the **middling sort** that made up about a seventh of the population and were **Hogarth's main market**.

- **The Mob**. Anyone could become destitute, there was **little welfare**, violence was widespread and there was **no police force** (the Bow Street Runners were established in 1750). London teetered on the brink of being **ruled by the mob**, a new word that was coined to describe the large groups of the poor that could attack and rob at will. Many of the poor barely survived and drowned their hunger pains in gin.

NOTES

- The woman is taken from *Gin Lane* and is so intoxicated she has dropped her baby while she is taking snuff. In 1769, William Buchan's immensely popular tract 'Domestic Medicine' asserted that half of the children who died in London each year were killed by laudanum, spirits or proprietary sedatives".
- The **War of the Spanish Succession** (1701-1714) had ended badly for France and Spain but Britain avoided the worst consequences and experienced **25 years of peace** that enabled it to build its wealth. Seven years after the war ended the collapse of the **South Sea Company** in 1720 made and lost fortunes.
- The only bridge over the Thames before Kingston was London Bridge and in 1750 Westminster Bridge was opened.
- In 1780 the Gordon Riots, an uprising by Protestants

against Catholic emancipation resulted in 285 rioters being killed.

- Hogarth's life and work through his 'modern moral subjects'. He also painted portraits and historical subjects, and wrote a book *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753)
- ***A Harlot's Progress, 1732*** (six paintings now destroyed and engravings)
- *A Rake's Progress*, 1734 (eight paintings and engravings)
- *The Four Times of Day*, 1736-7 (four paintings and engravings)
- ***Marriage A-la-Mode, 1743-45*** (six paintings and engravings)
- *The Happy Marriage*, after 1745 (painted but never finished)
- *Industry and Idleness*, 1747 (twelve engravings)
- *Beer Street and Gin Lane*, 1751 (two prints)
- *The Four Stages of Cruelty*, 1751 (four engravings)
- *The Humours of an Election*, 1754-55 (four oil paintings and later engravings)
- *Tall Piece or The Bathos*, 1764 (his last work, a single print intended as a tail piece to all his work)

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<http://www.hogarthonline.com> provides a detailed analysis of

Hogarth's work, plate by plate

<https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/hogarth>

<https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0102159> (use Firefox), a master's degree thesis about the social background to *A Harlot's Progress* and *A Rake's Progress*.

Rake's Progress thanks to Met Museum

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

- This is **William Hogarth** when he was 48 with his pug which he called **Trump**. Hogarth's mother was a shopkeeper and his father an unsuccessful schoolmaster and publisher.
- **Debtor's Prison**. Unfortunately, Hogarth's youth was overshadowed by the chronic financial problems of his father, who was **imprisoned for five years** because of his debts. This **humiliating experience haunted Hogarth** for the rest of his life.
- **Coffee Houses**. As an aside his father fell into debt through an unsuccessful coffee house venture. This was a time when literally hundreds of coffee houses opened. When this portrait was painted there were over 500 in London. It was an enormous business opportunity. However, Hogarth's father insisted that anyone coming to his coffee house spoke Latin; the business failed. Showing that at a time of booming business you have to do the right thing in the right way.

- His father could not afford to pay for a proper education so Hogarth started out as an **apprentice to a silversmith** in 1714, although never finished. Instead, he became an **independent engraver** and his early commissions were for cards, book illustrations and prints.

NOTES

- George I (reigned 1714-1727), George II (r. 1727-1760), George III (r. 1760-1820)
- 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.
- Hogarth's father Richard was imprisoned in Fleet Debtors prison in 1707 (when Hogarth was 10) for five years. He had set up a coffee house where all the patrons had to speak in Latin at all times; the enterprise failed. In prison he could not pay for Hogarth's education and instead in 1714 Hogarth was apprenticed to the gold and silversmith Ellis Gamble (later partnered with Paul de Lamerie). By 1720 he had set himself up as an independent copperplate engraver and enrolled at John Vanderbank's Art Academy (St Martin's Lane Academy) which collapsed in debt after the treasurer fled with the money. In 1724 he enrolled at an academy in Covent Garden run by James Thornhill and in 1729 he eloped with his daughter Jane. Sir James was against the marriage until it was arranged for him to see *A Harlot's Progress* when he realised he could pay his own way in the world. He became a Freemason in 1728. His main house

was in Leicester Square (then Leicester Fields) and he bought a country retreat in Hammersmith in 1749, now Hogarth House, a museum. He had no children but was a foundling Governor of the Foundling Hospital in 1739 which was founded by Thomas Coram.

- 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".
- His wife Jane outlived him by 25 years and she guarded his reputation, kept his papers, ran the business and successfully campaigned Parliament for Hogarth's copyright term to be extended from 14 to 20 years.
- He drew on the moralising 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*, 1743-45
- *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.

BIO:HOGARTH

- William Hogarth (1697-1764) was born in London, the son of an unsuccessful schoolmaster and writer from Westmoreland. After apprenticeship to a silver engraver, he began to produce his own engraved designs in about 1720. 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.
- Jane was a businesswoman who lived 25 years longer than Hogarth (he died aged 66 and she was 80). She managed to persuade Parliament to pass a bill that extended her copyright from 14 years to 20 years.



A Harlot's Progress,
1732



A Rake's Progress,
1734



Marriage A-la-Mode,
1743-45

A Harlot's Progress, 1732

A Rake's Progress, 1734

Marriage A-la-Mode, 1743-45

- In order to introduce you to eighteenth-century London I have selected three series of images by Hogarth.
- The first is ***A Harlot's Progress***, a series of six paintings from which he produced engravings in 1732 when he was 35. Only the engravings survived; **the paintings were lost** in a fire in 1755. As I said he called them 'modern moral subjects' because they were intended to teach a moral lesson drawn from everyday society and they are realistic portrayals, there are no mythical creatures.
- 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 most prints after that were created exclusively as prints without any painted counterparts.

- **Hogarth's market** was the **middling sort**, a small group, **like Hogarth**, who went to coffee houses, read the latest periodicals, newspapers and gossip and they were appalled by what they saw around them.
- **Let us start with one of their concerns...**

NOTES

- 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.
- ***A Harlot's Progress, 1732** (six paintings now destroyed and engravings)
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A HARLOT'S PROGRESS, 1732



Arrival



Mistress



Prostitute



Prison



Dying



Wake

- **Prostitution**. The middling sort were **religious, frugal, tax paying, patriotic and literate** and had a growing level of disposable income. They could afford his prints and they were appalled by what they perceived to be the moral shortcomings of large parts of society—corrupt professionals, the aristocratic elite, the idle poor or **anyone who acted in an unchristian way**.^[1]
- Hogarth decided to go direct to these people and **bypass the usual publisher route**. He announced the sale of his engravings in the *Daily Post* on 8 March 1732. **For a guinea** (£1.05) the subscriber would receive six prints. The first he painted was number three, showing a '**common harlot**' rising at noon for breakfast. Visitors praised her pretty countenance and her **déshabillé** (pronounced 'days-a-bee-ay'), that is her scantily clothed body, and advised him to paint more.
- *The Harlot's Tale* concerns **one young and innocent woman from the country** was led into evil ways by the corrupt and uncaring of London. Let us see how...

NOTES

- *A Harlot's Progress* (also known as *The Harlot's Progress*) is a series of six paintings (1731, now destroyed) and engravings (1732). 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. After painting 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 allegory are reminiscent of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.
- Hogarth created the engravings using his skill as a silversmith. He produced a 'limited edition' of 1,240 sets for a guinea (one pound one shilling) a set. Pirate copies were soon being sold and Hogarth managed to convince MPs to pass the 1734 *Engraving Copyright Act*.
- The original paintings were destroyed by a fire in 1755 at Fonthill House, the country home of William Beckford (1709-1770).
- The middling sort are difficult to define as there was no consciousness at the time of 'class'. If we define it economically as those whose income was between £50 and £400 a year then in 1750 it accounted for 15% of all households. Aristocrats, gentry and the very wealthy accounted about 2-3% of the population of London. The poor accounted for the vast majority of the population. The term 'middle class' did not come into widespread use until 1913.

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'Female Prostitution in 18th-century England', Rictor Norton, [<http://rictornorton.co.uk/though13.htm>] explains the link between dressmaking and prostitution. The London Tradesman (1747) observed that "those [prostitutes] who pretend to deal only with select customers . . . take the title of milliner, a more polite name for bawd". It seems to be because of the opportunity to earn more money from a group of women. Dressmaking and tailoring often worked on the boundary between the criminal world and respectable world of wealthy clients.

[1] H. R. French, "The Search for the 'Middle Sort of People' in England, 1600-1800", *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Mar., 2000), pp. 277-293 (17 pages)

[2] L. D. Schwarz, 'Income Distribution and Social Structure in London in the Late Eighteenth Century', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 32, No. 2 (May, 1979), pp. 250-259 (10 pages), published by Wiley



Plate 1: *A Harlot's Progress, Innocence Betrayed*, 1732

- This shows a young woman arriving at the Bell Inn and being led astray by an older woman. On the left is the wagon in which the young woman arrived from York. Note that it is a wagon not a coach. A wagon was the cheapest form of transport. The journey was very slow and passengers sat or lay among the goods being transported. The journey **cost about a shilling a day, about a halfpenny a mile** and as **York is about two hundred miles** from London the journey would cost about **8 shillings** and take **eight days**.
- The gentleman on the horse is a **clergyman** and he accompanied her from York and is now returning. He has lost interest in the fate of the young woman and is looking at a letter that is addressed to the **Bishop of London** ('To the Right Reverend Father in London'). Hogarth blames the clergyman for his **failure** to protect one of his flock. His horse has knocked over a pile of buckets and **their fall might allude to her 'fall'** which begins here. It has been suggested that the clergyman is

Moll's father which makes his neglect more odious.

