

Low life: William Hogarth, visual culture and sociologies of art

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Abstract

This paper is an effort to understand Hogarth's unique position in early eighteenth century London, so as to grasp the rich complexity of his work. It begins by tracing two rival competing positions in the sociology of art, derived from Becker and Bourdieu, before taking a closer look at how Hogarth's work conjures up a new vision of the world, providing shape and meaning to the nation's changing understandings of morality, society, and the city. A fundamental transformation in the field of representation appears halfway through the eighteenth century and the interweaving of art theory, national identity, and systems of patronage are at the centre of this dynamic period. It is no accident *that* in Hogarth's world the main targets are those who seek to transgress their stations in life and cross class barriers. By combining two different sociological approaches to art the study builds a more nuanced picture of the artist and his work.

KEYWORDS

art, Becker, Bourdieu, London, representation

1 | INTRODUCTION

The sociology of art and culture is becoming one of the liveliest fields in the discipline. It is a key site for examining such central problems as the origins of modernity, the nature of social agency, the bases of social solidarity (and division), as well as the place of material interests and cultural values in social life. Yet the field remains 'beset by

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a fundamental uncertainty' over whether the focus should be 'on culture as forms of art practice or artworks, or should it broaden its reach to look at practices more generally and ways of life in an anthropological sense' (Hanquinet & Savage, 2016, p. 1)? The former tradition analyses the collective determinations of aesthetic experience and regards the work of the artist as the result of specific institutional forces. If this approach seeks to bring 'art "down to earth"' (Inglis, 2005, p. 99), then the latter emphasizes the 'ordinariness' of culture, how it is embedded in the routines of everyday life and the creative ways in which all kinds of symbolic material are worked over. Of course, this tension between rival perspectives can be used productively, which is my goal in this paper, through the case of the eighteenth-century artist William Hogarth. Although canonical sociologists have addressed art in their work, including Max Weber's writings on music, Georg Simmel's study of Rembrandt, and Norbert Elias's analysis of Mozart, it is fair to say that the sociology of art was regarded as an esoteric specialism in the discipline until the 1980s, if it was considered at all. The publication of two landmark texts, Howard Becker's (2008/1982) *Art Worlds* and Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*, did much to establish the case that the arts are thoroughly social and demand sociological attention. Their interventions gave rise to two distinct approaches: one associated with Becker and his insistence that art is a form of collective action, while Bourdieu offers a more structural engagement with how artistic fields function.

Becker's (2008 [1982], p. xxv) work draws on the symbolic interactionist tradition, where the negotiated order of any given situation is key, and he explains that his approach to art 'is social organizational, not aesthetic' and would not 'quarrel' with those who complain he is not a sociologist of the arts, but rather a sociologist of 'occupations applied to artistic work'. Instead of reifying individual artists and their particular works, his approach emphasizes their social character. Art worlds involve extensive networks of cooperation, convention, opportunity, and stratification among large groups of people participating in the creation of the work and the making of reputation. It has given rise to a whole 'production of culture' school, providing empirically detailed accounts of the organizational dynamics and divisions of labor involved in making art. His approach reinvigorated the study of culture and directs attention to the social work that goes into sustaining art worlds. Critics argue that by treating art as 'nothing special' the approach fails to grasp the meaning of an artwork and deadens the processes of artistic creation. To which the retort is that if 'production studies run the risk of eliminating "culture" from the sociology of culture, researchers who focus on the content of cultural products run the risk of...taking the "sociology" out' (Peterson, 1994, p. 184).

In contrast, Bourdieu's sociology of artistic production introduced more structural concepts like 'fields', 'positions', and 'habitus' to grasp how the origins of artistic worth do not reside in the artworks themselves, but in the social institutions where they are produced and consumed. It is difficult to exaggerate the influence of Bourdieu on the sociology of art and culture (see Hanquinet & Savage, 2016, for an indication), but there is a sense in which the artistic work itself gets lost amid the detailing of all the struggles surrounding it. The recent publication of Bourdieu's lectures on the nineteenth century pre-Impressionist painter Manet goes some way to addressing this difficulty. Over the course of eighteen weekly lectures delivered in 1999 and 2000, he provides a nuanced account of representation, through an analysis of what he terms the 'symbolic revolution that Manet started' (2017, p. 3) and the symbolic order he overturned. The importance of Manet, for Bourdieu, is that his successful efforts to secure creative autonomy in the nineteenth century constitute a key moment in the emergence of an autonomous field of artistic production. Bourdieu emphasized that a work of art is never the 'solitary expression of an artistic genius nor the simple reflection of that artist's social origins' (Lane, 2005, p. 37). Conventional art historians suffer from an 'individualist illusion' and have treated 'art history as if it were a relay race of geniuses' (Berger, 2016, p. 178) on this reckoning, while sociology 'flattens and trivializes artistic creation; that is it sets the great and the small on the same footing, at all events fails to grasp what makes the genius of the greatest artists' (Bourdieu, 1981/1993, p. 139). In a sense what Bourdieu is striving to achieve in the lectures on Manet is to think through the relation between what might be called "'the exception" (the genius) and the normative tradition' (Berger, 2016, p. 168).

My claim is that we should conceptualize Hogarth and his work in similar terms. When a successful symbolic revolution occurs, it overturns 'cognitive, and sometimes social, structures' creating distinctive 'categories of perception and judgement' (Bourdieu, 2017, p. 3). Bourdieu cautions against using classically romantic interpretations

of the terms 'revolution' or 'revolutionary', and is careful not to pinpoint a specific date or to assign all the plaudits to a single individual or group. As he later puts it, 'the subject of a work is a complex relationship between a socially constructed habitus and a historically constructed field' and that 'it is in the relationship between this habitus and this field' where a 'new manner of painting, is invented' (id., p. 61). If Bourdieu is at times extremely critical of art history, there are occasions where he is influenced by its interpretative procedures, so that his method is one that 'elaborates the social and historical framework of Manet's work, constructs his social biography and acknowledges the space of conflict and scandal that affected the criticism of the period' (Charle, 2017, p. 353). It is that approach that will be deployed in the following analysis of Hogarth and his world.

