

A STUDY OF GEORGE WILSON'S EIGHTEENTH-
CENTURY NARRATIVE FANS AS PRINTS AND MOBILE
CONDUCT INSTRUCTORS

VOLUME 1: THESIS TEXT

by

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the engraved narrative fans made by the English fan maker George Wilson (active before 1795 to after 1801). Wilson's fans form part of the extensive collection belonging to Lady Charlotte Elizabeth Schreiber (1812-1895) held at the British Museum. The thesis challenges the hitherto overlooked status of printed fans in art history and fan history by revealing the ways in which their study enriches current understanding of eighteenth-century print culture. It does so by establishing the fan shop as an important contributor to the range of visual material circulating in London. It demonstrates how closely Wilson's fans were aligned with popular print narratives. Besides prints, it further shows how closely fans were linked to conduct literature through their pictorial engagement with virtuous and satirical tropes and motifs. It argues that Wilson's fans provide an innovative form of spectatorship and readership on which textual and visual sources relating to behaviours were experienced in the public sphere, aiding different sensory ways in which a female owner could learn about, and understand, conduct. Thus, it concludes that Wilson's fans reveal insights into eighteenth-century print processes, the function and circulation of artworks, and themselves created novel forms of social conduct.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, sister and Teddy.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to thank my parents and sister for their support during the length of the PhD research and writing process, which they will be relieved is now completed. I would also like to acknowledge my sister's comments and advice regarding the readability of the thesis as I was editing individual chapters. Secondly, I would like to thank my extremely supportive primary supervisor Camilla Smith, who has helped guided me through the PhD research and writing up with humour and enthusiasm, making it an enjoyable experience. My secondary supervisor Claire Jones has also been very helpful and encouraging, particularly in offering advice with regards to the aspects of my thesis which deal with the collection and exhibition of fans.

Further to this, I want to recognise the staff who work in the busy Prints and Drawing Department study room at the British Museum, and especially Angela Roche, for their help in retrieving the fans I have needed to view, touch and photograph over the past three years from their storage locations. Moreover, particular thanks should go to Assistant Curator Elizabeth Jacklin, based at the Victoria and Albert's Blythe House Repository, for her assistance in answering my enquires about the provenance history of a print illustration now stored in Blythe House's fascinating facility. Similarly, I found the studying of various fans, as well as a large folio, in the Victoria and Albert Museum's Prints and Drawing Department Study Room well organised by its assistants. Final praise should go to the cheerful and welcoming staff based at the Guildhall Library and Archives in the City of London, who retrieved sometimes very heavy (and large) Worshipful Company of Fan Makers' records and scrapbooks for me to look at on more than a couple of occasions over the past four years.

List of Abbreviations

1. *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *A Selection of Beau's*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511.
2. *The Female Seven Ages (I)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Seven Ages (I)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.
3. *The Female Seven Ages (II)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Seven Ages (II)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.723.
4. *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.
5. *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, thereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.
6. *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Lady's Adviser Physician & Moralist*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.501.
7. *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (I)*, hereafter referred to as *The Ladies Bill of Fare (I)* (hand-coloured version). British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512.
8. *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* print illustration, hereafter referred to as *Progress*. Victoria and Albert Museum Number: RENIER.421.
9. *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Quiz Club*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510.
10. *The Royal Carriage at the Jubilee of Queen Victoria on June '21, 1887* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Royal Carriage*.

Abbreviations/Alteration of Book and Illustration Titles in the Thesis Text

All abbreviations employed in the main body of the thesis text, as well as specific terms and definitions, are indicated in footnotes. For the sake of the readability of the text all illustration titles will be included with only the first letter of each word being formatted

in capitals in the main thesis text. All numbers up to one hundred, excluding measurements, will be referenced in words and hereafter in numbers.

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A STUDY OF GEORGE WILSON'S EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NARRATIVE FANS AS PRINTS AND MOBILE CONDUCT INSTRUCTORS

INTRODUCTION

In 1760, an anonymously penned encomium, 'The Fan', appeared in an edition of *The Grand Magazine*. This lists some of the uses to which a woman could put her fan, detailing:

It [the fan] exercises the office of the zephyrs, and cools the glowing breast. It saves the blush of modesty by showing all we wish to see, yet hiding all that we desire to conceal. It serves the purpose of a mask [...]. It hides bad teeth, malicious smiles and frowns of discontent; stands as a screen before the secret whisper of malicious scandal; expresses the caprices of the heart, nay sometimes even speaks; in a word it has a thousand admirable qualities, and may justly be entitled one of the noblest inventions of the human mind.¹

'The Fan' serves as a useful summary of the uses of the fan by its owner and society by the mid-eighteenth century, namely expressions of love, concealment of impolite conduct and physical imperfections.² Thus, the description above reveals several reasons why the 1700s were so important for the popularisation, development and use of fans, in an era in which the fan was primarily used by women's hands. Moreover, this text makes clear the potential of the fan to encourage interaction and physically protect a woman from harmful conduct.

The sentiments conveyed by such an ode reflect those of earlier poems which attest to the ways in which the mounted fan could express an owner's emotions, as well as

¹ Anonymous, 'The Fan', *The Grand Magazine*, November 1760, London, n.p.

² For the purposes for this thesis I define 'society' as the middle-class English population sharing the same geographical area and social circumstances, particularly those peoples living in London.

convey modes of conduct and misconduct if so desired. For example, Soame Jenyns' verses, written in his *The Art of Dancing*, published in 1726, declares:

What daring Bard shall e'er attempt to tell
The Pow'rs that in this little Engine dwell?
/ [...] Its num'rous Uses, Motions, Charms, and Arts?
/ [...] Its Shake triumphant, its victorious Clap
Its angry Flutter, and its wanton Tap.³

Jenyns's verse vividly describes the fan's ability to interrupt and encourage certain behaviours in people. Additionally, poetry such as this serves to indicate the social and sensory role of fans.

The primary aim of this thesis is to identify the mid to late eighteenth-century engraved English, narrative fan as a significant art form, because of its contribution to helping develop an understanding of eighteenth-century print processes, and the marketing, function and dissemination of artworks in this period. Thus, it seeks to resituate the engraved narrative fan at the heart of a far more complex relationship with other types of printed artwork and literary texts circulating at the same time in London.

Furthermore, it suggests that analysis of the fan can add to knowledge of eighteenth-century social and gender conduct by communicating something more about how notions of conduct were perceived, understood and enacted in the 1700s. It proposes the ways in which the fan, in turn, significantly influenced these debates, and themselves created innovative visible forms of social conduct. Moreover, it pursues a line of investigation that examines the eighteenth-century fan as an object which could

³ Soame Jenyns, *The Art of Dancing*, London, 1726, 20.

influence decisions a female owner made, as well as those of others around her.⁴ Hence, this thesis contributes to both art-historical debate and histories of conduct, offering fresh lines of enquiry into the under-investigated area of art historical analysis of fans.

This thesis focuses on the surviving oeuvre of the English fan maker George Wilson (active 1795 to after 1801). It works methodologically as a case study of the thirteen surviving fan print designs produced by Wilson in the 1790s. The period focus of this thesis is due, in the main, to the surviving production dates of Wilson's printed fans (which date to between 1795 and 1801) and will be explained further shortly in this introduction. At least one unmounted version of each was collected by Lady Charlotte Elizabeth Schreiber (1812-1895), and they form part of the British Museum's Prints and Drawings Department. It is these unmounted fans which form the focus of this thesis's investigations. Eleven of Wilson's engraved fan designs were first catalogued by the art historian Sir Lionel Cust (1855-1929), (a civil servant who was transferred to the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings in 1884), as 'social' and as revealing a sustained concern with modes of conduct.⁵ These include one hand-coloured and several uncoloured versions of the stipple-engraved fan prints *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux* (Fig. 1) and *The Good Swain* (Fig. 2), both produced in 1795.⁶ *The Good Swain*'s counterpart, *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (Fig. 3), produced

⁴ Vivian Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', Roy Porter and Marie Roberts (eds), *Pleasure in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1996, 109.

⁵ Lionel Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves, Presented to the Trustees of the British Museum by the Lady Charlotte Schreiber, FB & c Ltd.*, catalogue, London, 2015, Preface.

⁶ The hand-coloured version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux*, hereafter referred to as *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512.

in 1796, is also listed in Cust's classification.⁷ Together they give indication of Wilson's unusual and sustained engagement with matters of behaviour for the benefit of a female owner. Thus, the focus of this thesis on Wilson means it does not look in detail at painted English fan leaves.

This thesis will demonstrate that the contribution of Wilson's engraved fan print designs to art history lies in his shrewd formation of easily decodable, yet innovative, visual links to different types of text and image in printed forms: conduct literature, satirical caricature, ballad and genre prints, as well as proverb illustrations, carrying moral themes. It contends that Wilson selected pictorial motifs and literary tropes of virtuous women and satirised contemporary debates around conduct from historical and topical writings and imagery including Shakespearian works, as well as different types of potential male suitors vying for the fan owner's attention. Thus, this thesis considers a variety of different types of conduct sources. The close connection between Wilson's engraved fans and these pictorial motifs and literary tropes first featured on single-sheet prints pertaining to moral stories involving men and women have been largely ignored in art historical enquiry. This thesis aims to demonstrate that Wilson's work is important to art and social history as his modification of pictorial motifs and literary tropes suggest the different ways in which visual material was viewed, discussed and perceived in the eighteenth century. His fan print designs also carry distinctive tones, contributing to contemporary people's knowledge of the types of learning experiences that engraved fans could provide. It is argued that out of this change of function – by

⁷ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

which I mean the transition in use from providing a user with a source of entertainment or interest to that of personal or collective education – eighteenth-century engraved narrative fans emerged with a renewed consequence due to their originality and skilful execution of design. It must be noted that the production and marketing of most engraved fans were made for a female customer base. Hence, this thesis centres chiefly on women's usage of the fan in the eighteenth century and, thus, specifically contributes to an understanding of eighteenth-century gender.