- The woman's luggage is on the right and her trunk is labelled 'MH'. We find out later that the 'H' stands for Hackabout and there was a famous prostitute called **Kate Hackabout** the sister of a well-known highwayman called Francis Hackabout who had been hanged at Tyburn in two years before. It has been suggested that 'M' stands for Moll as this was a slang term for prostitute (later it came to mean a gangster's female companion) although it also meant "female companion" or simply "woman" and it was a familiar form of "Mary" (20% of female babies baptised in the 18th century were called 'Mary'). Hogarth might also have been thinking of *Moll Flanders* (1722), a popular story by Daniel Defoe of the adventures of a big-hearted woman with loose morals.
- **She has scissors and a pincushion** tied to her waistband suggesting she might be looking for employment as a **seamstress**. The rose in the bosom of her dress indicates freshness and innocence. As one commentator at the time wrote, "**the modest simplicity of her manners, her native innocence, the bloom of youth, all concere to give an interest to her person, and render her an easy prey to the wiles of the wretch who is addressing her**".
- The woman addressing her is the notorious Mother (Elizabeth) Needham who ran a brothel near St. James Street. Such women were called bawds and were **hated by the public**. She was tried the previous year for 'keeping a disorderly house' and fined a shilling and ordered to **stand twice in the pillory**. You may think of the pillory as amusing but she was so badly treated by the public that she died the next day. In other words she was stoned to death. On the other hand if the crowd thought that the person had been mistreated by the criminal justice system they were offered

refreshments and protected from the sun with umbrellas.[1]

- Finally, note the **two men in the doorway** of the inn. The man on the left is **Colonel Francis Charteris** who had **died shortly before** the engraving was printed. We know who these people are because Hogarth painted their portraits. Charteris was described as "**infamous for all manner of vices**" including being drummed out of the army as a cheat, lending money at exorbitant interest and running a bawdy house. His greatest infamy though was as a "**seducer or rapist of women**". He was **sentenced to death twice for rape** but both times friends in high places obtained a pardon from the king. **He ran a bawdy house and his technique was to put agents at inns to spot girls newly arrived from the country** and to offer them a job as a servant in his house. So that is what is happening here Moll is being offered what she believes is a respectable job.
- By the way, the chequerboard above the door of the inn does not mean chess is played here (chess was played at Hogarth's haunt, the Old Slaughter's Coffee House in St. Martin's Lane) it meant it was **licensed to sell strong spirits**.

NOTES

- You may wonder how accurate Hogarth's scenes were. Well, prostitution **was** rife. It was a necessity for many poor women and a convenience for men of all social classes so it was tolerated (although brothel keeping was banned in 1751). It was not until the nineteenth century that prostitution was regarded as a social evil and criminalised in the Vagrancy Act of 1824.
- The journey from York cost about 8 shillings, what a general labourer earned in a week and what a clergyman earned in a

day (assuming a five day week).

- From newspaper reports we know **men's rationale** for why women became prostitutes changed during the century, in the first half most men thought women became prostitutes to satisfy their lust or because they thought they could make a fortune and gradually in the second half men increasingly saw it as a necessity for poor women in order to survive. This series by Hogarth was part of bringing about that change.
- Moll has a lot of luggage so appears to have arrived in London for an extended period and is probably looking for employment. The luggage tag round the goose's neck reads, "For my Loving Cousin in Tems Street in London" ('For my loving cousin in Thames Street, London') and may be there to suggest our heroine's fate.
- A stage coach cost 2d or 3d a mile plus tips at the end. The travelled a barely four miles an hour in good weather. In the early eighteenth century the flying-coaches were introduced these had better suspension that enabled them to travel at eight miles an hour and so halve the journey time.
- Across from the inn a woman is hanging stocking over her balcony and there are two inverted chamber pots on the railing.
- The **Bell Inn** was in Wood Street, south of the Barbican near what is now the Slug & Lettuce.
- Another confirmation that this did happen is from an article in ***The Spectator*** (1711, ran till 1712, not today's *The Spectator* which was founded in 1828) the writer describes how as he sat drinking in an inn he chanced to hear in the next room an innocent young woman from the country saying her prayers with an older woman that he recognised as a notorious brothel keeper. The 'beautiful Country-Girl'

was then offered the job of maid to the woman who presented herself as an elegant lady.

- The person in the pillory was at the mercy of the crowd who sometimes supported them. **When Daniel Defoe was pilloried for satirising the Government he was pelted with flower petals.**
- The use of the parasol and umbrella in France and England was adopted, probably from China, about the middle of the seventeenth century. The **folding umbrella** was introduced in Paris in 1710 and became popular but in **London** the first use was in **1750** but it was not accepted until the 1780s.

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[1] <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/extract-from-the-diary-of-francis-place-describing-the-pillory-1829>



Plate 2: *A Harlot's Progress*, *In High Keeping by a Jew*, 1732

- **Moll has completely changed and is now the mistress of a wealthy merchant. She exposes her breast and kicks over the table in order to divert attention from her lover who is creeping out by the door.**
- The gentleman seated in the centre is very well dressed and is Hackabout's provider. He was identified **as a Jew by the title** and because of the paintings on the wall behind which are from the Old Testament.
- **The smashing crockery has startled a monkey whose face mimics that of the gentleman. At the time it was regarded as the height of fashion for a society woman to have a monkey or a parrot and, for those who could afford it, a black servant.** The servant boy is bringing a kettle just as the table is tipped over and his startled look adds to the shock. Hogarth **was** concerned by the exploitation of Africans and the poor **but** he presents African child servants as commodities and his opposition here was the fashionable desire to own foreign

goods rather than exploitation.

- On her dressing table is a mask implying she has been attending the **fashionable masquerades** a form of fancy dress ball, possibly with her young lover. Masks concealed the wearer's identity and the rich and famous would meet to flirt and intrigue. At this time, 1732, the most popular venue was **Vauxhall Gardens** (then called **New Spring Gardens**) which had opened three years before. It was rumoured at the time that the idea for Vauxhall Gardens came from Hogarth.

NOTES

- In **1290 Edward I had banished Jews from England** and they were only allowed to return in 1656. If he is Jewish then Hogarth may have included him as an exotic rarity as there were only 7-8,000 Jewish families living in the country. It is also possible he disliked Jews and is making fun of them by showing the gentleman being cuckolded and her lover escaping.
- The two large pictures on the wall behind are scenes from the Bible that tell a moral tale. They are placed there to indicate he is Jewish as they are from the Old Testament. On the left is a scene from the **story of Jonah** (Jonah 4:8) when God protects him from the heat of the sun with a gourd which God then destroys leaving Jonah to suffer in the heat of the desert. Hogarth may be suggesting that Hackabout's provider has been protecting her but that protection will soon end. The second picture shows **King Uzzah who is struck dead** by God for **touching the Ark of the Covenant** from Samuel 6:1-5. This may complete the picture on the left by adding that if you break God's commandments you will die. The two small pictures have been identified and are of two well-known freethinkers. Below Ark of the Covenant is

Thomas Woolaston (1670-1733) who “wrote a defence of the Christian religion against the Jews”.

- We shall see that Hogarth frequently employed Old Master painting in his work. Hogarth that that patrons and connoisseurs valued Italian and French artists too highly and more respect should be given to British artists. Including them as small items on the wall was a way of diminishing them and using them make an amusing or satirical point further reduced them to mere accessories.
- **Vauxhall Gardens** was called New Spring Gardens until 1785. **Tickets cost one shilling**, when a **general labourer earned about 8s a week**, a skilled engineer 16s a week and a **clergyman nearly £2 a week**. Teachers were the lowest paid at about 6s a week. Tickets for large events cost more, the opening in 1732 cost one guinea, a jubilee in 1786 attended by 61,000 people cost half a guinea and in 1813 entry to a grand fete cost two and a half guineas. Standard entry increased over the years and was 4s 6d in 1821. In the 1850s the standards fell and it closed in 1859.

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Plate 3: *A Harlot's Progress*, *The Compleat Trull at her Lodging in Drury Lane*, 1732 ('Trull' is an archaic term for a prostitute)

- Hackabout has gone from being a fashionable, well kept mistress to a **common prostitute**.
- **Prostitution**. In the eighteenth century **prostitution was organised by women** and was **largely a front for theft**. A women or often a pair of women would search the streets for **drunk men and steal their valuables, typically their watches**, without actually having sex with them. Two women went together as they could overpower and rob a man. The profession most closely associated with prostitution was **millinery and dressmaking** which was regarded as synonymous with prostit. Male pimps did not take over the running of prostitution until the nineteenth century.
- Moll still has some fine clothes remaining and a **pocket watch showing the time is 11:45** in the morning. As I said, the watch has probably been stolen. **She has lost her maid and now has a servant who is making what at the time was called "a**

slovenly dish of tea ...".