There is a tendency for the different perspectives to be viewed – and to regard themselves – as being fundamentally opposed. As Becker put it:

[the] notion that you can mix Bourdieu and Becker in whatever proportions you like, according to your taste for or tolerance of conflict, let's say, is not accurate. In fact, they ask different kinds of question and look for different kinds of answers and are not reducible one to the other. (Becker & Pessin, 2008, p. 385)

Pronouncements like this certainly caution against a superficial synthesis, not least since there are rival intellectual projects at work here, but if one is aiming for a more comprehensive, sociological understanding of art then recognizing where they complement each other will deepen and extend the range of enquiry in several crucial respects. First, it can highlight where the key disagreements lie—whether these be over theoretical position or level of analysis—and treat these interpretations as employing a distinct angle of approach, then there is no in-principle reason why they cannot be combined to investigate a dynamic set of social relations. Second, the strongly generalizing character of sociology itself means that concepts can be used in different empirical domains, and both Becker and Bourdieu are particularly adept at this. For instance, Becker describes the significance of artistic conventions enabling art world participants to interact with one another as the very basis of collective action, while Bourdieu's account of the different positions artists occupy in a field, whether they be 'priests' or 'prophets', is a recasting of terminology from Max Weber's sociology of religion. Third, their work is alive to issues of culture and agency, without ever losing sight of the institutional contexts in which art is socially produced and consumed. Once these circumstances are identified, we are better equipped to explain the artistic and economic networks that confer status upon certain objects and how specific meanings are lent to works of art over time. Fourth, the notions of 'field' and 'world' while drawing attention to a complex set of interactions, can also shed light on how geography matters, where connections can span vast distances or across a single neighborhood, which suggests that place and space have a profound, but often overlooked, contribution to tell.

2 | SITUATING HOGARTH

In order to understand the innovations achieved in Hogarth's art, it is important to begin by situating his work in the history of art. Hogarth's work conjures up a new vision of the world, providing shape and meaning to the nation's changing understandings of morality, society, and the city. Few would dispute the following view:

Art historians have long recognized that a major change in European art takes place in the middle of the eighteenth century, and that this change is particularly pronounced in England...From a purely visual point of view, the most obvious feature of late eighteenth century art is bewildering variety. The type of coherence that is normally found in earlier phases of European art simply is not present. (Wark, 1971/2001, p. 3)

Clearly, a fundamental transformation in the field of representation appears mid-way through the century and the interweaving of art theory, national identity and systems of patronage are at the center of this dynamic period. Consequently, we need to place Hogarth in the evolving art world politics of early eighteenth century London, before taking a closer look at the range of Hogarth's artistic vision to fully grasp the impact of it and the challenges it presented to the dominant aesthetic order.

If seen from within the parameters of English art, which was largely characterized by its mediocrity, then Hogarth's contribution becomes even more striking. As the Marxist art historian Frederick Antal (1962, p. xvii) put it 'no other artist built up an art of such originality and such high quality upon so slender a native tradition'. Before 1,700 England was regarded as a cultural backwater, most of its leading artists were hired from abroad, and the market for painting was limited, restricted to the nobility and aristocracy who had a particular taste for portraiture, while an old Puritan animosity toward images (as symptoms of 'Papist' idolatry) was only beginning to dissolve. Yet by 1,800 London was one of the leading centers of European art, rivaling the kind of importance that cities like Florence, Venice, and Amsterdam had achieved in earlier centuries. The significance of place to artistic creativity is a strong reminder that art, from beginning to end, is a collective social practice. In such cities 'locality and community determined what was known and talked about and provided the patronage, market, and service networks' upon which creative processes rely (Gatrell, 2013, p. xiii). It has been noted how London's St. Martin's Lane and the surrounds of Soho and Covent Garden was at the center of an increasingly commercialized and professionalized artistic community. The St. Martin's Lane Academy, founded in 1735 by Hogarth became the leading school in Britain training painters, sculptors, and architects for over 30 years. The neighborhood itself was 'replete with the shops of cabinetmakers and upholsterers, carvers, goldsmiths, and print engravers, as well as painters, sculptors, engravers and other creative trades' (Sloboda, 2019, p. 245). Their closeness 'meant that they collaborated in innumerable ventures' and from 'their collective energy—although there were quarrels and factions as well as alliances—a distinctive style spread through London and the country' (Uglow, 1997, p. 276). This urban market was especially important in Britain than in most other European countries, where patronage from church and court often played more a decisive role.

London itself was a marvel. It was the largest city in Europe, and no other city grew so fast—from around 600,000 inhabitants in 1,700 to just short of a million in 1801 (Paris was half the size). It was defined as 'the new Rome', due to its wealth, imperial reach, and social dynamism. It was, however, a Rome with a difference. As Jules Lubbock (1995, p. 7) explains, London was a city where 'the candlestick had supplanted the triumphal column and the armchair the imperial palace...[it] was the first modern city' (cited in McKellar, 2013, p. 107). London's creative energy was sustained by the wealth generated from empire, slavery, commerce, and invention, so that the city became the greatest trading and financial center yet known. Power and wealth were not solely concentrated in traditional aristocratic elites but were to be found among the increasingly affluent commercial classes. While 'Paris beat London in its aristocratic luxury consumption, it couldn't match the social *breadth* of London's market for artifacts, books, pictures, and life's multiplying conveniences' (Gatrell, 2013, p. xiv, emphasis in original). Crucially, it was the growth in mass consumption that provided the main stimulus to the economic take-off occurring in Britain at the end of the eighteenth century and in doing so it became the first industrial society (Mann, 1986, p. 451).

In this evolving situation, the artist was faced with two different kinds of employment: one sought the patronage of the older, patrician nobility, while the other catered to the 'new rich' and their tendency to buy rather than commission. Described as less 'hidebound in their tastes, they enjoyed the treatment of modern themes in their pictures' and thus 'constituted a new kind of market – one in which art was treated increasingly as a commodity' (Vaughan, 1999, p. 8). The problem confronting ambitious artists was how to balance these competing interests and we will see how these tensions played out throughout this paper. It is also important to recognize that the divide between arts and crafts was somewhat fluid. These were not yet two worlds, rather the distinctive art world that developed in and around St Martin's Lane was one that preserved certain features of the artisanal, communal, workshop-based model, which was the hallmark of urban European art centers for centuries before.

Yet at the same time, the artists and artisans working in this neighborhood deliberately cultivated the new commercial market, pursuing:

an economic orientation toward mercantilism, rather than institutional or private patronage. In doing so, they developed a corporate style, strongly influenced by the Continental rococo, or “the modern taste,” as it was known at the time and predicated upon an advanced and innovative concept of design. (Sloboda, 2019, pp. 246–247)

Much of Hogarth's own graphic work and his famous ‘conversation pieces’ were influenced by French rococo engravers and painters, though it was to a Low Country tradition that the London market especially looked to.

3 | EVERYDAY ART

In the century before Holland was the great economic power and its rapid growth was ‘regarded as something of a miracle’ (Antal, 1962, p. 1). Dutch wealth accrued through a mix of maritime trade, mercantile enterprise, and livestock cultivation. Initially a modest assortment of farming, fishing, and shipping communities, without a shared language, religion, or government, transformed themselves into a formidable world empire. It is in the Dutch Republic in the late sixteenth century that we find the emergence of a whole range of new genres and subject matter. The Republic provided a unique environment for enterprising artists to work in, with virtually no commissions from the Catholic church or a powerful court, the painter was no longer dependent on them for their livelihood and was, therefore, less restricted in choosing what to paint. It has been estimated that between 1,640 and 1659 alone, some 1.3 to 1.4 million paintings were produced in the Netherlands—a figure even more remarkable given that the population numbered approximately 2 million (Gaiger, 2013, p. 67).