The fan's current location in art-historical scholarship is possibly due, in part, to the fact that it straddles so many other disciplines, the areas of dress, decorative arts and printing to name but a few areas. This thesis argues that the eighteenth-century printed narrative fan can, in fact, develop current understanding of print culture and processes, as well as how imagery was used and considered by an audience living during this period, alongside fostering a knowledge of eighteenth-century social conduct. The fact that the engraved narrative fan's popularity gained momentum in the 1790s, during a period of tumultuous social change and political tension, made the fan all the more important as a signifier of an owner's conduct, as the outward expression of personal, and national, identity was brought into sharp focus.⁸ For this reason, comparisons with William Hogarth (1697-1764) are useful to draw upon throughout the thesis as he created a number of popular narrative series of eighteenth-century morals and conduct, depicted people holding and using fans in his work and his work was also translated onto fans. As defined for the purposes of this thesis, the term 'conduct' is understood as

⁸ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991, 346.

‘the manner in which a person behaves, especially in a particular place or situation’.⁹ The term ‘instructor’ is identified in a broader sense of the word, indicating something which could embody one or all of the qualities of a demonstrator, adviser, counsellor and guide. Besides these explanations, as the literary historian Vivien Jones defines, an eighteenth-century woman may have understood conduct literature to constitute ‘a genre of books that attempt to educate the reader on social norms’.¹⁰

This thesis offers a reading of the engraved narrative fan that draws on Jones’s interpretation of contemporaneous conduct literature. Jones proposes, in her essay ‘The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature’, published in 1996, that eighteenth-century conduct literature stimulated different forms of education for women, through humour, strict instruction and pleasure.¹¹ Her line of enquiry focuses on the fact that eighteenth-century conduct literature is not as straight forward as has sometimes been implied – as purely repressive in nature – because it presented an evocation of the very fantasies and desires it warned against.¹² This thesis builds on this premise and develops it further by integrating it within the specific context of narrative fans. It pursues a line of enquiry that focuses upon how Wilson transformed the fan into a mobile conduct instructor through the form of the fan. This course of investigation will develop debates regarding the balance of power between the sexes in the 1790s to help determine the degree to which viewers at the time may have regarded the engraved

⁹ Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, Oxford, 2000, 8.

¹⁰ Vivien Jones, *Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity*, New York and London, 1990, 14.

¹¹ Jones, ‘The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature’, 108-122.

¹² *Ibid.*, 109.

narrative fan to be empowering. Furthermore, the approach taken in this thesis contributes to gender studies within the wider context of art history.

Having defined the primary research aims of this thesis, a brief overview of Wilson's practice is undertaken to highlight why Wilson's fan print design production is the focus of this thesis, as well as to show the complexity of his fan prints. After this, the introduction continues by analysing the history and social development of the eighteenth-century English fan. The introduction will then examine several key themes this thesis explores related to this thesis's main research questions in order to explain the ways in which analysing Wilson's printed fan production contributes to the fields of art history, material culture and gender studies. The final part of this introduction will set out the thesis methodology and sources, before, lastly, establishing the thesis structure.

George Wilson

In this section I briefly outline the reasons behind choosing Wilson as the focus of investigation in this thesis and will thus consider his practice within the context of his contemporary fan makers and predecessors. It is important to mention that nothing to date is known of Wilson's fan or print practice before 1795, or indeed any details of his life. Although it is known from the publication dates on his fans that Wilson was active in fan making from 1795 to 1801 it is likely he worked before and after these dates. There are no advertisements or trade cards created by him, the reasons for which remain unclear. It is reasonable to assume that he branched into fan engraving, at least in the

1790s, after carving out a career as an engraver of single-sheet designs. As Wilson himself stated on six out of the thirteen of his surviving fan print designs, he was both original designer and drawer ('invent, et delt.' as written in abbreviated terms on his fans). Instead, it seems that he either solely published or jointly published three of his known fan print designs, indicating he had a measure of influence over the process from start to finish, and supplied stock to other fan sellers' shops. Wilson's other surviving fan print designs are either published by Joseph Read, one of Wilson's foremost contemporaries, the fan maker and publisher Sarah Ashton (active before 1750 to 1807) or Ashton and Hadwen (first name unknown). As research for this thesis has uncovered, Wilson also produced a proverb print illustration in 1796. A single copy of this print survives in the Victoria and Albert Museum, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter One. Wilson operated from No. 108 St. Martin's Lane, as included in the publication line of four of his fan print designs. His period of fan production encompasses different types of engraving and both monochrome and skilfully executed hand-coloured designs.¹³ Of his thirteenth fan engravings discussed in this thesis, seven are satirical in nature, three feature cyclical or literary themes, two designs deal with commemorative subject matter, and one fan design is advisory in tone.

Wilson is only mentioned once in a substantive historiography of the fan leaf, by the painter and etcher George Woolliscroft Rhead in *History of the Fan*, published in 1910. Rhead draws attention to the fact that among Wilson's 'more successful humorous fans

¹³ Hand-colouring of engraved fans after the printed engraving is dried, usually in water soluble ink. Many single-sheet prints in the eighteenth century were hand-coloured by fan painters and specialist engravers who were skilled in hand-colouring very small surface areas. In museum storage hand-coloured eighteenth-century fans sometimes bleed this colouration onto the remainder of their surface if exposed to water, which damages the fan image and leaf.

are those giving, in a series of medallions along the border of the fan, *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* and *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor*' (Fig. 1 and Fig. 4 respectively).¹⁴ Rhead's remarks upon the number of fans contained in the Schreiber collection sporting 'grotesque' characterisation is referenced by Susan Mayor in her fan collecting guide published in 1995.¹⁵ While both authors comment upon Wilson's skill in producing amusing caricature, they do not pose any questions as to how this may have been a strategy to help translate ideas of conduct onto his fan print designs. Thus, such comments led me to develop this line of enquiry by exploring how Wilson's engagement with different types of engraving and caricature, as well as choice of printing material, drew associations with a diversity of trades related to print making, novelty and politics.

Equally, one of the most distinctive characteristics of Wilson's known fan production is that it displays a variety of engraving techniques, a factor inherent in his fan print designs which I felt warranted further investigation in this thesis. The process of printing a fan design normally involved printing from a copper-plate directly onto the fan surface (usually paper). The most common form of printed fan throughout the eighteenth century was an etched fan leaf, the simplest form of printing, which was often coloured by hand.¹⁶ Etching is a method whereby the design on the metal plate is made by acid eroding the surface of the metal that has been left free of protective wax.¹⁷

Most printed English fans were etched – whereby the design is made by acid biting

¹⁴ George Woolliscroft Rhead, *History of the Fan*, California, 1910, 264-267. *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *A Selection of Beau's*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511.

¹⁵ Susan Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to FANS*, London, 1995, 52.

¹⁶ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to FANS*, 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

away the metal where the wax layer has been scratched off. Furthermore, fan makers commonly used bright single-coloured inks to complete these designs.¹⁸ For example, Ashton's fan production in the 1790s utilise the etching process and she produced at least one of these fan designs in red ink. *Unmounted Fan Leaf* (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6), a printed fan made by Ashton and produced in 1792, which features a bust portrait of the Duchess of York held by a cupid, while two doves bill beneath the portrait, visually exemplifies the almost textual appearance the etching technique can give a printed image. Other contemporary fan makers, such as Charles T. Oviden (active in the 1790s), frequently used coloured inks when printing fan designs, most regularly a shade of green. In contrast, Wilson's practice is unusual in that there is only one etched fan included in his extant production, *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* (Fig. 7), displaying a compositional interplay of twenty-five narratives enacted primarily by men and produced in 1797.¹⁹ Moreover, his oeuvre of printed fan designs is entirely absent of single-coloured inks, which may possibly be due to his unusual printing methods.

However, black inked stipple-engraving features prominently throughout Wilson's fan leaf production, used on its own or alongside another engraving technique to complete eleven out of his thirteen surviving fan print designs. Rhead notes the fact that *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* and *A Selection of Beau's* designs are completed in an unusual mix of line and stipple-engraving, depicting various types of lovers, some 'ridiculous'

¹⁸ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to FANS*, 48.

¹⁹ *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

in nature.²⁰ Stipple-engraving is a development of the late eighteenth century and was the most common form of engraving adopted by Wilson to complete his fan print designs. It was an improvement upon traditional engraving techniques as it was a method that used a tool like a burin (a hardened steel tool that cuts a design into the surface of a metal plate) and produced broken lines of little dots.²¹ These dots visually characterise such fan print designs as Wilson's *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist: Or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the expense of Nobody!* (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9), produced in 1797 and featuring different positive and negative mental states of mind.²² Anthony Griffiths comments that stipple-engraving was a fast technique and this fact may explain why fan makers like Wilson, as well as single-sheet engravers, so frequently used stipple-engraving in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.²³

Additionally, mention must be made of line-engraving as Wilson, unusually for a fan maker, utilises this challenging engraving technique to great effect on several of his fan leaves. This term refers to engraved images made from separate horizontal and vertical lines made by a burin onto a metal surface and printed on paper.²⁴ Even brief visual analysis of some of the details on Wilson's *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart (untitled)* (Fig. 10 and Fig. 11), for instance, produced in 1797, usefully reveals the way in which

²⁰ Rhead, *History of the Fan*, 265.

²¹ Anthony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, London, 2016, 49.

²² *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.501.

²³ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 49.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 46.

line-engraving could be used to great effect.²⁵ Line-engraving is a difficult form of print making, particularly so when completed on a small-scale and combined with other engraving techniques, and was rarely used for print fan designs in the eighteenth century. Those fans which do include areas of line-engraving in their design reflect the superior skill of the engraver.