- On top of the bed is a box labelled "**James Dalton his Wigg box**". Dalton was a **well known and bold highwayman** who once locked a group of watchmen in their watch house, seized a ship on which he was being transported and even tried to rob the Queen but he stopped the wrong coach. This shows that Moll is now associating with notorious criminals. The interest shown by the cat indicates that Dalton may be hiding under the bed to escape arrest.
- Coming through the door on the right are at least four figures. The person leading them has been identified as **Sir John Gonson**, a London magistrate who the previous year became (in 1730 and 31) **the 'harlot hunting magistrate' who would descend on 'night houses' and prosecute the prostitutes he found**. The other men are bailiffs who may have come to seize the watch she is holding after a complaint the previous night from a disgruntled client.
- Finally, **the witches hat and broom** fixed to the wall could be fancy dress for attending a masquerade or, more likely, an item for satisfying flagellants, a common perversion at the time.
- Many of Hogarth's interiors have pictures on the walls that add another layer of meaning. For example, top left is a print of Titian's *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (1542) so Hogarth may be saying that like Isaac she deserves mercy. The two portraits under the window perhaps indicate her ideals. On the left is '**Capt. Mackheath**', a character from *The Beggar's Opera* (John Gay, 1728) who, although he was a highwayman was also a hero figure. The other is **Dr. Henry Sacheverall** (pronounced 'sa-chever-all', 1674-1724), a religious dissenter whose sermon in 1710 preaching against the Whig government led to riots in the streets and won widespread

support.

- **Moll is arrested and tried and sent to Bridewell prison...**

NOTES

- At this time having a mistress was common and even mentioned with a 'knowing wink' between gentlemen but it was considered immoral by the majority of the middle-class. Brothels were also common and brothel keepers renowned although they were illegal and the public treated anyone associated with them harshly as we have seen.
- One commentator referred to "the deplorable appearance of every object in this wretched receptacle...".
- On the table is Hackabout's breakfast. A knife hangs over the edge of the table, reminiscent of Dutch still life painting where it represents the fragility of life in the balance and also sometimes it is used as a phallic symbol. There is also a small bowl, a loaf of bread and some butter resting on a piece of paper that has written on it 'Pastoral letter to.' Pastoral letters were sent out by the Bishop of London, Edmund Gibson warning about the dangers of masquerades and placing butter on the paper indicates Hackabout view of his opinion.
- The table on the right contains numerous items , the most notable are a letter addressed to Md. Hackabout in the drawer and a pewter measure on the floor with Drury Lane written on it, an area where prostitutes and brothels flourished.
- The witches hat might be associated with sadomasochistic practices or with witchcraft and female power. By the early eighteenth century most educated people were sceptical about the existence of witchcraft. The last woman executed

for witchcraft was Mary Hicks in 1716. She and her nine-year-old daughter were found guilty of making people and animals sick and of raising a storm at sea and they were both hanged.

- On the window sill are **two bottles of medicine** indicating she is already suffering from some disease.



Plate 4: *A Harlot's Progress, In Bridewell Beating Hemp*, 1732

- The location changes once again and we see Moll **beating hemp in prison**. The prison is usually identified as **Bridewell Prison**, near Blackfriars, and near Fleet Prison. She is **dressed in fine clothes** which she may have worn to impress the magistrate or she might have wanted to look her best or it might simply be the one she was wearing when she was arrested in the last scene.
- Beating hemp was a **common employment** for prostitutes and was a step in preparing hemp fibres for weaving. Hemp's Latin name is *cannabis* (*cannabis sativa*, along with bamboo among the fastest growing plants on Earth) and is used **to make fabric, rope and sail canvas**. In fact the word **canvas is derived from the word cannabis**. Beating hemp stalks to soften them and separate the fibres was extremely hard work, some said worse than breaking stones and prisoners had to work from sunrise to sunset.
- Moll is **clearly distressed** and is being urged to work harder by

the labour-master. He is pointing to a chain with a ring at the end used to shackle prisoners to the block. **The labour-master forces prisoners to work** using a whip or a cane as he takes all the profit from hemp making. The whipping of women prisoners was not abolished until 1792 thanks to the prison reform movement.

- The **one-eyed woman** next to him, who might be his wife, is **fingering her bonnet ribbons** and her dress fabric. We know from testimonies that well dressed women often had their fine clothes taken in prison. It is possible Moll has offered her lace in exchange for escaping punishment.
- Behind them a man in **hanging by his wrists** from the stocks on which is written "**Better to Work than Stand thus**".
- There are **eight other people** in the scene, a gentleman wearing a fancy coat with his tricorne hat hanging behind him. On the floor in front of him is a **torn eight of diamonds** card indicating he is a **gambler** and perhaps tore the card in anger at his fate. Next to the right is a younger person leaning on her mallet and two other women beating hemp. There is a whipping post behind them with the words "**The Wages of Idleness**" written on it and to their right is a black woman with another person half hidden behind her. The object hanging on the wall is a petticoat and on the back wall is a shutter with a crude figure drawn on it with "**Sir J G**" written above it. This refers to the magistrate previously mentioned **Sir John Gonson**.
- Finally the two women on the right are not beating hemp. The one on the left is the servant from the previous picture who is now wearing Moll's shoes and laughing at her plight although she stays with to the end. The woman next to her is "**destroying vermin in her clothes**" as one commentator at

the time wrote (Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth's Graphic Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 147). The prison was rife with fleas and lice.

NOTES

- The Unlawful Games Act 1541 made virtually all gambling illegal. The law was never enforced, but it did mean that gambling debts could not be collected through court action. Laws were brought in to limit the stake to £100 and the aristocracy were advised to gamble only with themselves to avoid cheats. The gentleman shown above may be a card-sharp as is indicated by the torn, possibly forged playing card, as the eight never has four diamonds in a row, but three, two and three.

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[http://www.histecon.magd.cam.ac.uk/docs/crump_perils.pdf,
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- <https://www.londonlives.org/static/Bridewell.jsp>



Plate 5: *A Harlot's Progress, In a High Salivation (sic) at the Point of Death*, 1732

- It is now **four of five years later** which we can tell from the age of her son, the boy next to her. She is **wrapped in sweating blankets** and is **dying or has just died**. Her **son is turning a piece of meat** hanging in front of the fire.
- Her servant now seems to be defending her from the two gentlemen who have been identified as **Dr Misaubin** (pronounced 'mees-au-ban') and the seated **Dr Rock**. Both were **notorious quacks** with fake cure-all medicines. Misaubin is the thin man and commentators at the time said it was a 'striking' likeness. He is mentioned in *The History of Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding and was known by everyone because of his '**Little Pill**' that he claimed **cured all diseases**. The pill brought him a **generous income** even though he was so well known as a quack that Fielding caricatured him in his play *The Mock Doctor*. The other gentleman was identified as Dr Ward but he didn't arrive in London until 1733 and it is more likely to be Dr

Rock as his name is written on the piece of paper on the right. **Rock also sold a pill specifically for the cure of venereal disease.** The two gentlemen appear to be arguing about whose pill Hackabout should take and the servant is telling them both to stop possibly because Hackabout has just died.

- The woman at the left is going through **Hackabout's trunk** which we saw in the first plate when she arrived as an innocent country girl from York. The woman may be a **nurse or the landlady** looking through her paltry possessions trying to find enough to pay her for her work or the rent. She might also be the woman **come to prepare the corpse** and is looking for the nicest clothes to dress her in to be displayed at her wake.
- (CLICK) **On the floor is a piece of paper saying 'PRACTICAL SCHEME' and 'ANODYNE' with a drawing of what could be a necklace. These necklaces were sold as a cure for children's diseases and for what a typical advertisement called 'the Secret Disease', that is a sexually transmitted disease.**

NOTES

- Other details of the period include two candles hanging by their wick to the left of the door and a piece of what was called 'Jew's bread' above them used as a fly trap. There are medicine bottles on the mantelpiece and in the centre of the floor a small table has been knocked over sending the ink flying. There is a bowl and spoon which might have been some gruel Hackabout was being fed.
- It is a poor room with flaking plaster, a pile of coal on the right next to a bedpan covered by a plate inscribed "B...Cook at the ...". On the object which might be a coal scuttle is a

pipe, an old punchbowl, a Dutch spittoon and a piece of paper on which is written "Dr. Rock" and on which what might be Moll's teeth which have fallen out because of all the mercury she has taken to try to cure her syphilis.



Plate 6: *A Harlot's Progress, Her Funerall Properly Attended*, 1732

- Hogarth finishes the Moll's progress **with her wake**. She is hidden in the coffin on which is written 'M. Hackabout Died Sepr 2d 1731 aged 23'.
- On the left the parson has his **hand up the woman's skirt**. She looks pleased to receive his attention and he is so engrossed that he is **spilling his brandy** which may be a **metaphor** for another type of spilling. She is holding a sprig of rosemary which was thought to prevent infection.
- The woman to the right holding a bottle looks on disapprovingly.
- **Moll's son** sits under her coffin dressed as the **chief mourner** but unaware of what is happening. He is happily playing with a peg top. On the floor by the boy and on the coffin are sprigs of yew placed there because they were also thought to prevent infection.
- **Her drunken madam mourns** on the far right with a jug

labelled 'Nants', that is brandy (or armagnac, from the Nantes area of France and inferior to cognac), beside her. Another mourner above her is a prostitute who pretends to mourn while she **steals the undertaker's handkerchief** another common article stolen by prostitutes.

- **The white hat hanging next to the coat of arms** is a sad reminder of her original innocence, it is the one she wore when she first arrived in London.