Most artists worked for what in England would have been known as ‘the middling sort’ (in Holland the *brede middenstand*), a very broad stratum of the population ranging from wealthy merchants to butchers and tailors. It has been said that ‘there was a painter and painting available to suit every taste and pocket’ and so they ‘responded to their bourgeois clientele’s desire for pictures that were largely celebrations of the world around them’ (Wiseman, 2014, p. 9). These include deceptively realistic images of rural landscapes, tidy cities, calm waterways, intricate still-lives, and scenes depicting the mundane routines of everyday life in the Republic. Images of the interior of houses, for example, turned into a distinct genre with its own conventions, often taking the form of moral allegories on the virtues of cleanliness or of hard work. One of the best known is Jan Steen's *The Dissolute Household*, depicting a scene of domestic chaos where the various sins of sloth, gluttony and lust carries a message about the links between order and virtue, disorder and vice—instructing viewers to withstand the seductions of worldly pleasures (see Figure 1). Yet the moralizing is accompanied by a comic energy, playing on the collapsing boundaries between houses of license (bawdy taverns) and the family home. Dutch art was the first to celebrate domestic space, as well as to ‘satirize its disruption’ (Schama, 1987, p. 391). This tradition informed the visual art of William Hogarth to the extent that the question of his ‘Dutchness’ is crucial to understanding his position in the art world of eighteenth-century London.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was a key figure in it and his criticisms of the Dutch manner, from the President of the British Royal Academy of Art, for the vulgar nature of their subject matter was influential. While he found them technically accomplished, he insisted that ‘their merit often consists in the truth of representation alone’ and that it ‘is to the eye only that the works of this school are addressed’ (Reynolds, 1781 cited in Alpers, 1983, p. xviii). The implicit contrast here is with the prestige of the ‘grand style’ of painting associated with the Italian Renaissance and sustained through the state-sponsored academies of art then developing across Europe. Central to the academic art theory promoted by Reynolds and the academies was the classification of painting into a hierarchy of genres, with still-life at the bottom and history painting at the top – where the ‘subjects it represented (derived



FIGURE 1 Jan Steen *The Dissolute Household*, ca 1663–1664. Credit line: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo: Scala

from the Bible, ancient history, and classical mythology) were intended to instruct and improve' (Nead, 1992, p. 47). Like others steeped in this classicist and idealizing conception of artistic practice, Reynolds was measuring Dutch painting against aesthetic standards derived from a different tradition and consequently found it lacking (Gaiger, 2013, p. 67). Italian Renaissance art has served as a model for much of the writing on art history, generating a considerable volume of commentary and theory, to the extent that it is invested in narrative, while the Dutch tradition of 'descriptive' art is concerned with 'picturing'—that is the process of seeing itself, so that Dutch culture was ultimately visual rather than textual (Alpers, 1983).

The dynamic is one fueled by status, reminding us of the sociological point that it is not enough to simply situate art in historical and social context, but rather to analyze the complex set of relations existing between social groups, artists, and society. The value of Bourdieu's concept of 'field' here is that it focuses attention on differentiation and hierarchy, demonstrating how such networks develop through conflict, struggle, and opposition in various efforts to secure cultural domination. Market fragmentation is one part of the story, but integration is as important—where state formation consolidated monopolies over different forms of power, concentrating it in the

hands of cultural, economic and political elites. At the end of the seventeenth century there were three types of image-maker vying for cultural power in Europe. They were 'artisan-producers whose guild monopolies were progressively destroyed by princes, states and academies, independent producers such as Dutch artists who serviced the market in artifacts, and privileged academicians who were found in Paris and who serviced the pictorial needs of monarchy and state' and by the eighteenth century, it was the 'academician who emerged as the dominant player' (Fyfe, 2000, p. 3).

The tension between market and state is crucial. As fields are products of modernity, they become increasingly autonomous over time. They are always open and unfinished, but they are 'never entirely autonomous—the capitalist market always exerts a significant external effect—they become increasingly separated from, and independent of, the centralized economic and political institutions of the modern nation state' (Swingewood, 2005, p. 145). A significant feature of Bourdieu's project is an examination of the historical conditions governing the emergence of an autonomous field of artistic production in the nineteenth century, which undermined belief in the academy, exposing it to the whims of the market and new conceptions of the artist were forged. However, if we look to the modernity of British art in the century before it has been argued that the 'most significant innovations of the period were a result of compromise' between these competing interests: 'Hogarth, Reynolds and Turner all invested their "popular" art forms of modern life painting, portraiture and landscape with something of the artistic ambition of old master painting' (Vaughan, 1999, p. 12). In reckoning with the distinctive kind of modernity developing in British art, we need to look at these relationships in more detail.

The shift from patronage to public sphere and the open market is crucial. It begins in the 1600s in the Dutch Republic, but gathers pace especially in London in the eighteenth century, partly as a result of the limited power of the monarchy, which meant that the court dominated culture to a much lesser degree than it did in France (Barker, 2013, p. 17). France is especially important to this account, as it was the first to establish a powerful art academy in 1648, and academies became crucial institutional mechanisms regulating intellectual life. In many respects, Hogarth sought to distance himself from both the 'Dutch' and 'French' artistic traditions to establish the very 'Englishness' of his own work. Reynolds dismissed Hogarth by belittling him with faint praise:

The painters who have applied themselves more particularly to low and vulgar characters, and who express with precision the various shades of passion, as they are exhibited by vulgar minds (such as we see in the works of Hogarth), deserve great praise; but as their genius has been employed on low and confined subjects, the praise which we give must be as limited as its object. (Reynolds, 1770, cited in Gatrell, 2013, p. 245)

It should be clear that art in this period is now central to the formation of national identity. European nations 'competing for trade markets also competed for mastery in the cultural domain and a thriving national school of painting was regarded as an index of a nation's power and prosperity' (Nead, 1992, pp. 46–47).