So too, Wilson's surviving fan oeuvre does not follow the wider common practice in late eighteenth-century fan making of regularly using the medley format – 'fusing the mechanics of the trompe l'oeil with a sustained programme of representational juxtaposition and overlap' – to form a fan's composition. The use of the medley format was epitomised by Ashton's fans, such as featured on *Unmounted Fan Leaf*, which also depicts an array of hand-written and printed notes and letters dotted about its surface surrounding the central images.²⁶ Rather, Wilson's fan print output presents a visual and textual strategy with which to convey amusement and moral guidance. Indeed, in contrast to painted fans, many late eighteenth-century printed fans do incorporate textual additions, which are a distinguishing feature and make them different to painted fans. For instance, Ashton's etched *A Dance Fan (untiled)* (Fig. 12), produced in 1798, features instructive and topical subject matter as it displays six columns of textual directions for dancing thirty-five different dances, while emblems of music feature at its centre. However, as shall be discussed, Wilson's innovative use of text – both letterpress and italicised – and image, coupled with the strategic placing of this text in

²⁵ *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Quiz Club*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510.

²⁶ Mark Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference, Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, New Haven and London, 1999, 38.

his compositions, appears unusual among his fan making colleagues. It gives an indication of the way in which I argue he likely hoped his fan print designs would be used.

The Folly of Man's printing process warrants particular attention as its sophistication demonstrates the extent to which Wilson's fans were at the centre of a diversity of trades and visual cultures, this factor being an additional motivation behind choosing Wilson as the main focus of this thesis's study. *The Folly of Man* sports both well-established and recently invented printing processes. Wilson skilfully combines three engraving processes in the production of this fan print design, including that of aquatint, which speaks to his ability as an engraver. Aquatint is a variant of etching and produces a large mass of dots, achieved by the use of a resin that is deposited on top of a wax layer during the etching process.²⁷ As Timothy Clayton remarks, many late eighteenth-century engravers 'ignored' aquatint, stipple-engraving and soft-ground etching techniques.²⁸ Mayor states that only a few fans survive that use this method as it was 'a rather too complex and elaborate process'.²⁹ Wilson's use of aquatint to complete one of his fan print designs, which was first used by single-sheet engravers, draws attention to his importance in expanding these processes onto the fan leaf surface. Wilson expertly experiments with such developments in the production of *The Folly of Man*, signalling that he was using the fan format as one of 'artistic exploration and licence'.³⁰

²⁷ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 56.

²⁸ Timothy Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, Haven and London, 1997, 225.

²⁹ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 225.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

Another aspect of *The Folly of Man* which is in marked difference to other fan print designs made by Wilson's fan making contemporaries from this period is its large scale. For example, it is five centimeters wider than many of Ashton's etched medley fan print designs and ten centimeters more than her botanical fan print designs. Similarly, one of Wilson's linear figurative fan print designs, *The Quiz Club*, eclipses the width of the average fan print in the 1790s, spanning nearly 58 centimetres across. His creation of large fan prints allows for the realisation of the often lengthy roundel narrative series he devised and for all their background details, figurative outlines, facial expressions and accompanying textual additions. Certainly, it is likely he contributed to all the different elements in his fans, conceiving of these as whole images. Therefore, it can be surmised that the size of each of Wilson's fans relates to its imagery rather than any practical considerations.

The complexity and originality of Wilson's fan print designs is aptly demonstrated by *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*, which exists in both hand-coloured and two uncoloured versions in the British Museum's Schreiber fan collection. *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* presents a brightly coloured composition comprising a roundel featuring a rosy-cheeked cupid with butterfly wings holding up the title text appearing above twelve figurative roundel images (Fig. 13). Either side of this image are draped laurel wreaths that reach below the roundel text, enclosing it in a pleasing outline of form. Each roundel encapsulates a beau in a different state of emotion, with his corresponding thoughts written underneath.

Here, Wilson offers a wonderfully diverse grouping of beaus, divided into six sets of two, designed to encourage the viewer to contemplate their contrasting characteristics. For instance, the 'The Merry Lover' (Fig. 14), depicted as a jolly, round-bellied man, is set against his opposite in terms of behaviour and bodily shape, 'The Melancholy' (Fig. 15), illustrating a thin, haggard man. These visible contrasts encourage an enjoyable experience of learning about these opposite modes of conduct. Wilson's expert use of stipple-engraving and colouration lends tone and form to each character, aided by his placement of each beau's arms, frozen in a gestural motion of one kind or another. Wilson's clever introduction of puns, including a 'Considerate' beau standing on a tortoise to convey his cautious nature (Fig. 16), underlines his strategy of utilising pictorial motifs to convey character at a glance. Inclusion of visual imagery like this shows his creative approach to, and aptitude for, devising fan print design for learning through amusement. With the production of this fan design, Wilson presents the possibility for manifold levels of interpretation, as the fan contains elements of the enigmatic and satiric for a female owner to delight in and take guidance from. So then, the potentially patronising aspect of Wilson's beau fan leaf designs as a collective must be taken into account too, as they invite a female owner to cast a condescending eye across their fan leaf surfaces, demonstrating their multivalent nature.

It is important to note that Wilson's practice of producing black, and skillfully hand-coloured editions of a number of his fans, is uncommon compared with those produced by his contemporaries, such as Ashton and Ovenden. This fact seems especially pertinent if it is taken into consideration that Wilson evidently printed some of these designs onto a surprising variety of materials, including silk and thick board, indicating

that his fan shop was a site of some artistic creativity. Furthermore, and significantly for this thesis's research aims, his fans themselves are varied and experimental enough to provide a significant body of work for this study. For example, Wilson not only used stipple and line-engraving, etching and aquatint, combined with italicised text, but printed his fan print designs onto a variety of novel surfaces. He used thick paper board as a medium on which to print one version of a composition relating to a female 'Seven Ages', *The Female Seven Ages (11)* (Fig. 17), produced in 1797, aligned with a gilt-rim applied around the middle section of its shape.³¹ Additionally, Wilson printed one of his commemorative designs, *The United Sisters* (Fig. 18), produced in 1801, onto silk (in addition to printing this design onto paper).³² It is for all these reasons that the main body of the thesis focuses primarily upon Wilson.

Wilson's talent is testament to the fact that beyond the British Museum, his surviving fans are now housed (and categorised as such) in some of the most important museums and university collections in the world. These include, most notably, a mounted copy of Wilson's stipple-engraved *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* (Fig. 19), produced in 1796, held in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, while another unmounted copy of this fan print design is stored in the Rare Books and Special Collections in the Firestone Library at Princeton University. Further to this, a copy of *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, three copies of *The Lady's Adviser, Physician and Moralist* and five copies of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*, all unmounted, are at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. In addition, the Victoria and Albert Museum holds single

³¹ *The Female Seven Ages (11)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Seven Ages (11)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.723.

³² British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.

unmounted copies of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*, *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* and *Good-for-Nothing*. Finally, a mounted copy of *The Lady's Adviser, Physician and Moralist* is housed in Stanford University Libraries.

The History and Social Development of the Eighteenth-Century English Fan

It is useful to provide a technical and historical summary of the development of the eighteenth-century fan as a way of foregrounding the significance of this thesis in focusing on engraved rather than painted fan designs. Popular subjects that the fan leaf depicts, its functions, as well as type of engraving fans incorporated into their composition and design, will be analysed. Afterwards, I explain the themes central to this thesis's aims and clarify how studying Wilson's printed fan production contributes to the broader fields of art history, material culture and gender studies.

The oldest form of fan was a hand-held screen for fanning oneself, depicted in Ancient Egyptian relief and painting.³³ Early forms of fixed-fan – by which I mean a single inflexible fan leaf surface normally joined to a handle at its base – were also used for fanning grain and starting fires.³⁴ The earliest forms of folding or reticulated fan – by which I mean a fan leaf surface that has been repeatedly folded so that it can open or close and have fan sticks applied to the reverse of the folds and held together at the bottom by a pivot, which is held in place by a rivet – can be traced to Japan to between the sixth and ninth centuries.³⁵ In Japan, the fan was linked to all aspects of life and

³³ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to FANS*, 11.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁵ James Mackay, *Fans. Ornaments of Language and Fashion*, London, 2000, 24.

carried by men and women. By the end of the seventeenth century, folding fan sticks were commonly carved and decorated and a type of dancing fan had also evolved.³⁶

The European folding fan was first imported from Asia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, brought back from the Middle East by Christian Crusaders. It is known, through portraits of the royalty, including Elizabeth 1, that a form of cockade or pleated fan was used during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.³⁷ By the end of the seventeenth century most fans used and sold in Britain were folding fans, around 12 inches long and often sporting verso and recto images.³⁸ From the beginning of the eighteenth century the sticks of the fan had begun to be decorated.³⁹ Most significantly for the purposes of this thesis, from around 1720 painted imagery was introduced on fan leaves, often on surfaces such as vellum – calfskin or membrane that has been prepared to be used for writing on and for oil painting. These were produced by celebrated fan painters, but their popularity started to wane as the demand for printed fans grew in the 1720s.⁴⁰ As early as 1721, the May edition of the *Daily Journal* reports that ‘some Ladies of the first Rank having caused the Picture of the Skreen, describ’d in the *London Journal*, and lately printed from a Copper-Plate, to be painted on their Fans’, declaring that, as a result ‘Ladies cannot be supply’d with them fast enough’.⁴¹ This

³⁶ Mackey, *Fans. Ornaments of Language and Fashion*, 27.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 42. Fan sticks serve as the mount upon which a leaf is fixed in order to make it mobile and able to be unfurled or closed. Sticks in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were made from a great variety of materials, including gold, wood, cane, bamboo, ivory, mother-of-pearl, bone and tortoiseshell. They were often decorated and could be inlaid with precious gems, pierced or carved. Sticks were normally fastened to the leaf using various gums and glues, with brown animal glue being most commonly used in the eighteenth century.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁰ Anna G Bennett and Ruth Berson, *Fans in Fashion*, exhibition catalogue, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, 1981, 6.