NOTES

- **The house has an ironic coat of arms hanging on the back wall. It has three spigots of taps indicating flowing alcohol, the 'spill' of the parson and Hackabout life spilt.**
- Behind her two more prostitutes are talking and one is showing the other her finger while behind them a woman adjusts her appearance in the mirror.

A RAKE'S PROGRESS, 1734



Inheritance



High Life



Low Life



Saved



Married



Gambling



Prison



Madhouse

[Return to Gallery](#)

- ***The Harlot's Progress* was wildly successful and Hogarth made £1,200 from the first series. However, soon after publication there were no less than eight pirated copies.**
- **Encouraged by the success** he started work on another series with a wealthy man as the central character. The idea of the **downfall of a wealthy rake** was a plot that his audience would be familiar with as it had appeared in various literary works.
- The fall of the young girl in the last series was blamed at the time on those around her failing to act in a Christian way but the young rake was responsible for his own fall.
- *The Rake's Progress* sold for one and a half guineas (£1.57) and it is believed he delayed publication as it was made available the day the new Engraver's Copyright Act came into force. **This Act had been promoted by Hogarth who was the leader of a strong lobby group of artists. It was the first copyright act to be passed by Parliament for anything other than literary works and it protected his work from copying.**
- Here we see the eight paintings on which the engravings were based. I will briefly show you each painting and then the

engraving as it is easier to see the detail in the engraving. I have flipped left-to-right each of the above paintings to match the engravings which are, of course, reversed.

NOTES

- Hogarth placed an advertisement offering nine engravings of which eight were *The Rake's Progress* for one and a half guineas (£1.57). He later placed an advertisement saying that as he had introduced more characters the prints would be delayed. **It is now thought that he intentional delayed publication as the first run of prints bear the date 25 June 1735. That was the very day the new Engraver's Copyright Act came into force.**



A Rake's Progress, The Heir, 1734, 35.2 x 40.4 cm, Met

- We see **Tom Rakewell** in the centre being measured by a tailor. He is trying to buy off his betrothed Sarah Young because he has just inherited the wealth of his father. Her mother is rejecting the coins and pointing to her daughter's swollen abdomen indicating he has **made her pregnant**.
- (CLICK) The letters in her apron read "**Dearest Life ... & marry you ...**" And another "**To Mrs Sarah Young in Oxford.**" Meanwhile, behind his back, his lawyer is robbing him.
- **We shall see how Rakewell rejects the middling sort's values of duty, marriage and thrift while Sara Young embodies their values of good nature, patience and loyalty.** Tom's father is also criticised, he is shown in the picture above the fireplace 'raking in' gold—there are multiple associations for the name 'Rakewell'.
- The man on the ladder is tacking mourning cloth to the moulding and as he does so a part of the moulding falls and some coins drop from the hole. Below the coins is a portrait of a

gentleman wearing a fur lined hat and there is a matching hat on the mantelpiece. This suggests the room belonged to this man and he has recently died.

- The book at the bottom left mentions "**My Son Tom**" so we can assume it is Tom in the centre of the room. We find on the next Plate that their name is Rakewell which is appropriate for the father as he raked in money and for the son as he is a rake.
- (CLICK) **This is a later version of the print and we see** Hogarth changed the memo book for a bible whose cover has been cut to make a sole for a shoe. This is a pun, the book whose aim is to save the soul has literally been used to save a sole. Note how changed the look of Tom and Sarah.
- Commentators at the time immediately deduce from his vacant face that Tom Rakewell is "**formed by nature for a DUPE**". To illustrate this, behind Tom Rakewell **a person is taking money from a sack**. Some commentators say he is the family steward, an appraiser, or the undertaker but another states that the **old, uncurled tie-wig and the baize bag under his right arm clearly identify him as a lawyer**.
- **The question is, what will Tom do with the fortune he has inherited from his father?**

NOTES

- Written on the book at the bottom left of the first engraving is "Memodns: 1721 May 3d. My Son Tom Came from Oxford 4th. Dined. At the French Ordinance 5th. Of June--Put of my bad Shilling—".
- On the table the document starts "An Inventory of ..." and others includes "Mortgages", 'India Bonds' and 'Fines & Recoverys'. The casket in front of him has bags of coins

labelled '1000', '2000' and '3000'.

- The eight paintings in William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress* tell the story of Tom Rakewell, a young man who follows a path of vice and self-destruction after inheriting a fortune from his miserly father, finally ending up deranged and penniless in Bedlam, after his failure to establish himself in society. It was Hogarth's second 'modern moral subject', and followed the hugely successful *A Harlot's Progress* (1730)." (Soane Museum)
- "Tom Rakewell, the son of a recently-deceased financier, has arrived home after inheriting his fortune. The scene is full of details underlining the wealth that has been hoarded in this unkempt, gloomy house. The family steward seated at the table, furtively steals some money. Tom, being fitted for a new suit, is seen attempting to pay off his pregnant lover/fiancée, Sarah Young, who stands weeping at the door holding a wedding ring in her hand. Sarah's mother angrily rejects the handful of gold coins being offered by Tom." (Tate)
- The note on the chair under the bold of cloth in the first version reads "London Bought of Wm. Tothall Wollen Draper in Covent garden."
- By the fireplace is an old woman carrying sticks perhaps on Tom's instruction as his father was too stingy to light a fire.
- The cat is described as half-starved and looking for food.

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A Rake's Progress, The Levée (pronounced 'le-vee'), 1734, 35.2 x 40.4 cm, Met

THE LEVÉE

- He is clearly spending the money and living the high-life. A few years have passed and Tom is in his London home at his morning levée (pronounced 'levy'), attended by musicians and other hangers-on all dressed in expensive costumes. London was described at the time as England's 'only great city' and Tom has assumed what he considers the manners and dress of a gentleman.
- (CLICK) In his right hand he holds a note which reads "Sr. the Capt. Is a Man of Honour, his **Sword may Serve** you yrs. Wm. Stab." Tom is looking at the man who brought it, a **surly looking person** wearing a three-cornered hat. Behind him is a man blowing a hunting horn adding to the noise and suggesting Tom hunts. Bottom right a jockey holds a cup engraved "**Won at Epsom. Silly Tom**" suggesting Tom owns a racehorse.

- **To the left of Tom is a man holding a paper on which is written 'Garden Plan'. The man is either the landscape gardener William Kent or Charles Bridgeman, gardener to George I and George II** (who replanned Kensington Gardens, designed Stowe, advised Pope on his pleasure gardens at Twickenham and who invented the haha').
- In front of the gardener is a French dancing master and we know **Hogarth strongly disliked all foreigners**, particularly the French, so he has made this figure a caricature.
- The man with **his arms folded** is the **prize fighter James Figg**, pugilistic champion of England for 15 years. A typical fight consisted of a sword fight, a prize fight and a fight using cudgels and Figg was a master in all three, particularly swordsmanship.
- In front of him is a man adopting the **classic fencer's stance** and he is said to be the **fencing master Dubois** who was killed the year this was produced in a duel with an Irishman who coincidentally was also called Dubois. Dubois was French and his recent death may be the reason he is included.
- **Finally, the person at the harpsichord could be** (George Frederic) **Handel** (1685-1759) (or his rival Niccola Porpora to whom he was losing business). Handel in his younger days was famous for his drawing room recitals on the harpsichord. The book whose page he is about to turn reads **"The Rape of the Sabines, a New Opera", a fictional opera**, and a list of performers **including two of Handel's singers**. The scroll behind him contains a list of the gifts given to a famous singer called Farinelli. Italian opera was described at the time as **"the most frivolous of all amusements"** and Hogarth adds another twist with the title of the opera. The castrati, eunuchs, will be raping the

sopranos who at the time were notoriously loose women. So this completes the picture of Tom being led astray by the tastes and dictates of fashionable society.

NOTES

- Behind them there are three pictures on the wall. The two cocks refer to another of Tom's sports, cock fighting and the central picture is the ***Judgement of Paris*** (similar to a painting by Rubens or Gerard Hoet, 1648-1733). At this time many pictures of this type were being imported from Italy and France and they were generally poor quality, heavily varnished and thoroughly **despised by Hogarth**.
- In the background in another room there are five men and one woman variously identified as a wig make ('perukemaker'), Taylor, hatter, milliner and, looking out of the window, a poet holding a verse titled 'Epistle to Rake'. Some commentators speculated that the woman is Sarah Young his former betrothed.
- "In direct contrast to the manner in which his father lived, Tom has quickly adapted to a life of luxury. He is seen here aping the fashionable aristocratic practice of the morning levee; an audience with visitors and tradesmen while the aristocrat prepares for the day. The crowd of people vying for Tom's attention, including those in the adjoining room, is meant to appear absurd, satirising both the taste and entertainments associated with high society and those members of the middle class, like Tom, who indiscriminately aspire to it. Indeed Tom's lack of judgement and pursuit of pleasure will be his undoing." (Tate)
- The singers shown on the right hand page have the middle of their names omitted but are Sen. Farinelli, Senesino, Carestini and Senora Cuzzoni, Strada, Negri and Bartolle.

Only Carestini and Strada remained as Handel's singers the others deserted him for Porpora. Hogarth is having fun with the idea of (eunuchs) raping virgins (sopranos were notoriously loose women).