4 | SERIOUS COMEDY

Hogarth and his work were bound up with the question of whether England should have an academy of arts, which was eventually established in 1768 (Fyfe, 2000, p. 107). These disputes were important in cementing views on what constituted 'great' or canonical art (Perry, 1999) and when we now think of eighteenth century English art it is largely the classical fantasies, history paintings, and elegant portraits that catered to the tastes and pretensions of the wealthy that dominates. Not least because of their 'sheer quantity and repetitiveness', but it is in this context that we can see Hogarth's approach to satire working as 'a source of mental health in the eighteenth century, for resort to its truth-telling enabled people to challenge absurdity, subvert their own deference and exact vengeance on their betters' (Gatrell, 2013, p. 217). We will question the extent to which Hogarth should be

understood as the people's artist, as Vic Gatrell (2013) evidently suggests, and while his work is often equated with the 'outlook of the rising English middle classes of the period' (Antal, 1962, p. xvii), this really only forms one facet of it. Of course, it does yield insight into how the distinctively commercial culture of mid- and late eighteenth century saw itself and the place of pictures for a middle class whose economic power had grown out of all proportion to its political power (Barrell, 1986, p. 36). Today, Hogarth is most associated with his depictions of low life and its material environments in what were then known as 'modern moral subjects', or Comic History Painting, that satirically dissected the vices of the age.

Hogarth was born in 1697 near Smithfield market, where London's cattle were sold, the son of an ambitious schoolmaster of modest means who became bankrupt after a failed business venture. As a result, the family were confined to the Fleet, the city's debtors' prison. The Hogarth's struggles were little different from countless others down on their luck, and the young William had to 'shift for himself' as he put it, as an apprentice in a silver workshop for seven years. It was here he learnt the engraving skills that enabled him to open his own business as an engraver of prints and of metal in his mother's house in 1,720. In that same year he enrolled in London's first academy of painting and drawing in rooms off St Martin's Lane, when it closed in 1724 he studied in Sir James Thornhill's similar academy in Covent Garden. He married Thornhill's daughter, Jane, in 1729, at which point his career took flight (Gatrell, 2013, p. 264).

Hogarth quickly exploited his family connections and by the early 1730s, he was thriving as a painter of portrait groups, as well as achieving some success with his satirical paintings. His studio was something of a meeting place for men about town: artists, musicians, theatre people, and assorted dilettanti. When he inherited Thornhill's painting equipment in 1734 he suggested that the artists should join together to hire a room in St Martin's Lane and re-establish an academy that would become the center of artistic training and community for most serious artists. Although Hogarth argued for the need to provide training, exhibiting space, and public access to art in the early eighteenth century, he also maintained a deep-seated skepticism toward foreign 'Academies of Art'. His academy would have no 'leaders' and he attributed the failure of previous academies to the 'leading members assuming a superiority that their fellow students could not brook' (cited in Uglow, 1997, p. 275). In France the Académie royale, founded in 1648, exerted enormous influence and several Italian cities also boasted academies, which had flourished since the Renaissance, but within them the teaching of art tended to follow rigid and hierarchical structures. These institutions were closed orders of artistic practice, resembling an estate system of stratification and were strongly associated with aristocratic cultural power.

One of Becker's (1982/2008) central arguments is that there is no such thing as *the* art world, rather there are multiple and fractious social spaces of art in which diverse creators co-exist. Although the St Martin's Lane Academy provided tuition, many of its members (including Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Hudson and George Moser among others) advanced plans for a more prestigious academy organized along continental lines, which would lead to the establishment of the Royal Academy in 1768. Hogarth died four years before it was formed, but he had made clear his dislike of the pomposity associated with such institutions, promoting more democratic principles in his own attempts to secure professional recognition for the practice of art in England. Indeed, the first print Hogarth published as an independent enterprise in 1724, was *The Taste of the Town* (see Figure 2) speaks to the cultural politics at work here. It depicts a bustling street scene of crowds attending a performance of the play *Dr Faustus* on the right, and a masked ball on the left at the opera house. Facing the square is 'The Academy of Arts' and each is the object of Hogarth's satire on the contemporary fashion for masquerades, operas, pantomimes and the pomposity of the Academy. Three foppish figures admire the pseudo-classical edifice, which to Hogarth symbolizes the decay in English culture, while debasing forms of popular entertainment command the foreground. The appetite for such spectacles at the expense of more meaningful drama is criticized in the center of the image, where a figure carts a wheelbarrow full of the unwanted works of such English writers as Shakespeare, Dryden and Addison, to be disposed of as waste paper (Perry, 1999, pp. 140–141). It is a picture capturing the dynamic tensions in the English art scene and popular entertainment at the time. Crucially, it is also one grounded in the observation of urban street life and this would become one of the defining features of his work.



FIGURE 2 William Hogarth *The Taste of the Town*, 1724. Credit line: British Museum

5 | PORTRAYING SOCIETY

Among his most famous pair of images are the *Gin Lane* and *Beer Street* prints of 1751, which were designed, he said 'to reform some reigning vices peculiar to the lower class of people' (in Jarrett, 1992, p. 62) and were his response to the gin-drinking epidemic then causing much alarm. In *Gin Lane* (see Figure 3) Hogarth depicted a depraved world set in the St Giles area of London, where it was said that some one in four houses were selling gin. The print centers on a gin-sodden mother reclining in a drunken stupor while her baby tumbles to a certain death and all around are menacing signs of desperation and decay. Feral children gnaw on a bone, buildings collapse and the only person prospering is a pawnbroker, doing a roaring trade out of the wretched misery. The clear implication is that 'all natural values' have been 'turned upside down due to the effects of the foreign import of gin' (McKellar, 2013, p. 117). The gin-making process had been imported from Holland at around the time of William III's accession to the throne in 1688 and quickly became endemic—it was cheap, plentiful and immensely popular. Hogarth's friend the novelist and magistrate Henry Fielding complained that 'Should the drinking of this poison be continued in its present height during the next twenty years, there will, by that time, be very few of the common people left to drink it' (cited in Moore, 1997, p. 13).

The didactic message from the *Gin Lane* print is one illustrating the devastating effects of gin on the starving poor, which is contrasted with the scene to be found in *Beer Street* (see Figure 4). Here the healthy, blissful benefits of drinking English beer is played off against the desperate, ragged gin drinkers. In *Beer Street* the pawnbroker's shop is the only dilapidated building, underlining the jovial air of prosperity among those enjoying their native drink after their labors. The convivial 'beer drinkers are hale and hearty, their fat contented faces indicating their material satisfaction' (Moore, 1997, pp. 94–96). It is a celebration of English industriousness



FIGURE 3 William Hogarth *Gin Lane*, 1751. Credit line: British Museum

and stout bonhomie, overflowing baskets bear witness to this success, and while the workers have paused to enjoy a break, it is clear they are not idle. The juxtaposition between wealth and poverty is a persistent theme across many of his compositions. As is a distinctive strain of patriotism, championing an aesthetic nationalism, which denounced 'picture-jobbers from abroad' who 'continually import ship-loads of dead Christs, Holy Families, Madonnas, and other dismal, dark subjects, neither entertaining nor ornamental, on which they scrawl the terrible cramp names of some Italian masters, and fix on us poor Englishmen the character of universal dupes' (Hogarth, 1737, cited in Uglow, 1997, p. 323). Hogarth's nationalism was derived from a Protestantism, which saw itself as providing the basis for 'free enquiry and commercial success', and fiercely opposed the 'forces of conservatism and repression' it associated with Catholic cultures, especially France (Vaughan, 1999, p. 11). From the early 1740s to the mid-1750s Hogarth's embrace of patriotism was particularly intense. During this turbulent period 'of ongoing military conflict between Britain and France, and amid widespread fear of a French invasion, Hogarth attempted to craft and then to propagandize the nature of what it was to be British'



FIGURE 4 William Hogarth *Beer Street*, 1751. Credit line: British Museum

(Beirne, 2018, p. 135). He achieved this through an array of images, including *Calais Gate, Or O the Roast Beef of Old England* (1748–1749), *March to Finchley* (1749), *Gin Lane* (1751), *Beer Street* (1751) and the invasion series *France* (1756) and *England* (1756).