⁴¹ Anonymous, Classified Adverts, *Daily Journal*, May 1721, London, n.p.

report indicates that the process of printing designs onto the fan leaf surface increased the demand for them. Girls as young as ten would regularly purchase and carry printed fans, averaging three a year, as they learnt how to hold and use them in both domestic and public settings.⁴² As Edith Standen has pointed out, the novelty and convenience of the folding fan first led to its adoption within British female society in the early decades of the eighteenth century.⁴³ Thus, importantly for the research context of this thesis, the acquirement of an engraved fan as an obligatory accoutrement extended beyond its functional use as ‘an instrument used by ladies to move the air and cool themselves’, as Samuel Johnson defined in his *Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1755.⁴⁴

Printing fans allowed fan makers and sellers to expand their trade, as well as to duplicate multiple copies of the same copper-plate design so that their fan designs could be sold in a range of commercial establishments, such as fairs, and in other fan makers’ and sellers’ shops.⁴⁵ The transference of fan makers’ attention from producing painted fans to printed ones in the 1720s near paralleled the act of the Parliament of Great Britain passed in 1710 titled ‘The Statute of Anne’, also known as the ‘Copyright Act 1710’.⁴⁶ This was the first statute to provide for copyright regulated by the government, rather than by private parties.⁴⁷ This statute encompassed fan publishing from the time

⁴² Angela Rosenthal, ‘Unfolding Gender: Women and the “Secret Sign Language of Fans in Hogarth’s Work’, Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (eds), *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, Princeton, 2001, 126.

⁴³ Edith Standen, ‘Instruments for Agitating the Air’, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 23:7 1965, 243.

⁴⁴ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 1, London, 1785, 759.

⁴⁵ Mayor, *The Collector’s Guide to FANS*, 46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁷ Mayor, *The Collector’s Guide to FANS*, 46.

of its enactment, providing fan makers with a legal framework to take action against other fan makers who tried to make a profit from selling fan designs made by a different fan maker as their own.⁴⁸ This suggests the unauthorised copying of printed fan designs was a common occurrence. In addition to this, in 1734 the Engraving Copyright Act came into effect, also called ‘Hogarth’s Act’, which protected only those engravings that involved original designs and thus, implicitly, made a distinction between artists and craftsmen.⁴⁹ Thereafter, ambitious fan makers such as Wilson could include their name, publication address and date of their design on the fan leaf itself, thus copyrighting their printed fan design.

Angela Rosenthal explains that many of the earliest fan prints dating from the 1720s and 1730s were destroyed, with the ‘fan sticks recycled to suit the fashions of the year, month or week’.⁵⁰ This fact explains why surviving fan print designs are scarce, indicating that it was the stick that was considered precious, whereas the paper was regarded as dispensable. This allowed for a fan owner to keep up to date with new gossip and events. Moreover, Rosenthal brings up, but does not elaborate upon, the point that engraved fans were often published in exactly the same way as single-sheet prints. Within the context of the fan shop a customer could draw immediate associations between the visual and textual subject matter on the print and fan leaf formats, and these connections are something which will be expanded upon in this thesis. Rosenthal is also one of the first art historians to include mention of female fan makers in detail, such as Martha Gamble (active before 1710 to after 1740), who sold engraved fans featuring

⁴⁸ Rosenthal, ‘Unfolding Gender’, 46.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 123.

scenes from some of Hogarth's moral narratives. She outlines the transfer of single-sheet subject matter to that of the printed fan leaf by some fan makers as a means of attracting a customer base.⁵¹ However, she does not consider the collaborations between male and female fan makers in the capital, nor comments upon the impact adjacent businesses or the area in which a fan shop was situated may have had upon its customer base. The way fan makers and their commercial establishments were at the nexus of a diversity of trades relating to print making, novelty and shopping is an aspect of fan studies that is brought into clear focus throughout this thesis.

Nearly a century after Wilson created his fan print designs and at a time when fan production in Britain was at a very low rate, as shall be explored in Chapter Four, ideas around fan design had changed to focus upon how usage of fans in the eighteenth century may have facilitated flirtation. However, the art critic Charles Blanc's *Art en Ornement et Robe* (*Art in Ornament and Dress*), published in 1877, assesses what style of imagery is best for the fan, although he confines his comments primarily to those eighteenth-century fans that are painted, and not engraved. He does not analyse any themes that were popularly carried by the engraved fan. Rather he poses the question:

Can well-known pictures, scenes from comedies, or pastorals, be painted on them? [...] what would be the use of depicting figures engaged in action of any kind, when they could only be seen separated, cut, and mutilated by the radiating folds of the vellum or silk on which they are painted [...].⁵²

As this extract indicates, Blanc argues that meaningful painted subject matter should not be considered for this mobile format as this 'would be a waste of labour', as the folds of

⁵¹ Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender', 127.

⁵² Charles Blanc, *Art en Ornement et Robe*, London, 1877, 196.

a mounted fan can obscure part or whole of an image.⁵³ So, he considers that mounted fan leaf imagery images should be confined to the spaces between the sticks. He goes on to advise that it is better ‘to use a diffused or radiating ornament’ and that an artist ‘should arrange his figures so that they occupy an oblique division of the fan’, recommending they could ‘be placed face to face in couples’ so as to remain entire.⁵⁴

Blanc does not analyse English fan leaf subject matter specifically but advises fan makers that figures which relate to one other in some way could be placed on separate sticks (of the fan), such as a ‘Watteau Harlequin kissing his hand to a Columbine’, so as to ‘reconcile the disputants’ when the fan is refolded and closed.⁵⁵ Blanc shows an awareness that images across a fan are read in relation to each other. He goes so far as to advise that isolated pictures between the fan’s folds are best suited for its surface ‘in order that elegant women, in manipulating their fans, may have twenty opportunities in each fancy group of showing the artist’s talent’.⁵⁶ Here, he raises an interesting point in terms of the dissected/fragmented image of the mounted fan leaf. He is clearly of the opinion that a narrative series of imagery would work best across the surface of a mounted narrative fan print, understanding that images depicted across a fan are read in relation to each other. This is an aspect of fan design composition which this thesis will explore in greater detail. Because Wilson’s fan designs feature several series of beau, this fact will allow me to consider how the individual figures displayed across the span of these fan leaves relate to each other in Chapter Two. Blanc also observes how

⁵³ Blanc, *Art en Ornement et Robe*, 197.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 197.

segmenting an image by inserting it within a series of smaller frames rather than one large picture frame works better for the fan leaf format as it can be easily seen in sections. Although Blanc notes such compositional devices, he does not expand on them in any depth.⁵⁷ This thesis advances this line of investigation in an original manner by analysing how Wilson utilised binary, opposite and contrasting themes in his fan leaf roundels to help foreground the concept of correct deportment and conduct. Moreover, whereas Blanc only takes account of mounted fan print imagery, this thesis considers both mounted and unmounted fan designs produced by Wilson.⁵⁸

One frequently produced type of fan leaf which was popular in the late eighteenth century is the cabriolet fan, typified by the anonymously hand-painted *Cabriolet Fan (untitled)* (Fig. 20), possibly made in either Britain or France, of which surface is split into three vignettes, each showing an idyllic rural activity.⁵⁹ It is comprised of two separate leaves, one set above the other, similar in design to the wheel of a cabriolet carriage.⁶⁰ While painted eighteenth-century fans tend to carry pastoral scenes and images of love, printed fans depict a variety of subjects. A range of themes as diverse as portraits to the Classical are found, as well a significant percentage depicting social and cultural commentary, many sporting roundel series of figurative, narrative imagery.

⁵⁷ Blanc, *Art en Ornement et Robe*, 213.

⁵⁸ In order to mount a fan, which would have been printed onto a rectangular shaped sheet of paper, the print was smoothed and folded in a concertina fashion and then each fold (on the verso side) glued to a fan stick, before placing a short metal pin or bolt through the bottom of the two plates, upon which a fan is mounted, together. An unmounted fan print design is one that has not had any type of fan sticks attached to its verso side after being folded (reticulated) (Susan Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to Fans*, London, 1995, 48).

⁵⁹ A 'vignette' refers to any small painted scene included on a fan leaf surface, commonly depicted on late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century painted fans made of vellum and chicken skin.

⁶⁰ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to FANS*, 50.

The wide-spread use of the printed fan soon saw it become a subject discussed by poets and cultural commentators, such as John Gay (1685-1732). One of the critics' chief condemnations was their coquettish and amorous fluttering.⁶¹ Poems such as *Laura's Fan*, published in 1788, invoked the fan's potential to induce love in a suitor by quipping:

Say, Laura, say what means this mystic shew;
The quiver'd arrows, and this silver bow [...]
Say, are not these the instruments of Love?
Yes, yes, they are: I feel it in my breath [...]
On me that quiver empties every dart.⁶²

Consequently, the 'language' of the eighteenth-century folding fan could facilitate what Bertha de Vere Green calls 'close-proximity communication', affecting conversation by inflecting and amplifying physical gestures.⁶³ This inspired authors to exalt the mounted fan as instrument in the art of flirting. The first lines of Gay's poem, *The Fan in Three Cantos*, published in 1713, proposes the fan's potential for flirtatious sociability. As Gay notes:

If conscious blushes on her cheeks arise,
With this she veils them for her lover's eyes,
No levell'd glance betrays her am'rous heart,
From the fan's ambush she directs the dart.⁶⁴

Such observations did not stand alone. An understanding of the folding fan as something that enabled romantic and social ambitions populates the lines of many poems of the eighteenth century.⁶⁵

⁶¹ John Gay, *The Fan in Three Cantos*, London, 1713.

⁶² Anonymus, *The Garland: A Collection of Poems*, Oxford, 1788, 32.

⁶³ Bertha De Vere Green, *A Collector's Guide to Fans over the Ages*, London, 1975, 147.

⁶⁴ Gay, *The Fan, Third Canto*, 24.

⁶⁵ Eighteenth-century magazines, such as *Tatler* and *Spectator*, as well as specialist periodic journals like *The Craftsman*, all printed in London, regularly advertised the modish nature and flirtatious possibilities of the mounted fan leaf to their readers. For example, Joseph Addison (1672-1719) presents the reader in an edition of *The Spectator*, issued in June 1711, with a comic address titled 'The Exercise of the Fan, No. 102', or as he remarks underneath the title 'a satire upon coquettes'. In this mock essay, he exclaims

Gay draws attention to the various sounds a reticulated fan could make. He asserts that:

this bright machine survey,
/ Whose ratt'ling sticks my busy hands sway,
/ [...] The Fan shall flutter in all female hands
[...] [sometimes rising] to noisy anger.⁶⁶

Alternately, the fan could move with soothing sound if a lady gently wafted her fan across her body or space around her. As was noted by Mr Cresswick, author of *The Lady's Preceptor; Or, a Series of Instructive and Pleasing Exercises in Reading* of 1792 – a manual compiled specifically for ‘the particular use of females’ – the fan, tapped or fluttered by skilful fingers, could betray or intentionally register the emotions of its owner to an audience.⁶⁷ Poems such as these emphasise one aspect of the social function of the fan. In this thesis I consider the fan's social function as encompassing notions of spectatorship and novelty and an ability to both promote and disrupt normative modes of conduct as Wilson's fan print designs simultaneously ridicule and reinforce gender norms in this period.