- The scroll over the chair reads: "A List of the rich Presents Signor Farinelli the Italian Singer Condescended to Accept of ye English Nobility & Gentry for one Nights Performance in the Opera Artaxerses--A pair of Diamond Knee Buckles Presented by_____A Diamond Ring by_____A Bank Note enclosed in a Rich Gold Case by_____A Gold Snuff box Chace'd with the Story of Orpheus Charming ye Brutes by T: Rakewell Esq
- Under the end of the scroll it reads "A Poem dedicated to T. Rakewell Esq."
- Horace Walpole credits Bridgeman with the invention of the ha-ha but was unaware of the earlier French origins.
- London was

REFERENCES

<https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/hogarth/hogarth-hogarths-modern-moral-series/hogarth-hogarths-0>



A Rake's Progress, The Orgy, 1734, 35.2 × 40.4 cm, Met

THE ORGY

- We see here how Tom has been led astray and is on a downward slope. It is set in a well known London establishment called the '**Rose Tavern, Drury Lane**'.
- (CLICK) We know it is the Rose Tavern as it is engraved on the plate the man is bringing in the door. The plate is engraved '**John Bonvine at the Rose Tavern Drury Lane**'. The man at the door is the porter at the Rose Tavern and is a well-known personality called '**Leather Coat**'. He was famous for his strong ribs and for a pot of beer he would lie in the road and let a carriage wheel ride over his chest.
- Either side of him are two musicians and a singer, the woman with her mouth open. The singer is singing '**Black loke**' and she is pregnant. 'Black Joke' was a well-known **bawdy song** containing the line "Her black joke and belly so white", with **black joke referring to female genitalia**. A number of **ships were named 'Black Joke'** and about 100 years later HMS Black Joke became one of the **most successful anti-slavery**

vessels.

- So why is he carrying a plate? It is for the **woman at the front right who is removing her shoe**. She is a '**posture woman**' who will remove all her clothes and dance on the plate adopting poses.
- All the women in the picture are **prostitutes** and the one with her hand inside Tom's shirt has **stolen his watch** and is giving it to another woman. His watch tells us it is three in the morning.
- On the wall are portraits of the Roman Caesars but they all have had their faces cut out except for the most depraved 'Nero'. By the tip of Tom's sword is the torn out face of Julius Caesar indicating, perhaps, that Tom is about to be deposed.

NOTES

- Going round the table clockwise there is a black woman laughing at the whole scene, a woman spitting her drink at another woman possibly because they are arguing as the other woman is wielding a knife.
- A woman standing on a chair setting fire to a map labelled 'TOTUS MUNDUS' or 'The Whole World'.
- The next woman is being strangled or caressed by a man whose wig she has just knocked or pulled off. Finally there are two women drinking. One is trying to drink from the punch bowl and is spilling the drink and the other is holding a bottle and drinking from a glass.
- Tom's sword is not in its scabbard and on the floor in front of him is a nightwatchman's lamp and a staff on which is the arms of the City of London. This suggests that Tom got into a fight with a nightwatchman replaced his sword incorrectly

as he was so drunk and stole his lamp and staff.

- In the third state of the plate the unlabelled portrait is titled 'PONTAC', a very expensive and fashionable London eating house.
- "This chaotic scene is set in the notorious **Rose Tavern, a brothel-cum-tavern in Covent Garden**. Tom, lolling drunkenly on the right, makes a risible contrast with his studied elegance in Scene 2. Near the doorway on the left, a street singer performs a bawdy song, which is probably more suited to Tom's musical taste than the opera being played at the harpsichord in Scene 2. Standing to her left is a waiter who holds a polished salver to put on the table for the prostitute-cum-stripper, seen removing her clothes in the foreground, who will spin and pose upon it." (Tate)



A Rake's Progress, Arrest, 1734, 35.2 × 40.4 cm, Met

THE ARREST

- **Tom is being arrested for debt by bailiffs.** Tom is travelling in a sedan chair to a party at St. James's Palace which we can see at the end of the road (CLICK). We know it is **1st March, St. David's Day** as the man on the left has a **leek** in his hat. This man is probably one of Tom's creditors and has tracked him down and called the bailiffs. St David's Day was **Queen Caroline's birthday** (Caroline of Ansbach, 1683-1737 was the wife of George II, 1683-1760) which was a **Court day** accounting for all the carriages outside the Palace.
- Tom has been **saved from being arrested by Sarah Young**, the girl he had earlier rejected; she is holding out a bag of money for the bailiffs. From the contents of the box falling from her grasp she is apparently now a successful businesswomen, a dealer in millinery. Her gift demonstrates her generous spirit and enduring, if misplaced, love for him.
- At the bottom right a **group of seven boys was added to the third edition** of the print along with the flash of lightning notice

they were not in the painting. White's club is on the left shown by the sign over the door and on the bollard at the right is the word 'Black'. White's started as a chocolate-house in 1693 but became the most notorious gambling house in London frequented by nobility and the very rich. The boys are engaged in gambling and theft and the additions indicate that Tom has massive gambling debts that the bailiffs have come to collect.

- The boys gambling also shows how the **vices of the aristocracy corrupt society**. **The boy at the back right is stealing Tom's handkerchief**. The two boys in front of him are playing cards but the **boy wearing the wig is cheating** as his accomplice is behind the other boy looking at his cards and holding up two fingers. **The boy being cheated is a 'Mercury'**, that is a boy who sells newspapers in the street, which we can tell from the horn stuck in his belt (his cap read "Your Vote & Interest — Libertys").
- The boy about to throw dice from a cup has a star tattooed on his body and he is looking at another boy holding a jacket, possibly won from the first boy. **The last boy is smoking a pipe** and reading "THE FARTHING POST", a gossip sheet that was sold cheaply by evading the stamp duty. He has an inverted **spirit glass and a noggin**, a small container, so he goes round the streets selling gin.

NOTES

- Tom narrowly escapes arrest for debt by Welsh bailiffs (as signified by the leeks, a Welsh emblem, in their hats) as he travels in a sedan chair to a party at St. James's Palace to celebrate Queen Caroline's birthday on Saint David's Day (Saint David is the patron saint of Wales). On this occasion he is saved by the intervention of Sarah Young, the girl he

had earlier rejected; she is apparently a dealer in millinery. In comic relief, a man filling a street lantern spills the oil on Tom's head.

- A sedan chair containing a very richly dressed Tom has been stopped by two men with cudgels. This is not a robbery as one of the men holds a piece of paper with 'Arrest' written on it so they are bailiffs. The woman is Sarah Young, the woman he was originally betrothed to and she is restraining the bailiff and holding a bag of money.
- The basket at the extreme lower right is a shoeblack's basket.
- "The upshot of Tom's profligate lifestyle is shown in Scene 4, set in St James's, Mayfair. Tom is on his way to St James's Palace to be presented at court. Unfortunately he has been stopped by a bailiff who is about to arrest him for debt. He has been saved by the timely intervention of Sarah Young. In Scene 1 Tom had offered her mother a derisory sum of money to buy off Sarah who was pregnant with his child. Here she offers the bailiff her hard-earned wages. This demonstrates her generous spirit and enduring, if misplaced, love for him." (Tate)



THE MARRIAGE

- Tom attempts to salvage his fortune by marrying a rich but aged and ugly old maid at St Marylebone (pronounced 'maah-luh-bn') Old Church. This church was known for holding private marriages as it was some way out of the centre of London (CLICK). It was constructed in 1400 and was in a bad state of repair and was pulled down in 1741 and rebuilt.
- Tom has a haughty look and his eyes seem to be examining the pretty maid to his new wife's left who is tying a bow in the back of the bride's dress. To make it clear he is getting married the clergyman on the right is reading **a page headed "OF MATRIMONY"**. Tom Rakewell is holding a ring in his right hand and is about to place it on the finger of his betrothed.
- In the background, Sarah Young has arrived, holding their child while her indignant mother struggles with a 'pew opener' who is holding some keys above her head. They may be trying to enter the church to 'forbid the banns' or simply to change Tom's mind at the last minute by showing him his child.

- One of the two dogs has a glass eye like the bride and they mimicking the human situation.
- **The tablet fixed to the wall on the right contains the last five commandments and a crack runs through VII to X them suggesting these have all been broken, namely adultery, stealing, bearing false witness and coveting.**

NOTES

- The young boy at the front is placing a kneeling pad. He has a tear in his coat and was described at the time as a 'charity boy' who may have been hired for the occasion.
- On the pew to the far left are some evergreens which were described at the time as "**appropriate to the perennial quality of the [bride's] ... lust**" although they also suggest it will be a "**wintry marriage**".
- The box on the left is labelled "THE POOR BOX" and a cobweb covers its opening suggesting it is never used. The engraving on the pew identifying them as over the burial site of Edward Forset and it was reported that such an inscription was to be found in the old church.
- Behind the bride's head is the pulpit with 'IHS' inscribed on the front making a mock halo for the bride. Above the pulpit are two marks, the upper one was where the clergyman hung his hat and the lower one is where he rested his head and shoulders while preaching.
- "The scene is set in Marylebone Old Church, north of Hyde Park, which was renowned for clandestine weddings. Having squandered his fortune, Tom attempts to appropriate another one, not through gainful employment, of course, but marriage. Having rejected marriage with the young, pretty and faithful Sarah, Tom's bride is now an ageing, dumpy,

one-eyed heiress. Sarah can be seen entering with Tom's child in the background. Her attempt to interrupt this shameful ceremony is prevented by a brawl between her mother and an overzealous church attendant. Any hope of salvation for Tom now appears to have gone." (Tate)



THE GAMING HOUSE

- We are now in a **gambling house** (CLICK). The snarling dog in the foreground has a collar labelled "**Covent Gar[den]**" identifying it as in Covent Garden although it was suggested at the time it is the notorious **White's club**.
- At the back **a fire** seems to have broken out. A **nightwatchman on the left** with a lantern and staff appears to be **shouting** and two people at the back are alarmed. It was suggested at the time that the smoke and the fire signified that **Tom was in "another place", a reference to Hell**.
- **Tom is in the foreground on his knee** pleading for the assistance of the Almighty. His chair has fallen over and his wig has fallen off and we can assume that he has just lost the fortune he acquired from his marriage. Most men shaved their heads as they wore wigs all day.
- To the right of Tom is a **man with riding boots and spurs with a pistol in his pocket**. He was identified at the time as a **highwayman** but there was some disagreement as to what he was doing. He has either just lost his ill-gotten gains and is in a

dream and ignoring the boy next to him holding a glass on a tray or he may be **listening carefully to who has won so he can rob him later**. Behind him with his hat pulled down is a man biting his fingernails or possibly hiding his face who may be an accomplice of the highwayman.