When Hogarth first made his mark as a painter, in the 1720s, it was with a new style of portrait: the small-scale family group known as the ‘conversation piece’. Again, the inspiration was initially Dutch, but the genre had also acquired a popularity in France and the idea was brought to England in about 1720 by French artists. It was a type of picture that especially appealed to the English, developing here to a position of importance far beyond anything attained over the Channel. Hogarth became the leading, and most distinguished, exponent of the ‘conversation piece’ in polite society. Many reasons have been put forward for its popularity and it is an art form associated with the middle class, who certainly found this more informal, domestic style of portraiture appealing. Promoting the benefits of refined conviviality, Hogarth’s conversation pieces extol the virtues of family life. They tended to represent members of the same family or close friends in a relaxed fashion, having tea, playing cards, or simply talking to one another. The painting of the ‘The Strode Family’ from 1738 gives an indication of the kind



FIGURE 5 William Hogarth *The Strode Family*, 1738. Credit line: Tate Images

of polished sociability displayed in these pieces (see Figure 5) and in them we can see the emergence of a modern ideal of the loyal, companionable family. Of course, the 'idea of obtaining a group of portraits on one canvas rather than paying for a whole series of single figures' will have 'appealed to the thrifty instincts' of 'self-made businessmen' (Wark, 2001, p. 18). The secret of their 'success was their moderate price combined with their elegance' (Antal, 1962, p. 34) and it was Hogarth who made this type of picture popular in refined circles. A result, no doubt, initially of his father-in-law's social connections and his own compositional skills in the genre.

The scope this new type of painting gave for setting a scene made it an ideally suited vehicle to explore other narrative situations. His first major success did exactly this and when he painted a scene from John Gay's famous musical comedy *The Beggar's Opera* (see Figure 6) it gave him the opportunity to explore the dramatic rapport of characters on stage. He produced several versions of it in the late 1720s. The opera was hugely successful. Using popular English and Irish folk tunes instead of intricate arias, and set in the criminal underworld rather than royal palaces, the piece mocks the finery of the then fashionable Italian opera. The juxtaposition between respectable and criminal, which the play successfully exploits, is one that was not lost on Hogarth and he 'transferred the *Opera's* theatricality to his own narrative dramas' (Gatrell, 2013, p. 249). Hogarth often seems to "stage" an image as if it were a play and his characters frequently assume expressive gestures and poses, suggesting his interest in art and theatre operates on several levels, not least in his 'use of the metaphor of life as a stage, of his preoccupation with the relationship between reality and artifice, hypocrisy and deceit' (Perry, 1999, p. 158). This can be seen in two narrative sequences that cemented his reputation and generated considerable income for him, which he named 'Modern Moral Subjects' and astutely marketed them.



FIGURE 6 William Hogarth *The Beggar's Opera*, 1729. Credit line: Tate Images

6 | PLACE AND PROGRESS

Hogarth's 'Progresses' are fateful journeys through London. Crucial to his moral geography is the contrast between the City of London, the oldest part of the capital with its crumbling houses, maze of winding alleys and association with merchants (it remained the commercial heartland), and the smart West End, where the landed aristocracy lived in their second houses, surrounded by spacious and orderly squares, while they were in town at the royal court, for the season or for business. Dissolute Covent Garden lay in between, a district infamous for its taverns, bordellos, coffee-houses, gambling clubs (known as 'gaming hells') and other forms of fashionable entertainment. *A Harlot's Progress* (1730/32) and *A Rake's Progress* (1734/35) each chart the demise of naïve protagonists caught up in corrupt social institutions, exposing the exploitation and hypocrisy of contemporary society. In the former series of engravings the contradictions surrounding prostitution and sex trafficking are explored through the plight of a vulnerable country girl tricked into the occupation and her journey through the brothels of Covent Garden, before ending up in a Bridewell forced to beat hemp and eventually dying of venereal disease at the age of just 23. Each of the images are packed with tell-tale detail, inviting us to interpret and immerse ourselves in the narrative. The opening plate (see Figure 7), for example, shows M. (for Moll or Mary) Hackabout's arrival from the York stage coach, she is immediately lured by a pockmarked 'bawd' into the profession as a lecherous gentleman customer awaits in a doorway. No inch of the print is wasted; symbolic references abound and each foretells impending destruction. From the collapsing pile of pots to the goose whose neck is wrung, through the cracking plaster on the walls of the inn in the background to the ineffectual clergy man failing to protect the wagon full of young girls whose fates, like Hackabout's, are already sealed.

Apart from the obvious moral message in the series on the consequences of poverty and the corruption of innocence in the exploitation of sexual vice, there are several recurring themes that feature in all the 'Progresses'. As the cultural historian David Dabydeen (1987, p. 11) puts it, 'people are always seen in relation to *things*, a relation that is indicative of the depersonalization of human life' (cited in Perry, 1999, p. 151, emphasis in original).



FIGURE 7 William Hogarth, *A Harlot's Progress*, plate I, 1732. Credit line: British Museum

Relationships are depicted in terms of commercial transactions, of money or objects changing hands, revealing a persistent preoccupation with greed, hypocrisy and vanity in contemporary life. The immediate success of *A Harlot's Progress* led Hogarth to plan a second series, but this time concentrating on a character born lucky in *A Rake's Progress*. Nevertheless, the brutalizing forces of city life are also portrayed in the Rake's riches to rags story, wasting away his inherited wealth on high and low living as he descends through London's spaces of confinement—from imprisonment in a debtor's prison, to the madness of Bedlam.