The fan grew to hold increased significance during the eighteenth century among a female customer base (of whom they were mainly the preserve), partly due to its physical ability to convey a nuanced range of emotions and intentions.⁶⁸ Such capacity became progressively important during this period as a focus upon a woman's bodily

‘Women are armed with Fans as Men with Swords, and sometimes do more Execution with them. To the end therefore that Ladies may be entire Mistresses of the Weapon which they bear, I have erected an Academy for the training up of young Women in the Exercise of the Fan, according to the most fashionable Airs and Motions that are now practis'd [sic] at Court’ (Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, 27 June 1771, 282-283).

⁶⁶ Gay, *The Fan*, *Third Canto*, 25.

⁶⁷ Mr Cresswick, *The Ladies Preceptor; or, a Series of Instructive and Pleading Exercises in Reading*, London, 1792, 2.

⁶⁸ Rosenthal, ‘Unfolding Gender’, 1.

comportment and outward appearance as it made visibly manifest her manners and character.⁶⁹ Visual depictions like Hogarth's etched and engraved *Some of the Principal Inhabitants of ye Moon: Royalty, Episcopacy and Law* (Fig. 21), produced in 1724, highlights the fact that the fan had become synonymous with the clichéd superficiality of eighteenth-century urban manners by the 1720s.⁷⁰ *Some of the Principal Inhabitants of ye Moon* depicts a group of figures including a woman sporting a folding fan as a replacement torso and a tea pot for a head. The fact that a woman wears a fan for her torso, and has physically become the fan, shows the extent to which a woman was associated with material goods. Therefore, it can be understood that the eighteenth-century fan came to be perceived as an enabler of corporeal forms of behaviours, as well as facilitating different ways to learn about conduct in engraved form.

Fans and Conduct Literature

As established at the beginning of this introduction, and as Wilson's fans likewise exemplify, the second key focus in this thesis after fans and print culture is on conduct. Recent scholarly analysis focusing on the issue of conduct in eighteenth-century England explores individual aspects of behaviour during this period. Such studies build on Norbert Elias's seminal publication, *The Civilising Process*, originally published in 1939, which examines the process by which modes of behaviour evolved that society now considers modes of behaviour of 'Western civilized man', including civility and manners.⁷¹ Langford, for example, identifies a number of characteristics which he argues define the 'Englishness' of men and women living from the seventeenth century up until the mid-nineteenth century in *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁷¹ Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process, History of Manners*, Oxford, 1978, xi.

1650-1850, published in 2000. Langford lists among these characteristics plain-speaking, honesty and reserve.⁷² Jenny Davidson, meanwhile, has evaluated arguments that characterise hypocrisy as a moral and political virtue linked to the politics of politeness in the Georgian era in her book *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen*, from 2004. In this text she proposes that hypocrisy was very similar to behaviours such as chivalry and politeness, but ‘under a different name’.⁷³ For example, she argues that using certain tools of sociability, such as flattering talk, could ease awkwardness or silence in conversation. As previously mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, Jones has explored the idea that conduct literature offered eighteenth-century women pleasure, as well as an education. I advance this approach by arguing that fan print designs, with their advantage of mobility, encouraged a range of types of female learning, in addition to sending up newly emergent modes of conduct. I suggest this facilitated the use of fans for owners at the time as empowering conduct instructors, and that studying them in this light can help our own understanding of eighteenth-century social conduct.

History of Fans in the Eighteenth Century

This section will analyse the history of eighteenth-century English fans, the scholarly field pertaining to texts focusing on these fans to date, and explain how my study adds to existing scholarship. It is useful, firstly, to synthesise briefly the key approaches taken to eighteenth-century fans to date. One of the main methodologies favoured by scholars writing about fans produced during the eighteenth century has been to

⁷² Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, Oxford, 2000, 2.

⁷³ Jenny Davidson, *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen*, Cambridge, 2004, 7.

determine the fan as essentially an item of women's fashion. Older scholarly definitions of eighteenth-century fans that take this methodology can be attributed to just three men, all French. These are Spire Blondel's *Histoire des Eventails chez tous les Peuples et a toutes les Epoques (History of the Fan in all People and Periods)*, published in 1875, Blanc's *Art en Ornement et Robe* (published in 1877) and the French bibliophile and journalist Octave Uzanne's survey *L'Eventail (The Fan)*, published in 1884. It is nineteenth-century books such as *Art en Ornement et Robe* that have, to date, shaped current understanding of eighteenth-century fans. For these authors, the main significance of the fan lay in the fact that it was used and regarded as a fashion accessory. Accordingly, they align the eighteenth-century fan with other types of female material adornment, reflecting the fact that nineteenth-century attitudes (in the main) were more akin to that of the eighteenth century rather than that of twenty-first century.

As its title suggests, *Art en Ornement et Robe* details the usage of items of late eighteenth-century European fashion. In so doing, a familiar trope of association between the fan and fashion is established. Blanc places his short chapter on fans in *Art en Ornement et Robe* after a technical discussion of 'Fringes and Feathers', giving indication not only that he considered the fan's chief function as mere ornament but that its subject matter was almost an aside. Blanc also notes something of the technical make-up of the fan. He recalls that workmen who were employed in 'making the frames', worked alongside 'the engraver' and 'the gilder', and were part of 'fifteen or twenty persons employed in making the fan'.⁷⁴ He examines issues of making, materiality and function, but not the subject of the fan leaves. I forge a modern approach

⁷⁴ Blanc, *Art en Ornement et Robe*, 210.

by making associations with the printed eighteenth-century fan across the broader context of visual imagery and forms of entertainment. This methodology is enabled by primarily focusing on Wilson's printed fan designs in relation to their pictorial and material connections with fashion, novelty, printmaking and consumerism. Questions of how an engraved fan's imagery may have altered, or guided a woman's actions, are similarly not touched upon by Blanc, perhaps due to the period in which he lived. I advance such issues in this thesis by examining Wilson's link with female consumers through an original study of the relationship between his fans and conduct literature. I look specifically at the ways Wilson utilised the themes of un/healthy bodies and im/morality to translate the idea of manners and conduct onto his fan.

Attempts to categorise eighteenth-century fans simply as a lady's fashion item in scholarly literature have gone hand in hand with an enduring emphasis on their use as objects of flirtation. For example, in *Art en Ornement et Robe*, Blanc unites description of the eighteenth-century fan with the word 'coquetry', reducing its consequence to its ability to facilitate visual communication, intimating that any imagery on it only adds to its attractive nature.⁷⁵ Blanc's narrow line of enquiry limits the fan's full significance to the coquettish. This thesis takes a focus upon the eighteenth-century engraved narrative fan beyond an object of flirtation to study it as part of a wider narrative of conduct. It is concerned with the diversity of narratives inherent to fans, from cautionary depictions of male suitors to virtuous and dishonourable life-cycles of men and women.

⁷⁵ Blanc, *Art en Ornement et Robe*, 210.

Uzanne foregrounded the fan's main significance to be as a fashionable Parisian woman's accessory in his historical book *L'Eventail*. In *L'Eventail*, Uzanne did not explicitly relate his consideration to English fans, although his research does help contemporary consideration of fans for several reasons. He, too, aligns the fan with hand-held accessories such as muffs, as well as repeatedly linking the fan with the concept of ornament.⁷⁶ As Uzanne addresses his reader 'the Fan in your case is the most adorable ornament of woman, that which sets in relief most clearly her refined manners [...] and her enchanting graces'.⁷⁷ In so doing, he shares a tendency to concentrate upon the fan's ability to make visible an owner's graceful figure but without any consideration of how a fan leaf could affect their behaviour or that of those around them. The only reference Uzanne makes in relation to the social function of fans is by way of a token description of the subject matter of the late eighteenth-century French fan. As he reports, the French fan's imagery became political in the 1790s, 'replaced in its figures the rosy nymphs and coquetry of Watteau at the commencement of the Revolution', making a connection between a fan and its ability to act as a form of political propaganda.⁷⁸

The fact that Uzanne, like Blanc, mentions the French artist Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) in relation to fans, is important as these writers are both drawing attention to a celebrated Rococo artist, which emphasises a link between the fan and flirtatiousness. Yet, he makes no comment relating this observation to English fans. Instead, he lists types of fan circulating in the French Court, citing fans such as scented

⁷⁶ Octave Uzanne, *L'Eventail*, London, 1884, 143.

⁷⁷ Uzanne, *L'Eventail*, 22.

⁷⁸ Uzanne, *L'Eventail*, 106.

leather specimens coming into fashion in the 1750s. He thus opens a line of enquiry into the fan's sensory impact on its environment and conduct of its owner that, however, is not pursued further. I take up this connection in Chapter Three of this thesis, wherein the fan's engagement with spectacle is established, aided by analysing the narrative subject matter of fans like *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*. It can be determined that only Uzanne raises awareness that some eighteenth-century fans' subject matter reflected social and political events and hints that this development could change their usage.

Perhaps surprisingly, current scholarship has not developed much in its approach. Although a small number of books mentioning the eighteenth-century fan have been published since Blanc's and Blondel's texts, they have almost always focused upon the fan's material form. For instance, James Mackey's *Fans. Ornaments of Language and Fashion*, published in 2002, continues to carry a similar viewpoint.⁷⁹ Like Blanc and Blondel, Mackey presents an impression of the fan leaf as, foremost, a female accoutrement of modish fashion and flirtatious communication. Mackey can be seen to intrinsically link these two tactics of investigating the eighteenth-century English fan, studying it as a tool of communication and as a modish accessory. Mackey credits the painted eighteenth-century fan for being an object of beauty, following the precedents set in earlier texts. This is reinforced by the life-size colour photographic reproductions included in his book, serving to draw attention to the fans' materiality. Mackey gives no mention to any eighteenth-century engraved fan imagery in any context other than commenting on souvenir fans that illustrate the first successful balloon flight taken in

⁷⁹ James Mackay, *Fans. Ornaments of Language and Fashion*, London, 2000.