- On the **left** the man sitting is carefully **noting down something in a book**. He was later identified as **Manners, the brother of the Duke of Rutland** to whom the **Duke of Devonshire lost the great estate of Leicester Abbey**. Manners was the only person at this time who had **amassed a considerable fortune from gambling by lending money** to gamblers at extortionate rates. In the book he has written "**Lent to Ld. Cogg 500[!]**" And Lord Cogg could be the well-dressed man across the table leaning towards him.

NOTES

- The person on the right could be turning away from the gaming table because of the nightwatchman's shout and the man in black may have just also lost a fortune at the table. The person with his left forearm on the table appears to be the winner as his hand is about to scoop the coins from the table.
- On the right are two people sharing coins, perhaps their booty from the evening's gambling.
- On the left at the back are three figures one of whom appears to be very angry. The angry man is holding the blade of a sword and may be using it to club the seated man. The well-dressed standing man appears to be trying to prevent the angry man from doing any harm.
- "Tom is seen losing another fortune in a dingy gaming den. A number of fortunes are changing hands, underlined by the reactions of the men around the card-table in the centre.

Meanwhile a nightwatchman on the right sounds the alarm as smoke pours through the ceiling. Tom kneels on the floor, distraught. Like the majority of the people in the room, he is too obsessed with gambling to notice or care that the building is on fire. He looks angrily towards heaven with his arms extended and his fists clenched, railing against God or fate." (Tate)



THE PRISON

- In the lower left corner on the scroll is written "**Being a new Scheme for paying ye Debts of ye. Nation by T: L: now a prisoner in the Fleet**". This shows Tom has been incarcerated in Fleet Prison, a prison for debtors. It was on the east side of Farrington Street alongside the Fleet stream, a notorious open sewer (CLICK).
- The head of the prison was the warden who was appointed by patent. This entitled the holder to sell the rights to the highest bidder. **People bid to run the prison** because of the extortionate fees they could charge the prisoners for liberties such as food, visiting rights and even the right to live outside the prison. Fleet Prison was known at the time for the **cruelties** it inflicted on prisoners.
- The surly young lad beside him is demanding **payment for a mug of beer**. The man behind Tom with the large key is the "turnkey of the Fleet". In his left hand he holds a book in which is written "**Garnish Money**", which is money taken from a debtor to pay his debts.

- Tom was described as "**helpless, bewildered, and despairing**". His one-eyed wife is standing beside him shouting at him with clenched fists. On the left is a group of figures, the central person being Sarah Young who has just fainted. In front of Sarah her young daughter is crying. Her mother is about to slap her hand to try to bring her round while a younger woman is holding a bottle of smelling salts under her nose.
- **He is surrounded by 'get-rich-quick' schemes.** From the papers on the table in front of him it appears **Tom wrote a play** which has just been rejected by John Rich, the manager of the Covent Garden Theatre.
- **Sarah is supported by a man with a beard, a ragged wig and a dressing gown.** He appears to be the person who wrote the documents falling to the floor which is **a scheme for paying off the national debt**. The war with France had resulted in a national debt that was double the gross domestic product and many people proposed schemes to reduce it hoping for a payout from the Government.
- In the background a man with a cap is holding **something in a furnace**, perhaps alchemy turning **base metal into gold** and above it is what appears to be a still for distilling spirits.
- **The telescope pointing out of the window** might be trying to solve the problem of **finding a ship's longitude** for which the government was offering an **enormous reward**.
- Above the bed behind him are a **pair of bird-like wings** and on the shelf are three receptacles labelled 1, 2 and 3 and two books, one with "Philosophical" written on the spine.
- The room is full of these crazy schemes indicating Tom's descent into madness...

NOTES

- Tom is incarcerated in the notorious Fleet debtors' prison. He ignores the distress of both his angry new wife and faithful Sarah, who cannot help him this time. Both the beer-boy and jailer demand money from him. Tom begins to go mad, as indicated by both a telescope for celestial observation poking out of the barred window (an apparent reference to the longitude rewards offered by the British government) and an alchemy experiment in the background. Beside Tom is a rejected play; another inmate is writing a pamphlet on how to solve the national debt. Above the bed at right is an apparatus with wings.
- "Tom is now in The Fleet, the debtors' prison. His previously plump wife, standing to his left, is now emaciated, indicating their desperate circumstances. In order to raise some cash, Tom has written a play, which lies rolled on the table next to him. Of course, this is as madcap a scheme as the alchemist seated at the back, attempting to make base metal into gold. This latest failure has infuriated his wife, who scolds him. Meanwhile, the jailer points at a ledger awaiting payment. With no course of action left to him, Tom has gone into a paralytic stupor." (Tate)



THE MADHOUSE

- **Finally insane and violent, in the eighth painting Tom ends his days in Bethlehem Hospital (also known as Bedlam), London's infamous and England's first mental asylum** (CLICK). It was founded in 1247 as a priory for the sisters of the Star of Bethlehem. It was first recorded as a hospital in 1330 and in 1547 **Henry VIII handed it to the City of London specifically for lunatics making it the first in England and the second in Europe** (the first being in Granada, Spain).
- **Only Sarah Young is there to comfort him**, but Rakewell continues to ignore her. He is scratching his head and it was suggested at the time that the black patch on his chest indicated he had **tried to commit suicide**. A man is either attaching shackles to prevent him committing suicide again or as some commentators suggested he is removing the shackles because Tom is dying.
- While some of the details in these pictures are disturbing to **21st-century eyes**, they were commonplace in Hogarth's day. The **two well-dressed women** to the right of centre are visitors

who have come to view the inmates. Visitors came to be entertained and amused and would **delight in the inmates obscenities**. In cell 55 is a **man wearing a crown made from straw** and holding a wooden sceptre. Commentators at the time noted that his is, in their words "making water". One of the women is feigning modesty by holding up her fan to hide what she has just seen while the other women is pointing and appears to be encouraging her to look again.

- On the far left in cell 54 is a **semi-naked religious fanatic** identified by the three pictures of saints in his cell.
- Behind Tom **crouches a tailor with a tape measure over his arm** and pattern samples pinned to his hat kneeling before an imaginary client, his pride in his work having overtaken his sanity.
- **Between the cells is a man drawing a diagram of the Earth with latitude and longitude marked.** He is apparently trying to solve the problem of establishing longitude mentioned earlier and for which the government was offering a large reward.
- On the right is a **man playing a violin** with a book of music on his head. The **man with the triple cross** and the pointed hat was seen at the time as imagining himself as the Pope reciting mass. Another person has a **band of straw round his neck** and a medallion containing a picture of a woman and was described as a "**melancholy lover**". On the handrail he has carved "Charming Betty Careless".
- **The irony is that, while Tom had set out to mimic the aristocratic lifestyle, he finishes by being one of its entertainments. Hogarth shows little sympathy for Tom while Sara Young embodies all that is good.**

NOTES

- The person behind is comforting both of them and in some versions of the print he is wearing a clerical collar.
- The letters "L E" on the wall may refer to the dramatist Nathaniel Lee who went mad in 1684 and was confined to Bedlam.
- One person near the centre is holding a roll of paper to his eye like a telescope maybe also trying to solve the longitude problem. The other is a crazy tailor with a straw wig playing with a measuring tape.
- "The final scene is set in Bethlehem Royal Hospital (Bedlam), an institution for the poor and insane. He is lying in the foreground almost stripped of clothes and thus his social pretensions. Sarah weeps by his side knowing that Tom is beyond her help. Like prisons and other hospitals, Bedlam was open to paying visitors. Within this scene an aristocratic lady and her maid are standing towards the left, amused and disgusted by the antics of the unfortunate people around them. The irony is that, while Tom had set out to mimic the aristocratic lifestyle, he finishes by being one of its entertainments." (Tate)

MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE, 1743-45



Marriage



Tête à Tête



The Inspection



The Toilette



The Bagnio



The Lady's Death

Marriage A-la-Mode, 1743-45

- This is *Marriage-À-la-Mode*, his masterpiece that he produced when he was 48. In this case I will just use the paintings as they are in good condition.
- The English were fascinated by the sexual exploits of the aristocracy and it was a common theme of literature. This series of prints tells the tale of the disastrous consequences of marrying for **money rather than love**. **The basic story is of a marriage arranged by two self-seeking fathers** – a spendthrift nobleman who needs cash and a wealthy City of London merchant who wants to buy into the aristocracy.