The sequence was painted, but Hogarth realized early on that such work could never reach their market in their original form as oil paintings. Having trained as an engraver he took full advantage of the technology and the popularity of reproductive prints. The engravings were his chief source of income, advertising them widely in newspapers and inviting potential subscribers to view them in his studio (Einberg, 1987, p. 96). As Antal (1962, p. 13) puts it, he 'was the most business-like of artists on a milieu pervaded by a business spirit. It is typical of his solid, bourgeois, commercial principles...that he was one of the first European artists to take action against the customary pirating of engravings'. In 1735 he successfully lobbied Parliament for a Bill outlawing piracy, which ruled that no one could make copies without the consent of the print designer. The so-called Hogarth's Act established a principle of legal copyright that was to 'survive until the demise of the reproductive print a hundred and fifty years later' (Wilton, 2001, p. 60). He even held back the publication of the 'Rake' prints until the Act was passed. Hogarth's career 'reveals the multiple paradoxes of the posturing artist flexing new muscles of independence' and while he railed against 'patronage and lordly taste, but was not averse to courting it himself' (Porter, 1982, p. 249).

It is important to recognize that Hogarth was no isolated maverick, thinking up this campaign in an inspired moment of individual genius. Instead, we need to attend to the social relations involved in the organization of artistic work, as Becker and Bourdieu remind us, the struggle for professional distinction in art was a contested and long-term process. In defining his approach Bourdieu emphasizes crucial challenges to dominant authority that

herald a break with tradition, whereas Becker (1982/2008, p. 173) highlights collaboration, noting how art worlds 'produce, maintain, and destroy reputations on the basis of the assessments their members make of the work artists present as representing them at their best'. Debates over intellectual and artistic property were present in several fields in the 1730s:

Musicians were worried about pirated scores and plagiarized performances; writers were seeking to extend the copyright through the 'Society for the Encouragement of Learning'; playwrights and theatre managers were arguing against censorship. The theatre, too, faced problems of internal politics and external pressures, of a slightly different nature. While Hogarth was galvanizing the engravers into concerted action, Fielding was also forging a new platform, forming his own company, 'The Great Mogul's Company of English Comedians'...challenging the Establishment; and the playwrights also laid claim to free expression and the ownership of their talent. (Uglow, 1997, p. 271)

These struggles over artistic property were significant steps in the move toward treating an artwork as a commodity, often with a unique value, but which can be bought and sold like any other commodity. Yet the rise of the artist also involved a Durkheimian paradox: the 'individuation of creativity (accelerated by the Renaissance) was attended by an intensification of the division of labor which increased the artists on others, through the mediations of art critics, dealers, art historians, museum curators and so forth' (Fyfe, 2000, p. 15). The irony is that the more the artist strove to become a singular creator the more reliant they become on a network of specialists that was more integrated, concerted and extensive than is usually recognized. The mid eighteenth-century London art world was one where 'artists and artisans studied and socialized together, collaborated, and competed with one another' (Sloboda, 2019, p. 247) in ways that alter how we think about artistic creativity.

The darker side of London life is dramatized in some of his most celebrated work, and the compositions themselves are often conceived as if presented on a stage. I have already mentioned the influence of the *Beggar's Opera*, and how many of the images unfold like a scene from a play, but it is also important to note that this was also the era when the new literary form of the novel begins to take shape. And it is one utterly dependent on the individual deviance of key protagonists, whether these be socially climbing servants (as in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*), illegitimate and outcast children (as in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*) or the misadventures of street girls (as in Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*). These novels influenced Hogarth's narratives and the episodic structure of his sequences tell extensive stories. His scenes of everyday life are rather like chapters in novels, situating protagonists (whether these be the Rake, the Harlot or Idle Apprentice) in tragicomic predicaments and surrounded by a cast of believable characters in recognizable social worlds, whether these be 'a contemporary drawing-room or bawdy house, London street or prison' (Wilton, 2001, p. 60). Literary connections were crucial in forging this attitude to narrative, which lent a distinct modernity to British painting, through offering a 'new kind of psychological intensity much under the influence of the novel—for example Richardson's *Pamela* (1,740)' (Vaughan, 1999, p. 10). These connections ran both ways. Richardson clearly borrowed 'from Hogarth's progresses the particular Hogarthian graphic version of a play, with big scenes, symbolic gestures and objects' (Paulson, 1996, p. 39) freezing not only a moment in time, but a series of spaces. Both men show what it is like to dream of being a fine lady—and the destruction of those dreams by figures of respectability and authority. The slide from innocence to damnation demonstrated, by analogy, the similar fate 'of the British people in the hands of such "Great Men"' (Uglow, 1997, p. 195).

The ties between Hogarth and Fielding are especially notable, they were friends and worked together, frequently congratulating each other on their fidelity to "nature" and the moralities of "real life" that each referred (in Gatrell, 2013, p. 250). Both were fascinated with criminal life and the high visibility of its punishment, observing its deep penetration into metropolitan sensibility. The city's 'chaotic uncontrollability' (Watt, 1957/1972, p. 179) obsessed its literary inhabitants including Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, Dr Johnson and Fielding, so that a literary canon develops equating London with corruption, vanity and vice. Hogarth's satirical engravings 'scored

such a success because they could be taken at so many different levels by a highly diversified public used to reading between the lines' (Porter, 1982, p. 245) and are an indication of how widely shared his criticisms of English society were with his fellow citizens. Hogarth responded to the fiction of Swift and Fielding 'both structurally and thematically for his graphic satires' (Wagner, 1995, p. 19). Most memorably in his *Punishment Inflicted on Lemuel Gulliver* (1726), which was published within months of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and distils all the scatological humour of the novel in a single image.

But while in literature the novel really was a new form, with new critical values evolving around it, in painting the old exclusive and elitist values of connoisseurship continued. This makes the innovations achieved by Hogarth even more remarkable. In many respects, he 'upset established hierarchies' (Bourdieu, 2017, p. 19). A huge gulf separated Hogarth's vibrant observations of street life from Sir Joshua Reynolds's faith in the 'Grand Style'. Not surprisingly the print medium which Hogarth used so adeptly to make his satirical points was consigned to a low status within the Royal Academy of Art, of which Reynolds was the first president, and the commonplace themes which Hogarth explored did not qualify for the 'elevated' status that high-minded historical painting occupied. Engravers were excluded from the newly formed Academy exhibitions. Their work 'dismissed as artisanal, imitative and mechanical', held in such disregard that when Reynolds was asked to paint pictures that were to be later engraved, he replied 'he would be "degrading himself to paint for a print-seller"' (Gatrell, 2013, p. 141). Of course, that is not how Hogarth is understood today—as England's first great native painter.