1783 in Paris.⁸⁰ The significant lack of scholarly attention paid to this aspect of fan studies is discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, where the relationship between a fan's decorative elements and subject matter are considered as working together to convey an effective message relating to issues of conduct.

A third type of approach can be identified with the aforementioned publication of Rhead's *History of the Fan* in 1910, and again picked up in Avril Hart and Emma Taylor's co-authored *Fans*, published in 1998. These texts both investigate fan making businesses, a mode of enquiry which this thesis advances through its analysis of the ways in which fan shops, and the engraved fans they sold, can improve current understanding of the use of visual material in the eighteenth century, and contribute to knowledge of social conduct in this period. Rhead's text seeks to incorporate the eighteenth-century fan into a wider historiography. *History of the Fan* describes the uses of the fan leaf from antiquity onwards and adds that 'even on the Continent the literature of the Fan [at this time] is exceedingly scant'.⁸¹ Rhead acknowledges French precursors, but confirms that little scholarly attention had been paid to the fan, or at least 'no work making any pretension to completeness has appeared in English'.⁸² For the purposes of this thesis, Rhead's book is significant as it is one of the first sources to make reference to fan makers working in London during the eighteenth century, as well as to the Charter Act issued by Queen Anne in 1710. Rhead widens his analysis of the fan leaf to deliberate upon their commercial appeal, asserting that 'fan makers often

⁸⁰ Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender', 125.

⁸¹ Rhead, *History of the Fan*, Preface.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Preface.

combined the trade of fan making with the sale of millinery and stationery'.⁸³ In this discussion he takes the collection of shop bills, now housed in the British Museum, and originally collected by Miss Sarah Sophia Banks (1744-1818), as a case in point, detailing fan traders' business expertise.⁸⁴ Looking at Wilson's surviving fans, which are printed on a range of materials, display a number of engraving processes and include innovative textual and pictorial features, will help uncover how crucial they were to the intersection of a variety of trades related to print making, novelty, and shopping.

Rhead does not explore the types of customers or potential cross-over of pictorial motifs, this being the physical closeness of imagery depicting a recurring idea on the shop floor, which occurred inside fan shops. Moreover, the only explicit reference he makes to eighteenth-century engraved fans illustrating narrative subject matter is that 'the topical fan [...] recording public events, was entirely the product of the eighteenth century' and, hence, no comments are made about why they may have been such a popular subject among a female clientele.⁸⁵

Avril Hart and Emma Taylor take a similar approach in their co-authored book *Fans*, which focuses mainly on examples at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Here, they detail some of the important fan makers and shops that operated in eighteenth-century London citing records from the Sun Insurance, which list the Strand as a popular area for fan

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Preface.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Preface.

⁸⁵ Rhead, *History of the Fan*, 12.

makers.⁸⁶ However, they fail to elaborate upon the associations between male and female fan makers and the relevance of their trading establishments in the eighteenth-century.⁸⁷ The collaborative networks forged between fan makers not only influenced what commercial establishments fans were sold in but who they were published by. It is these relationships that are critical to the issues raised and explored throughout this thesis. It is worth noting, here, that a number of texts produced by the Fan Museum, located in South Greenwich, likewise continue to follow the same approaches established by authors such as Blanc. H  l  ne Alexander’s book, *The Fan Museum*, focuses upon painted and printed eighteenth-century fans’ materiality, describing details of a fan’s sticks and decoration.⁸⁸ What is more, many of these texts, mostly exhibition catalogues relating to the Fan Museum’s exhibition programme, give no broader context of fan usage and their social meanings.⁸⁹ It can be noted too that, that all the texts discussed in this introduction indicate a patchwork approach to the English eighteenth-century fan to date, with no single history published.

Even in the nineteenth century, at a time when Lady Schreiber was compiling her fan collection, scholarly literature relating to the fan leaf itself was negligible. Indeed, it is worth quoting at length the opinion of the anonymous author of the review of the ‘Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers Hall London’ (staged in 1870), published in *The Art Journal*, as this raises a number of points regarding the state of critical literary engagement with the fan in this period. The Drapers Hall exhibition, which will be a point of focus in Chapter Four, was organised by The Worshipful Company of Fan

⁸⁶ Avril Hart and Emma Taylor, *Fans*, London, 1998, 35.

⁸⁷ H  l  ne Alexander, *Fans*, London, 2002, 8.

⁸⁸ H  l  ne Alexander, *The Fan Museum*, London, 2001, 38.

⁸⁹ Alexander, *The Fan Museum*, 1.

Makers at Draper's Hall in London.⁹⁰ It had the aim of creating a display of individual fan collections, under categories such as 'modern fans', as well as offering prizes for fans made by amateur fan makers.⁹¹ The *Art Journal* review summed it up as follows;

The Literature of the Fan is not extensive. With the exception of an occasional newspaper notice, or a page or two of some magazine here and there, three or four volumes would probably exhaust the bibliography of this most indispensable and familiar object. Three out of the four books referred to are, as may naturally be expected, French; the remaining one is English, and is, by-the-bye, scarcely a book at all, but a pamphlet, or rather prefatorily essay to illustrate the Fan Exhibition held at South Kensington in 1870. It is certainly true that a history of fans, if fully written, would be curious and entertaining.⁹²

Several key issues can be extracted from this text. Firstly, the author makes clear that writings relating to the fan were limited in the late 1800s. So, somewhat paradoxically, even at a time when the collecting of fans and their exhibition was resurgent, published information associated with them was scarce. Secondly, this quotation demonstrates that the texts published in this era were found mainly only in pamphlet form (the pamphlet to which the author refers is Samuel Redgrave's *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans*, which details the fans loaned to the Victoria and Albert Museum for an exhibition in 1870). This was a time when numerous histories of other decorative arts were being written, especially in France. Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement of the author that a substantial history of the fan had yet to be written.⁹³

Additional points can be gauged from this review as the author continues:

⁹⁰ The Exhibition of Fans at Drapers' Hall was staged in July 1878.

⁹¹ See the reviews of newspaper clippings of various magazine and newspaper reviews of the Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers' Hall, London, July 1878, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS23797-8.

⁹² Anonymous, 'Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers' Hall, London', *The Art Journal*, New Series, 4, 1878, 315-316.

⁹³ Anonymous, 'Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers' Hall, London', 315.

If we could trace the great events of history down to their minutest causes, no doubt the fan would play a very significant role [...]. With this in her hand, no woman should complain of unequal rights [...]. It is true, therefore, that a history of the fan it would be a curious history. It is not for us to attempt such a history on this occasion; certainly it is a history of Art; it is also a profoundly antiquarian investigation.⁹⁴

Primarily, the author notes that a book relating the history of the fan would impart the vital role the fan played in society through the ages, and therefore for women. The *Art Journal*'s review's reference to women's rights is useful to note, too, as this thesis focuses on women as consumers of fans and how illustrations of different types of conduct depicted on them could possibly empower a female owner. More than this, it states that the history of the fan is bound up in both antiquarianism *and* the history of art, alluding to the multifaceted nature of the fan as an object. Hence, the author may have wanted to frame the studying of fans in this way in order to promote their collecting and scholarly research of fans, at a time when museums, fans collectors and governmental bodies were trying to revive an interest in fan making and fan collecting.

Gender Politics

The mounted fan was an accoutrement mainly used by women, and created and sold by fan makers and sellers with women in mind. Therefore, questions of gender in mid to late eighteenth-century London and shifting expectations and ideals of how women (and men) should speak, carry themselves, communicate and work in the capital as the century progressed are of key consequence for this thesis's research aims. In depth scholarly analysis of how women participated in the fan industry in the eighteenth century, as well as study of how their customers may have utilised the fan for different

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 315.

social ends, is, to date, very scant. Rosenthal's 2001 essay, 'Unfolding Gender', widens Mark Hallett's scope of focus on eighteenth-century satiric types of masculinity through discussion of visualisations of fans and their usage by women depicted in Hogarth's narrative engravings.⁹⁵ Rosenthal makes the beginnings of a link between London's architectural spaces and the consumption of fans by women, emphasising the fact that the female body became 'of central importance as a means of communicating social status' and interior states through gesture in London's public spaces.⁹⁶ This dissertation progresses this line of enquiry by relating the spectator and the language of fans to the wider context of interest in the visual, public areas of entertainment, exhibition and spectacle. The line of argument forged in this thesis develops Rosenthal's analysis of the physical impact of the eighteenth-century fan upon the city environment. It contends that novelties opened up new types of conduct and threats to conduct, and Wilson's fans could help people do this by presenting new ways of viewing combinations of narrative compositions and text which can be seen together.

Fans and their Relationship to Prints in the Eighteenth Century

There are a small number of books that recognise a correlation between developments in print culture and more mobile forms of print. In this section, I analyse the growing scholarship on print trade and culture in eighteenth-century London, and explain how my study adds to this body of literature. Approaches taken to discussing prints produced and disseminated in the capital in the 1700s tend to either take the form of an overview

⁹⁵ See Mark Hallett, 'Manly Satire: William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*', Angela Rosenthal and Bernadette Fort (eds), *The Other Hogarth: The Aesthetics of Difference*, Princeton and Oxford, 2001, 142-161, and Mark Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference, Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, New Haven and London, 1999.