NOTES

- The six pictures were painted in about 1743 and published as engravings in 1745 at a **guinea a set**. They **proved instantly popular** and gave Hogarth's work a wide audience.
- **The paintings** were also offered for sale but **only attracted two bidders**, one of whom bought them all for £126. Because

of this Hogarth went directly to engraving for later sets such as *Industry and Idleness* rather than produce paintings first.

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The Marriage Settlement (or The Marriage Contract), 1743, 69.6 × 90.8 cm, National Gallery

- On the right is Earl Squanderfield who is suffering from gout, the disease associated with overindulgence in alcohol and rich food. **The Earl is proud of his family tree** which he points to showing his family goes back to William the Conqueror. The reason for the marriage is outside the window. The Earl has **built a new mansion** and did not check he could afford it. The architect stands by the window with a document that says "**A Plan of the New Building of the Right Hon.**" (Right Hon. is a title used by earls, viscounts and barons.)
- The man standing by the table is one of the Earl's **creditors demanding payment** and holding a document labelled 'Mortgage'.
- The man sitting at the table facing the Earl is the **Alderman. He is the wealthy merchant** whose daughter is being married to the Earl's son. The gold and bills of exchange in front of him is **the dowry** he is paying the Earl and he is holding a contract

which says "**Marriage Settlement of the Rt. Hon. Lord Viscount Squanderfield**".

- **The man leaning over his daughter is the lawyer, Silvertongue.** He is sharpening a quill while ingratiating himself with the bride by whispering in her ear. Watch out for him later.
- The **bride looks bored, discontent and resigned to her fate.** She is listlessly fidgeting with her wedding ring, which she has threaded on her handkerchief. She has as much interest in the Viscount as he has in her. Above her head is a painting of a Gorgon's head screaming from the frame as if horrified by the scene.
- The son of the Earl is **Viscount Squanderfield is on the far left looking away from his intended bride** while taking snuff. **He is foppish and effeminate and made to look absolutely ridiculous.** He has just returned from the Continent and is dressed in the **French style**, with a **giant black bow** in his wig and **red raised heels** to his shoes. Hogarth hated the French and is making fun of these fashions. The mirror he is looking towards is cut in half by the pictures edge indicating he is half a man and the black patch on his neck is a sign of syphilis.
- **The two dogs chained together like the bride and groom show as much interest in each other.**

NOTES

- There is a **broken branch** on the family tree indicating a disowned marriage that did not inherit the title. This could have been a **morganatic marriage**, that is a marriage to someone outside the nobility, possibly a reference to the marriage settlement not passing on the title to his son. However, although it was considered as a solution to the

Edward VII and Mrs Simpson problem it has never been instituted in England even when Anne Hyde, a commoner, married Charles II.

- The painting to the left of the window **shows the Earl as a young Jupiter**, surrounded by pictorial references to warfare. Jupiter is the Roman god of oaths and treaties and so Hogarth uses this as a deliberate irony as the portrait shows the Earl looking away from the proceedings right under his frame. Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece, which no non-royal Englishman had ever been awarded at that date
- The other paintings on the walls all are of catastrophe, disaster or martyrdom:
 - Left hand wall, top left: *St. Agnes* is stabbed to death (Most closely resembles the work by Zampieri Domenico)
 - Left hand wall, bottom left: *St. Lawrence* is burned to death on the gridiron.
 - Left hand wall, centre oval: immediately above the bride and groom a *Gorgon's head* observes the scene and screams from an oval frame (as if even she is horrified by the scene before her). Normally the candlesticks would be to either side of the frame, but to heighten the absurdity they are central and therefore block a clear view of the Gorgon's face.
 - Left hand wall, top right: the ***Massacre of the Innocents*** by Peter Paul Rubens.
 - Left hand wall, bottom right: *David Kills Goliath* also by Rubens.
 - Right hand wall, top: *Cain slays Abel*.

- Right hand wall, bottom left: *St. Sebastian* is shot.
- Right hand wall, bottom right: *Judith decapitates Holofernes*.
- On the ceiling the *Red Sea closes over the Pharaoh's armies*.

REFERENCES

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_à-la-mode: 1. The Marriage Settlement



The Tête à Tête (or Shortly After the Marriage)

- A very famous picture.
- The two are now married and show little interest in each other. The clock shows 12:20, many commentators think at night although some think it is in the afternoon. I think it is the afternoon because of what looks like daylight and fact that the steward has been trying to discuss the unpaid bills. **Viscount Squanderfield** has just returned from a debauched party or brothel. His wife has spent the morning at home playing cards and music. Music signified sexual activity and the two violin cases are placed one on top of the other with one open with the violin poking out.
- The dog is sniffing at what could be a lady's nightcap in his pocket. The broken sword in front of him indicates he is impotent. One commentator wrote that his pose indicates "**sexual exhaustion with only undercurrents of drunkenness and brawling**".
- **Interpreting the wife's pose** has proved more difficult. At the

time she was seen as more innocent than him and her outstretched foot an attempt to win her husband's attention. However, the eighteenth-century viewer found her “**shameless for appearing before the servants with her lacings uncovered, her knees apart, and without her hoops**”.

- Recent interpretations are that she looks content and pleased with herself and is taking a **satisfied stretch**. She sits in an **un-ladylike pose** with her legs wide apart, and has a large and **strategically placed damp patch** on the front of her skirt implying she has recently had sex. She is slyly looking to the right through half closed eyes and **holding a pocket-mirror** above her head – she seems to be **signalling** to someone, perhaps her lover, out of the picture. The upturned card table indicates that someone, her lover, has just run from the room. There is therefore a deliberate contrast between the unhappy impotent husband who has visited a brothel but was unable to perform and the contented wife who has recently had adulterous sex.
- Meanwhile, the despairing **Methodist steward** on the left is holding a clutch of unpaid bills and his expression indicates he is disgusted with what is going on. His religion is indicated by a copy of 'Regeneration' in his pocket.
- The walls are hung with large Italian pictures, one of which has so indelicate a subject that it is protected by a **heavy curtain**; but the folds have been pulled aside to reveal a naked foot. Perhaps indicating that further indiscretions are soon to be revealed. We know from infrared technology that Hogarth originally painted a Madonna and child but later changed his mind.

NOTES

- The room is copied from the drawing room of 5 Arlington Street where Horace Walpole once lived. According to a contemporary commentator it is “**an apartment furnished without taste, and costly without elegance.**” The room is in the Neo-Palladian style which Hogarth despised as he found it degenerate. Ironically, the interior is based on the home of his friend Horace Walpole.
- The bust's broken nose indicates sexual problems and "the candles burnt down to their sockets . . . are all emblems of a marriage out of harmony".
- Extramarital affairs among the aristocracy were "expected" if not morally sanctioned. A wife was expected to wait until after the birth of her first son.
- A famous Latin phrase "Post coitum omne animal triste est" which means "After sexual intercourse every animal is sad." may be referred to by Hogarth. It is known in modern literature as Post-coital tristesse or PCT and in a recent study (2018) 20% of men report recent PCT but only 3.7% of women.
- 'Regeneration' is another name for what is now called being 'born again'. Methodists (and others) believe that all our sins can be forgiven if we completely give ourselves to God.
- The book on the floor by her foot is '**Hoyle on Whist**' (1742). “**Talking is not allowed at Whist,**” we read in *The Compleat Gamester* of 1734; “the very Word implies, Hold your Tongue.” So we are to **keep quiet about what has taken place** here.
- The husband's likeness is said to be based upon Hogarth's friend, Francis Hayman.
- The dog is a Bedlington terrier and the dog is interested in the mop cap in his pocket. The blue ribbon was worn by

unmarried women. Married women wore no ribbon.

- The music is in a typical dance book of the period and the music is typical but the tune has not been identified.
- "The fireplace and the mantle, center of the picture, is a **horrible example of William Kent interior decoration [neo-Palladian style]**. The clock, a part of an elaborate girandole full of rococo or "rock-work," shows 1:20 in the engraving, 12:20 in the painting, and consists of a grove in which appear a fat figure (probably Chinese) sitting on a bower of leaves, with two candles attached, and a life-size cat on top of this foliage hungrily eyeing two fish. "If the branches were tenanted by the feathered tribe," J. Ireland comments (i, 28), "it would be no more than we see every day; it would be vulgar nature. To make it uncommonly grand, and peculiarly magnifique, they are occupied by two fishes." In the center of the mantel is an **antique Roman bust with a broken nose [signifying impotence]**, with Chinese and Indian objects, statuettes and bottles, clustered about it. Behind the bust is a painting of a cupid blowing on bagpipes, his bow un-strung, amid ruins. These, together with the candles burnt down to the sockets (in the next room), are all **emblems of a marriage out of harmony, collapsing, burnt out, etc.**" (Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth's Graphic Work*, 1965)

REFERENCES

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_à-la-mode: 2. The Tête à Tête



The Inspection (or A Visit to the Quack Doctor)

- The Viscount is **suffering from syphilis** and is visiting a French doctor. He is holding out a **box of pills** while the lid sits meaningfully alongside the affected area. The doctor is usually identified as **Dr Misaubin (pronounced 'mees-au-ban')** who we saw in *A Harlot's Progress* although he looks different here. The open book on the right identifies one contraption is for putting back shoulders and the other is a corkscrew. The inventions are credited to **Dr Pill** (or M de la Pillule), the nickname for Dr Misaubin.
- The meaning of this engraving has been **much debated**. The taller woman is opening a penknife and is **looking angry** while the Viscount and the doctor smile at each other. One interpretation is that the **taller woman is the mother** of the girl and the **Viscount has given the girl syphilis** so she is seeking revenge. The girl's syphilis is indicated by her **dabbing an open sore** on her mouth. **A twist on this that is more consistent** with the period is that the girl **already had syphilis** and the

mother introduced her daughter to the Viscount so that she could **feign anger and get compensation** and treatment for her daughter. This interpretation is reinforced by her clothes which are too large and too old for her. She is holding a gold watch, a status symbol that indicates she has made a lot of money from prostitution. Sex with a virgin was considered to be a cure for syphilis which might be another reason why she is there. Perhaps, he believes he has been cured and no longer needs to pills. His cane raised mimicking the narwhale's tusk which the gullible believed was a unicorn's horn suggesting all is fantasy.