7 | INTENTION AND REPUTATION

In order to understand how Hogarth acquired this reputation and the extent to which it was a conscious, deliberate and premeditated strategy on his part, we need to delve further into the sociology of art. In the *Rules of Art*, which charts the emergence of an autonomous field of artistic production in nineteenth century France, Bourdieu (1996) focuses on three pivotal figures: the painter Edouard Manet, the poet Charles Baudelaire, and the novelist Gustave Flaubert. Each of them came into direct conflict with those state institutions which attempted to control what could be artistically represented. In the recently published lectures on Manet he calls into question the notion of intention and how the 'critics of Manet's times kept questioning his intentions—or worse, they lent him intentions, that is, they credited him with an intentionalist philosophy of painting, they credited him with intentions of subversion, provocation or incompetence, etc' (Bourdieu, 2017, p. 45). Instead of this philosophy of intention, Bourdieu (id., p. 83–84) advocates a philosophy of disposition, which concentrates on the structural conditions of artistic creation, where 'every stroke of the brush is both free and structured', which in turn 'is structured by the habitus' and this approach is the 'only way of articulating the work with the historical context in a non-mechanistic fashion'. As he has argued many times, 'it is because social agents are not entirely aware of what they are doing, that what they do has more significance than they realize', which holds 'for every one of us, and it is also true for artists – which is rather more surprising' (id, p. 55) and is the key to his analysis. These are crucial arguments and help us understand the clash between the noble and vulgar provoked by Manet's work. To take up a position defines the artist in relation to other artists within a field, and beyond them, a whole set of actors involved in creating 'the social value of the work (critics, gallery directors, patrons, etc.)' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 140, emphasis in original).

By offering a theory of practice, Bourdieu places the emphasis on what humans actually do, rather than what they say they do, insisting that most human action flows out of a practical sense of things. If social life is regarded as a 'game', then fields are the playing board. Embodied dispositions provide a 'feel for the game', which cannot be determined completely by the rules of the game. It is a dynamic process and Bourdieu was caught between defining his overall approach as 'structural constructivism' or 'constructive structuralism'. Explaining that constructivism involves 'a twofold social genesis, on the one hand of the schemes of perception, thought, and action which are constitutive of what I call habitus, and on the other hand of social structures, and particularly of what I call fields

and of groups, notably those we ordinarily call social classes' (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14). In the sociology of art and culture the 'appeal of this move' is that it 'takes the focus away from individual artists and their "intentionality", and it also focuses on the game itself rather than collapse it into the social context' (Hanquinet & Savage, 2016, p. 15). This interest in field dynamics has broader intellectual significance in that it heralds a relational sociology, which is not so much concerned with concrete relations between empirical actors, but rather with relations between positions and the conflicts between them. Indeed, Savage and Silva (2013, pp. 116–117) identify four distinctive ways in which Bourdieu deployed the metaphor of field, noting that while there is a 'certain slipperiness' here, this 'versatility' is a key strength. Yet it is only 'where forms of organized striving can be detected can we identify the existence of fields' (Savage & Silva, 2013, p. 119). It is the tensions between competition *and* integration that is so significant here, and 'organized striving' involves negotiating both objective relations and dynamic personal effort.

My suggestion is that the art world of eighteenth century England offers rich terrain to explore such conflicts over artistic worth and the differing social positions of the artist. The distance between Hogarth and Reynolds is 'partly determined by differences in age and by shifts in the market, but chiefly by differences in class, opportunity' and sensibility (Gatrell, 2013, p. 260). In short, what I have tried to do is highlight some of the aesthetic and social processes that helped to produce (and to challenge) the idea of an artistic canon. Here the role of 'academies in defining and supporting a canon of aesthetic values based (in theory at least) on the supremacy of history painting and the prestige of classicism' (Barker, 1999, p. 169) were pivotal. The positioning of Hogarth outside high art endured for some time:

Although Hogarth's reputation enjoyed a posthumous revival in the 1780s and 1790s, the charge stuck in Academic circles that, while he might be a clever commentator on the vices of streets and taverns, he was also the next best thing to being Dutch. Fuseli dismissed his work as "the chronicle of scandal and the history-book of the vulgar". (Gatrell, 2013, p. 246)

The nineteenth century saw a reversal in Hogarth's reputation, where he becomes a popular figure in efforts to establish a distinctive 'British School' of art, combining 'rustic virtue with urban craftsmanship and patriotism' (Bindman, 2019, p. 30). Twentieth century accounts of Hogarth place him as a radical social critic, a tradition which continues in Gatrell's (2013) treatment of the artist as a 'common man', opposing conventional society and its gross inequalities.

Indeed, the very making (and unmaking) of a reputation is an active social process, developing through the collective work of 'consensus building in the relevant art world' and like all forms of consensus, at every level, it 'changes over time' (Becker, 1982/2008, p. 359). The key point here is that analyzing reputations opens up aesthetic questions that have traditionally troubled students in the sociology of art. Emphasizing that art is work is one of the reasons why this approach is seen as not being about the "work of art itself", but the collective conventions that 'competent members of an art world use to decide when an artwork is the "same" and when it is "different"' (Becker, 2006, p. 23). Reputations endure less by any gifts of 'genius' than 'by such unspectacular contingencies as shifts and fashions in the distribution of patronage and publicity' (Harrington, 2004, p. 29). This dynamic process of selection reminds us that every artist and their work is subject to a set of classifying conventions, and it is helpful here to consider Bourdieu's (1996) distinction between 'priests', those 'consecrated' artists with established reputations in the field (such as Reynolds), and the avant-garde 'prophets' whose stylistic innovations place them in opposition to generic conventions (in this case Hogarth). Yet no matter how bitter the conflicts between them are, they ultimately share an unshakeable 'interest in the game', a deep 'investment' in the stakes of the field, and it is this objective consensus that lies beneath the surface of all these struggles—and it is this that helps shape the ongoing reproduction of the artistic field (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 227).

Of course, the terms of this opposition can easily be overdrawn, especially if we take a closer look at the nature of satire in the eighteenth century. Most satires were produced in support of the political opposition, who were in no sense underdogs, but frequently members of the landed classes and the targets were often those who did not live up to the ideals of their class. It is no accident then that in Hogarth's world the main targets are those who

seek to transgress their stations in life and cross class barriers. Despite the “truth effect” of his work, it largely ‘depicts not individuals but stereotypes familiar from other types of fiction, with a few “real” people, like notorious criminals and opera singers, to give an air of authenticity’ (Bindman, 1997, p. 104). The very point of caricature is the exaggeration of individual features to mock social custom and self-delusion, which in time would become a political weapon, but it is also the case that nearly every image from Hogarth is set in a readily identifiable place, each steeped in symbolic meaning and full of degrading encounters. His contemporaries ‘called him the Shakespeare of art, referring to the abundance and variety of the characters he created’ and Ronald Paulson (2003, p. xxi) maintains that ‘he is the only graphic artist, in England at least, whose expression is as rich, as polysemous, as worthy of analysis (and of the same sort), as Shakespeare’s’. This is an argument demonstrating the centrality of Hogarth within English culture of the eighteenth century and the linking to Shakespeare is clearly creating a sense of a shared English heritage between the pair. No doubt Hogarth would have welcomed this association, not least through his desire to forge a distinctive, national identity of Englishness.