⁹⁶ Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender', 125.

of the development of the print, or focus upon a single aspect of eighteenth-century print culture, such as satirical modes of masculinity. For example, the approach Malcolm Jones takes in *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Overview*, published in 2010, is characteristic of print scholars' strategy to present an overview of the variety of English prints.⁹⁷ Jones takes the opinion that 'prints in general have been extremely neglected in art history', adding that English prints have been even more so.⁹⁸ Jones places emphasis upon detailing the variety of single-sheet prints produced up until 1700 in England. As he remarks, 'the general reader may be forgiven for thinking that there were no such pictorial prints in England before the advent of the eighteenth-century caricaturists', commenting that art historians have 'instinctively looked abroad'.⁹⁹ Yet, Jones concentrates on single-sheet prints, such as broadsides, and does not analyse any forms of print, such as playing cards, which can be moved around or carried easily. Nor does he extend his discussion to analyse the ways in which the audience for which they were intended used them. I add to this research context by focusing upon how the study of a mobile form of English print, the fan, innovatively updated traditional themes commonly found on sixteenth and seventeenth-century single-sheet prints, thereby developing the context in which they should be seen. This line of enquiry is made possible as this thesis works methodologically by using Wilson's fan print designs, which display both age-old and more topical motifs and tropes, as its main case study.

⁹⁷ Malcolm Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, London, 2010.

⁹⁸ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, viii.

⁹⁹ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, viii.

To an extent, Malcolm Jones adopts the analytical framework used by the British Museum's Prints and Drawing Curator, Shelia O'Connell, in her book *The Popular Print in England*, published in 1999. However, whereas Jones aims to shed light upon pre-eighteenth-century English single-sheet prints, O'Connell concentrates upon the eighteenth-century popular print, so as to open up to the reader the diversity of English prints 'that [were] familiar to a large proportion of the population'.¹⁰⁰ O'Connell, in contrast to Jones, provides a more focused area of study with regards to English print culture so as to, as she explains, 'stimulate the reader to consider the role of prints in settings far beyond the collector's cabinet' to the tavern walls and domestic houses of the middle and lower classes.¹⁰¹ She also points out that some print, such as illustrated single-sheet series of proverbs aimed for children, could be brought in other functional formats, such as packs of cards.¹⁰² It is intended that this thesis will encourage the study of eighteenth-century century print culture across traditional boundaries to incorporate fans within the broader history of prints and print culture.

Hallett focuses on a single aspect of English eighteenth-century print culture, the satirical figurative print, demonstrating that the early eighteenth-century English print produced in London was an ambitious, skilful and experimental branch of graphic culture.¹⁰³ His book *Hogarth*, published in 2000, which discusses the engagement of the print with cultural developments, such as the growing opposition to marriage of convenience during the eighteenth century. Hallett asserts that Hogarth's engravings intervened in collective forms of practice, like the opera or masquerade ball, and

¹⁰⁰ Sheila O'Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, London, 1999, 14.

¹⁰¹ O'Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, 31-32.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 31-32.

¹⁰³ Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference, Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, Preface.

shaped, as well as confirmed, alternative modes of masculine and feminine identity and conduct, such as that of the rake.¹⁰⁴ This thesis builds upon Hallett's strategy of examining the dissemination of single-sheet prints in the capital and their relationship to contemporary politics, gossip, use and distribution in a number of ways. It studies eighteenth-century London fan shops (as this thesis works methodologically as a case study of Wilson's surviving fan designs, all produced and published in London), the types of fans and other products they sold, alongside demonstrating that fans were traded in the same space as a range of books and paper-based imagery. It extends this analysis by concentrating upon how the content of Wilson's fans enabled their transformation into mobile conduct instructors, as well as how he did this visually through the form of the fan in London's public sphere.

There are a few texts that draw attention to the relationship between fans and print culture and these acknowledge that fans were represented in eighteenth-century visual culture. Timothy Clayton's book, *The English Print 1688-1802* (published in 1997) recognises the strong connections between some single-sheet prints and fan print design. He acknowledges the role fan makers in the 1700s played in working on other types of print, for example, completing the hand-colouration of different types of single-sheet print.¹⁰⁵ However, although Clayton's text provides a substantial advance of scholarly art historical analysis pertaining to the engraved fan and its relationship to static forms of print, it fails to clarify the ways in which a female fan owner may have understood and used information such as that rearranged on the surface of the fan leaf.

¹⁰⁴ Mark Hallett, *Hogarth (Art and Ideas)*, London, 2001.

¹⁰⁵ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 224.

It is useful here, to mention Antony Griffiths' *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, published in 2016, which utilises a similar approach as Clayton, but introduces such things as the rates of survival and loss of prints, including printed fans.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, Griffiths explores the business of print sellers' shops in London in some detail, alongside explaining their customer bases and the different types of audiences for single-sheet prints more generally. He references a variety of unusual formats of print, in addition to elucidating their usage and understanding by purchasers. Griffiths discusses 'ephemeral' forms of print – defined as printed images that served a temporary purpose, including those prints pasted to a surface, such as the walls of sixteenth-century English domestic interiors, termed 'applied prints' – in a serious manner.¹⁰⁷ He remarks that these were not necessarily cheap, serving valuable roles, and therefore recategorises them as 'functional prints'.¹⁰⁸ This thesis aims to reveal how the eighteenth-century printed fans' interconnectedness across visual imagery facilitated its translation of the idea of conduct and enabled it to develop into an effective conduct instructor. For instance, Wilson's *The Quiz Club* (Fig. 10), demonstrates its close links to social masculine types depicted in late eighteenth-century satirical engraving by way of featuring a series of beau who facial outlines appear to signify their individual character. In so doing, it looks to shape a fresh approach to studying the eighteenth-century engraved English fan.

Eighteenth-Century London, Novelty, Spectatorship, Fashion and Consumerism

¹⁰⁶ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 202.

¹⁰⁷ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 203.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 203.

Consideration must be given to the scholarship on eighteenth-century novelty, spectatorship and consumerism, which is of importance to the research context of this thesis. Over the past couple of decades, a body of scholarship has built up which examines the domestic circumstances of men and women in the eighteenth century. Amanda Vickery's *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England*, published in 2009, is a case in point. In this book Vickery examines the business of delineating space and marking boundaries, which she argues lay at the heart of the Georgians' experience of life inside their houses. In this thesis I argue that fans impacted upon female owners' social encounters and comprehension of the public sphere of late eighteenth-century life in London, especially that of pastimes and visual entertainments, by way of their physical form, composition, textual additions and series of narrative imagery. John Styles' *The Dress of the People, Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, published in 2007, examines dress and patterns of consumption among people of the middling class, in both private and public settings, although he makes no mention of the fan. In this thesis I extend this area of scholarly focus by studying how women carrying Wilson's fans in London's streets might have used their subject matter to help demonstrate how a study of fans can add to this kind of approach.

At the same time, I broaden the scope of scholarly research that historians such as Claire Walsh and Kate Smith have undertaken relating to the experience of viewing and consuming in eighteenth-century London. Walsh's essay, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', in a 1995 issue of *Journal of Design History*,

investigates the design of shop interiors in London in the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁹ I relate this to fans by extending this focus to fan shops and the ways in which they can expand current understanding of print culture in the eighteenth century by establishing it as a key contributor to the range of visual material circulating in London during this period. So too, her recent essay, ‘Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century’, included in Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger’s collected essays titled *The Landscape of Consumption: Shopping Streets and Cultures in Western Europe, 1600-1900*, published in 2014, argues that commercial establishments in eighteenth-century London were founded on factors such the need to express cultural values.¹¹⁰ My thesis extends Walsh’s line of enquiry by placing fan makers and fan shop owners at the centre of the evolving commercial sector in London. I suggest that the physical space of the fan shop impacted upon the lives of Londoners by introducing them to a plethora of sights, sounds and tactile experiences that were dynamic in nature. I argue they were at the forefront of innovative shop displays, thus allowing customers to participate in a sophisticated cultural activity, in addition to creating connections between different paper-based formats and how they could be read and used.

Similarly, my thesis advances Emily Cockayne’s focus in *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England 1600-1770*, published in 2007, which addresses unpleasant aspects of urban living that affected the senses, sometimes caused by such things as people loudly

¹⁰⁹ Claire Walsh, ‘Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of Design History*, 8:3, 1995, 157-176.

¹¹⁰ Claire Walsh, ‘Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century’, in Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger (eds), *The Landscape of Consumption: Shopping Streets and Cultures in Western Europe, 1600-1900*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2014, 37-56.

drumming, with little regard for those surrounding them.¹¹¹ I develop Cockayne's argument by exploring how the fan could aid both pleasant and unpleasant sensations, provoking unexpected modes of conduct, such as surprise or anger. Equally, I advance Kate Smith's methodology in her essay 'Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London', included in an edition of the *Journal of Design History* published in 2012, in which she argues that sensory interaction with goods was one of the key means by which shoppers 'comprehended concepts of design and quality of workmanship'.¹¹² I apply Smith's disciplinary approach taken to explore eighteenth-century shoppers' experience to that of fans and fan shops. I establish fan shops as being at the vanguard of sensory exploration for shoppers due to their position at the centre of a nexus of trades relating to print making, novelty and shopping.

One further aspect of scholarship pertaining to the wider sphere of eighteenth-century novelty and material consumption that this thesis develops is spectatorship. Scholarly essays such as Hallett's 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the British Royal Academy', included in an issue of *Eighteenth-Century Studies* published in 2004, have taken the approach of examining how the public may have made connections between paintings displayed at the annual Royal Academy of Arts exhibition.¹¹³ This dissertation contributes to contemporary understanding of the emergence of picture galleries in the

¹¹¹ Emily Cockayne, *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England 1600-1770*, New Haven and London, 2007.

¹¹² Kate Smith, 'Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 2:1, 2012, 1.

¹¹³ Mark Hallett, 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the British Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37:4, Summer 2004, 581-604. Similarly, Luisa Calè's *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, published in 2006, and Rosie Dias's *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, published in 2013, explore the ways in which late eighteenth-century spectators could experience the novelty of viewing textual stories with their visual translation within Pall Mall's literary art galleries.