NOTES

- The book on the right reads, "Explication de deux machines superbes l'un pour remettre l'épaules l'autre pour servir de tire bouchon inventes par monsr de la pillule. Vues et approuvées par l'Academie Royal des Sciences a Paris", which means "Explanation of two superb machines, one to put back the shoulders the other to serve as a corkscrew invented by monsr de la pill. Viewed and approved by the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris".
- "Monsieur de la Pillule" (Mr. Pill) was the nickname of Dr. Jean Misaubin, who also appeared in Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress* and whose patented pill purported to cure venereal disease.

REFERENCES

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_à-la-mode: 3. The Inspection



The Toilette (or The Countess's Morning Levee)

- **Earl Squanderfield has died and his son is the new earl and his wife a countess.** This is indicated by the coronet over the bed and the mirror.
- It was the fashion at the time for **aristocrats to hold a reception during their 'toilette'.** This was held in her bedroom and could be at any time of the day. **Hogarth ridiculed such silly conventions** and by this period they were starting to become seen as **old-fashioned, inappropriate and even lewd** as men could attend and the lady would be wearing her **undergarments.**
- The word toilette obviously had a different meaning then but you might not know that it derives from the French **word 'toile'** (pronounced 'twal') or cloth referring to **the cloth** that covered a lady or a gentleman's shoulders while their hair was being dressed.
- The person lounging on the sofa on the right is **the lawyer Silvertongue.** He has his shoes off and clearly **feels at home.**

He is **making an assignation** with the Countess as he holds a **ticket to a masquerade** and is pointing to a picture of one behind him.

- The **man in blue is Lord Squanderfield** in **paper curlers**. They give the appearance of horns implying he has **been cuckolded by Silvertongue**. There is another reference to horns as the **black page boy is pointing to the horns** of Actaeon with a smile.
- On the left is an **Italian castrato** opera singer (Giovanni Carestini, pronounced 'ka-res-tini', Senesino or possibly Farinelli) accompanied by a man on a flute behind him and **the lady in white is based on Mrs Lane-Fox**, later Lady Bingley, who was known to have a **passion for Italian music**. This is another satirical reference to what was regarded as the ostentatious and decadent tastes of the aristocracy.
- **But how will this end?**

NOTES

- Paintings in the background include the biblical story of *Lot and his Daughters* (Bernardo Cavallino, sold in London in 1740), *Jupiter and Io* by Correggio (c. 1531, Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria), and the *Rape of Ganymede* (a drawing after Michelangelo, Royal Collection, is the likely source; it is similar to a version by Jan Swart van Groningen (c. 1530-40) (1500-60), Getty Museum).

REFERENCES

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_à-la-mode: 4. The Toilette



The Bagnio (or The Killing of the Earl)

- **The new Earl has caught his wife with her lover, Silvertongue**, and has been **fatally wounded** by him. The Countess has been to a **masquerade** with Silvertongue as we can see the discarded masks on the floor. The Earl must have followed them, burst in the door and found them in bed. There was a sword fight and the Earl has been stabbed twice. The Countess kneels begging for forgiveness. Silvertongue has dropped his bloody sword and is escaping through the window.
- The papers on the floor indicate this is the **Turk's Head Bagnio** (pronounced 'ban-yo') in Bow Street, Covent Garden which actually existed and was run by a Mrs Earle. A 'bagnio' was originally a coffee house with a Turkish bath attached but by Hogarth's time it was a place where rooms could be hired for the night, no questions asked. Brothels had been driven underground following the death by stoning of Mrs Needham and they disguised themselves as bagnio.
- **Violence was very common in eighteenth-century England,**

this included official punishments, the beating of wives, servants and children, robbery, tavern brawls and cruel sports such as cock fighting and bear baiting. 93% of murders were carried out by men and one of the most common reasons was **male honour**. Men felt that had to defend their honour to the death for the slightest of reasons. This declined during the eighteenth century, so, for example, by 1780, in Paris the jostling of coaches in a narrow street could lead to a fight and possibly death but in England if the same thing happened bystanders would try to restore order and murder was very rare.

NOTES

- London's population was 600,000 to 900,000 during the eighteenth century. The homicide rate is difficult to measure as it depends of court cases and excludes, for example, the murder of new born babies which research indicates was much higher. One analysis suggests homicide rates fell from 10 per 100,000 in 1600 to 5 per 100,000 by 1700.
- Duelling declined over the long 18th century, pistols replaced sword and the purpose changed from defeating one's opponent to demonstrating courage. There was an increasing intolerance of violence, a new understanding of honour and the expectation of 'polite' norms governing masculine conduct.
- The painting on the back wall is a **shepherdess** with the face of a **well-known prostitute**. She is holding a squirrel in her hand a catchword for a prostitute. The comical legs underneath are part of a tapestry of the *Judgement of Solomon* hanging behind the picture. Over the door hangs a picture of St. Luke.
- Most houses had tap water but few had baths so people who

wanted a bath went to public baths. These had back entrances for modest people who did not want to be seen taking a bath. This made them well-designed to take over the role of brothels. They charged from five shillings to half a guineas and foreigners praised their decorum, discretion and cleanliness.

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The Lady's Death (or The Suicide of the Countess)

- **The Countess has returned** to her father's house, the merchant we saw in Plate 1, and she is **now shameful and torn by guilt and despair**. Through the window we can see **old London Bridge** and it is the view Hogarth would have seen as a child when he visited his uncle.
- The broadsheet on the floor by her foot has a picture of **gallows** and we can read '**Counsellor Silvertongue**' and 'last dying speech'.
- **She has taken poison** after having bribed her father's **dim-witted servant** to buy her a dose of **laudanum**. The empty bottle lies on the floor.
- The notice next to the bottle tells of the **execution of Silvertongue at Tyburn** with a report of his dying speech.
- **Only her daughter and the maid show remorse** at the Countess's death. The child is wearing callipers which indicates she has **rickets** which contemporary commentators associated

with over **indulgence** not with deprivation. The child also has a **black patch** indicating she has **syphilis** that she contracted from her parents.

- **The final irony is that the marriage was arranged to make sure the family line continued.** We saw how proudly the old Earl displayed his ancient family tree. However, **females cannot inherit the title** and even worse, **as a suicide, all the property and possessions she inherited from the Earl are now forfeit to the state.** This means her father will lose his entire dowry except for the ring he is removing from her finger.

NOTES

- An apothecary is berating the servant. In his pocket is a stomach pump and a bottle of syrup used to induce vomiting but it appears he is too late.

REFERENCES

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_à-la-mode: 6. The Lady%27s Death



SUMMARY

- Hogarth created a new type of art he called "modern moral subjects" that he turned to as, in his words, he could not make enough money producing conversation pieces to pay the expenses his family required.
- Hogarth's modern moral subjects were very popular and very profitable. They were not seen as amusing tales for the uneducated but as serious moral lessons for everyone.
- The first of his modern moral subjects was ***A Harlot's Progress*** which we saw tells the tale of an innocent country girl who was misled and led astray by society. It was seen as a warning to all women about the dangers of being seduced by men.
- In the second, ***A Rake's Progress***, it is hard to blame society as Tom was his own undoing. So, Hogarth is warning men that they are responsible for their future.
- He makes this even clearer in his next completed series called ***Industry and Idleness*** (1747, 12 plates). In this there are two apprentices, one works hard and the other is idle. The first goes on to become Lord Mayor of London and the other ends up a

thief and is hanged.

- ***Marriage-A-la-Mode*** is an attack on the conduct and morals of the wealthy and the aristocracy. Historians go as far as to say that the continual attack on the corruption of the ruling classes led to the development of an early form of **middle-class consciousness about what is right**. The shift from keeping scandal shrouded in privacy to its exposure in the press led to the **emergence of the press as a court of public opinion**; and, reforms were brought about by community pressure exerted through the press. And Hogarth did a lot to help bring this about.
- **Henry Fielding wrote**, "I esteem the ingenious Mr. Hogarth as one of the most useful satirists any age has produced ... I dare to affirm that those two works of his, which he called the **Rake's** and the **Harlot's Progress**, are calculated more to serve the cause of virtue, and the preservation of mankind than all the folios of morality which have ever been written."
- It is sad to think that nearly three hundred years later we are still experiencing such things as a dishonest ruling class exposed by the press.



HOGARTH'S WORLD

QUESTIONS?

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- Full notes of this talk are on the 'Past Lectures and Courses' page of my website. The notes give even more information and references to other sources of information.