8 | CONCLUSION

Writing in this journal over fifteen years ago Nick Prior (2005, p. 136) insisted that whatever ‘the specifics, we need to be nimble with Bourdieu’s categories, not to slavishly duplicate the master’s tools, but to extend them, radicalize them and apply them’ and it is that spirit that has informed this paper. With respect to the sociology of art, I have sought to combine Bourdieu’s insights with those of Becker, and while these are often seen as mutually exclusive, the analytical framework developed here is one deploying their different interpretations in light of the empirical evidence, so as to deepen our understanding of Hogarth’s art. Each perspective asks slightly different questions about the phenomenon at hand, and approach, it from very different theoretical assumptions—Bourdieu offering a genetic structuralism and Becker through the lens of symbolic interactionism. This can be seen most readily in their choice of terms ‘field’ and ‘world’, where the idea of field refers to the social arrangements in which art is made and involves a structural mapping of positions objectively held. The logic of the field socially positions who and what is to be found in it, ‘as if it were a field of forces in physics rather than a lot of people doing something together’ (Becker & Pessin, 2008, p. 374). The idea of world, in contrast, regards social relations as an event, a vast array of people, engaged in all sorts of activity, seeing how others respond and adjusting what they do next through these interactions. It is a sociology of situations, rather than of structures, pointing toward a more inclusive and extended understanding of which actors belong in an analysis of art works.

For my purposes, their approaches provide crucial insight. Bourdieu’s understanding of field sheds fresh light on the rivalry between Hogarth and Reynolds, how each were jockeying for social position and while their relations can be cast almost exclusively in terms of power and domination, competition and conflict, there is underlying all the antagonism a fundamental, shared belief. Their two modes of cultural production are linked by their very opposition: the ‘struggle for the monopoly of legitimacy helps to reinforce the legitimacy in the name of which it is waged’ and shore up the ‘very principles of the game’ (Bourdieu, 1996, pp. 166–167). Likewise, Becker’s approach is not just restricted to the micro-social world of cooperation and collective action, it can also alert us to those social processes of selection and marginalization, those ‘losers who found their opportunities for artistic reputation blocked by modernization’ (Fyfe, 2000, p. 15). As we have seen, it was the artisan engravers (and others) who came to experience erasure, exclusion and discrimination in the evolving eighteenth century London art world. Moreover, the spatial metaphor of ‘world’ is especially appropriate here. Attention has been drawn to how the ‘intimate geography of St. Martin’s Lane and its surrounds was fostered through a dynamic and reciprocal relationship with the world both within and outside its borders’ (Sloboda, 2019, p. 247). It reminds us that an art world is above all a social space in which artists and an array of supporting personnel (apprentices, paint sellers, wood carvers, goldsmiths, textile dyers, etc.) join with patrons, merchants, dealers, audiences, and critics in a collective enterprise sustaining and modifying the conventions producing art.

'Field' is also a spatial metaphor and it can be used to examine the relationships between place and culture. However, it is crucial to note that 'if individuals occupy the same "social space" for Bourdieu this is not in virtue of their *social relationships* with each other but because they share similar *structural relations* to economic and cultural resources' (Botterro & Crossley, 2011, p. 101, emphasis in original). It is on this basis that Bourdieu dismisses network analysis and symbolic interactionism as they fail to distinguish underlying, objective relations from empirical social relationships. Although the ties between cultural classification, social stratification and spatial divisions are complex, their interrelations are determined by the distribution of economic, social, and cultural capital. As such field theory foregrounds issues of power and resources, but these are always embedded in a dense, interconnected web of territories. Recent transnational histories of early modern art have promoted the idea of 'entangled history' to convey the array of interconnected processes linking empires, regions and places. These 'global' dimensions of eighteenth-century art also point to the 'layers of stratification that art bore at the local level' (Slobada & Yonan, 2019, p. 11). Integrating 'field' and 'world' perspectives is a crucial step here as 'historians have not always grasped or adequately conveyed the significance of these overlapping processes, yet they were both profound and tangible' (Gould, 2007, p. 767). Likewise, it is important to 'recognize that social change does not derive from objectivist relations exclusively' and 'that the concept of field can itself be understood and applied in more flexible ways' than is conventionally the case (Savage & Silva, 2013, p. 118).

What I have tried to do in this study of Hogarth is to demonstrate how two different sociological approaches to art can help build a richer picture of the artist and his work. By exploring the complex relationships between the artist as producer, notions of class and taste, and the local conditions out of which art emerged, we can see how not all art worlds are equal. Hogarth did not simply constitute an abrupt challenge to the conventional art of the day, he ushered in something approaching a symbolic revolution in the way art was perceived. He was 'a perfect example of someone who could only be understood in terms of what he struggled against and, in so doing, the space he opened up for what followed' (Grenfell & Hardy, 2007, p. 113). This mission should not be confused with heroic altruism, as Bourdieu identifies a distinct complicity between artistic practice and economic aspiration in the avant garde, and which is very much to the fore in Hogarth's own field positioning a century before. Occupying a dominated position within the dominating class, he operated less like a traditional craftsman and more like a capitalist entrepreneur, going to considerable lengths to make his practice recognized as a profession, exploiting the wide appeal of a pictured world in a uniquely powerful way.

Although I have emulated some aspects of Bourdieu's (2017) analysis of Manet, it is important to note that Hogarth's work did not inaugurate an entirely new artistic field in England by subverting the conservative academic Beaux-Arts system in the ways that Manet achieved a century later. As Foucault (2011, p. 28, emphasis in original) memorably put it, what 'Manet made possible was all the painting *after* Impressionism, is all the painting of the twentieth century, is all the painting from which, in fact, contemporary art developed'. There is no sense in which Hogarth performed a similar 'deep rupture' in the field of artistic production, rather his work played a pivotal role in establishing the 'golden age' of British painting. And yet:

he appears to the arbiters of good taste to be impossibly vulgar—what the Bloomsbury critic Roger Fry (one of his opponents) called a *primaire*—the French term for a small-minded bigot. Despite his matchless skills as a painter—and indeed his sensitivity to paint—he seems to be dragging art out of the temple and into the gutter. He has never been quite forgiven for this by the art establishment, even to this day. (Vaughan, 1999, p. 25)

I have discussed above the question of Hogarth's reputation, and by seeking to integrate Becker's 'art world' perspective with Bourdieu's 'field analysis' this necessarily involves a more fluid understanding of the 'organized striving' defining the 'game itself' (Savage & Silva, 2013, p. 119). It is also worth noting that the 'general cultural atmosphere in England in the first half of the 18th century, in which Hogarth played an outstanding part, helped to set in motion the process by which French culture and art became an increasingly strong weapon of the bourgeoisie, leading up to the

Revolution' (Antal, 1962, p. 196). This is not to confuse political revolution with symbolic revolution, but to point to the partly accidental nature of radical social change and to maintain that close attention needs to be paid to the broader culture in which art is embedded.

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