1790s, by examining how the desire to view new forms of visual spectacle led to the development of innovative kinds of novel spectatorship and readership that extended viewing series of imagery relating to textual sources. This thesis explains that Wilson produced at least one fan print design that could help accustom an owner to align literary narratives with their pictorial translation in a similar way to that which the literary picture gallery achieved. For example, it discusses Wilson's fan print design *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, which visually depicts the soliloquy given in Act Two in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* as a narrative series of male figures. In Shakespeare's Act, the melancholy character of Jacques describes the cyclical life of man in seven ages; infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier, justice, Pantalone and advanced old age. These different ages of man are represented across *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, each figure paired with their accompanying title and lines of verse. This thesis argues Wilson translated literary subject matter on to visual form on the fan leaf surface in such a way so as to offer an alternative means by which his fan print designs' educative message could be understood and also helped an owner negotiate these galleries' exhibition spaces.¹¹⁴

Additionally, I draw on Lucy Inglis's *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, published in 2013, wherein she describes the vibrant street life of different areas of London in the eighteenth century. In contrast to Inglis, however, I focus on London's Pall Mall area, arguing that Wilson's fan shop was situated at the centre of significant cultural exchange and commerce towards the turn of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁵ Finally, Roy

¹¹⁴ British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.1010.32.

¹¹⁵ Lucy Inglis, *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, London, 2013.

Porter's discussion of people's changing experiences of social, economic, political and cultural circumstances as the eighteenth century progressed in *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, published in 1991, informs the entirety of this thesis.¹¹⁶ I extend Porter's methodology by analysing how the shifting context of late eighteenth-century society likely influenced Wilson's fan designs, and which, in turn, may have impacted upon how their owners understood the world around them.

Collecting Wilson's Fan Designs: Lady Charlotte Schreiber

We now turn to the collector, Lady Charlotte Elizabeth Schreiber (1812-1895), upon whose fan collection, now at the British Museum, this thesis is based. It is important to reference the scholarly attention the Schreiber collection has hitherto received. As the Keeper of the Prints and Drawing Department at the British Museum, Sir Sidney Colvin (1845-1927), stated at the time of Lady Schreiber's bequest in 1891, her fan collection, whose examples date from the 1720s to the 1870s, can be regarded 'as collector's pieces'.¹¹⁷ Unmounted eighteenth-century English fan leaves form her collection's core, most of which exist in an engraved state.

Lady Schreiber was born to Albemarle Bertie, the ninth Earl of Lindsay, and his second wife Charlotte (née Layard). Lady Schreiber married the Welshman and coal merchant Sir Josiah Guest (1785-1852) in 1833.¹¹⁸ When, in 1852, Sir Guest died, Lady Guest took over the running of the Dowlais ironworks until, in 1855, she married the academic

¹¹⁶ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991.

¹¹⁷ Quoted in Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves, Presented to the Trustees of the British Museum by the Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, Preface.

¹¹⁸ Charlotte Gere and Marina Vaizey, *Great Women Collectors*, London, 1999, 92.

Charles Schreiber (1826-1884). Thereafter, the Schreibers started to amass a vast collection of ceramics.¹¹⁹ French photographer Camille Silvy's photograph of Lady Schreiber (Fig. 22), taken in the July of 1861, gives a sense of her independent character, as well as her status. By the time this photograph was taken she had become established as a collector of paintings, chinaware and ceramics. Lady Schreiber continued to add to her collections well into her seventies, and in 1885 her printed catalogue was presented to the British Museum, a year after her English pottery and porcelain was gifted to the Victoria and Albert Museum.¹²⁰ Subsequently, in 1893, Sir Cust produced a catalogue of the Schreiber collection after its acquisition by the British Museum in 1891.¹²¹

The anonymous reviewer of the 'Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers Hall London' in 1878 serves to highlight the need for Lady Schreiber's fan collection to be viewed anew with an intellectual eye. The author declares:

Literature pertaining to Lady Charlotte Schreiber's fan leaf collection bequeathed to the British Museum before the turn of the twentieth century is [scantier] with regard to depth of analysis and reassessment of its value.¹²²

This quotation suggests that 'reassessment' of Lady Schreiber's fan collection had not been undertaken during the late nineteenth century.¹²³ Similarly, a review of Lady

¹¹⁹ Marjorie Caygill, *Treasures of the British Museum*, London, 2000, 4.

¹²⁰ Gere and Vaizey, *Great Women Collectors*, 92.

¹²¹ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves, Presented to the Trustees of the British Museum by the Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, Preface. A bequest of Lady Schreiber's eclectic collection of playing cards took place in 1895 (Lionel Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves, Presented to the Trustees of the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, catalogue, London, 2015, Preface). Posthumous sales of her collection included one at Sotheby's in 1896 (part of her personal library), a second of duplicate playing cards following the same year. Several of Lady Schreiber's porcelain items were sold at the auction house Puttick & Simpson in 1904 (Charlotte Gere and Marina Vaizey, *Great Women Collectors*, London, 1999, 92).

¹²² Anonymous, 'Exhibition of Fans at the Drapers' Hall, London', 316.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 316.

Schreiber's own publication *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* (1888), an article titled 'English Fans. And English History', penned for *The Spectator* in 1889, notes the collection's importance. 'English Fans. And English History' surmises the Schreiber collection to be 'consist[ing] of popular fans of the last and the early years of the present century, not belonging to the class of "beautiful and costly specimens which have been instanced and described and their vicissitudes recorded"'.¹²⁴ The review of *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* notes that Lady Schreiber's engraved fans present 'a remarkable contrast to the French and Spanish fan-painting of the period', adding 'the grotesque fans are very clever'.¹²⁵ Thus, the reviewer gives an indication of the potential that the Schreiber collection offers in terms of academic analysis.

Methodology

As this thesis posits that the fan shares close associations with pictorial compositions, motifs and literary tropes featured on a range of topical writings and imagery, it takes a multidisciplinary approach to demonstrate its arguments. It draws on design history, print history, art history, economic history, the sociology of manners, as well as nineteenth-century collecting practices and museology. This section expands upon those approaches and the research processes used to explore the thesis's main lines of enquiry.

In order to reveal how the eighteenth-century engraved narrative fan could have been seen to carry unique consequence, Vivian Jones's theoretical approach taken in her essay 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', is formative in influencing

¹²⁴ Anonymous, 'English Fans. And English History', *The Spectator*, 13 July 1889, 11-13, 11.

¹²⁵ Anonymous, 'English Fans. And English History', 11.

the way in which this thesis approaches fans.¹²⁶ Jones's way of reading conduct literature, which shows the different nuances of the conduct texts and how they encouraged different forms of learning for women, provides a framework for this thesis's research methodology. This thesis therefore draws on primary and secondary literary and visual sources revolving around conduct. Jones's text may be considered feminist as it indicates that conduct-related texts, such as Reverend *Wilkes' Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice*, published in 1740, are empowering for women as they were also a source of entertainment and fantasy, often offering female readers an opportunity to focus upon the prospect of inappropriate sexual conduct with male suitors.¹²⁷ My thesis draws attention to women as producers, consumers, collectors of fans, even as it shows them to be part of the confines of an eighteenth-century patriarchal framework of civility. Although Wilson's fans are designed by a man for women I argue they are inspirational and empowering to an extent because they provide alternative modes of entertainment, permitted consumer choice for women, and because female agency was sometimes involved in their production (and collaborated with Wilson on occasion).

The original location of Wilson's fan shop is also examined to aid comprehension of the proximity of fan shops to nearby establishments like theatres operating during the period. Close reading of historical conduct books, instructional poems, songs and fictionalised forms of advice literature circulating in the capital, all of which are now more easily accessible in digitised form, are compared to the text and imagery included on Wilson's fans. Eighteenth-century conduct material held at the British Library, as

¹²⁶ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, 108

¹²⁷ Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', 109.

well as pocket conduct manuals held at Cardiff University Library, are analysed, to help offer a re-reading of their ideological contexts and an analysis in terms of content (and physical form where possible) in relation to Wilson's fans.

Close visual and physical analysis of a multiplicity of eighteenth-century trade cards and adverts will be taken on as part of this process. Trade cards normally took the form of a small printed squares or rectangles and were used by traders to give to customers to help jog the memory. By the eighteenth century many trade cards depicted the exterior or interior of the commercial establishment they were advertising, supported by text giving the address (and occasionally a shop sign), location and, sometimes, a list of items the trader dealt in. Thus, trade cards offer a wealth of visual and textual information as to the full range of types of services which shops offered, as well as casting light on their owner/s, customer base and material layout. There is not much scholarship that uses trade cards so extensively as is undertaken in this thesis. It is important to make clear that this methodology draws on contemporary advertisements, like that taken out in newspapers like the *Public Advertiser*, and literature; the sources that survive. Also, visual analysis and reading of the original records and lists of Master Fan Makers, held at the Guildhall Library and Archives, will be carried out. Furthermore, this thesis uses social art historical methods by exploring the modes of fan production processes, the methods of distribution, consumption and reception, as well demographics – habitual users and their London-base. It considers Wilson and his

fellow fan makers in this process and the commission of fans. This involves analysis of primary resources, such as narrative print series relating satirical scenes of folly.¹²⁸

Thesis Structure

Chapter One, 'Place, Production and Display of the Engraved Fan in Eighteenth-Century London', argues for the location of Wilson's Pall Mall-based fan shop as situated within a nexus of diverse trades related to printmaking, fashion, novelty and shopping. It focuses on the fan making business, geography, adjacent businesses and networks of fan making and collaboration. By so doing, this chapter aims to determine that fan shops expand current understanding of print culture in the eighteenth century by establishing the fan shop as a key contributor to the range of visual material circulating in London during this period. It hopes to highlight the array of activities and trades that fan shops selling fans were involved in and to verify their suitability for the mixing of different types of popular visual and literary formats, which could be viewed and read by its customer base. It considers the fact that female customers viewing such an assortment of formats may have then started to consider the fan leaf format as serving an alternate instructional purpose. Lastly, it sets out how Wilson reflected all of these practices by focusing on examples that show his response to political events, topicality, novelty and consumerism. Chapter One therefore confirms the ways in which Wilson was operating, making the logical decision to imbue fan leaf designs with detail pertaining to conduct instruction for women with experience of changing social circumstances.

¹²⁸ Anne D'Alleva, *Methods and Theories of Art History*, London, 2012, 20.

Chapter Two, ‘The Late Eighteenth-Century Fan and Conduct-Related Texts’, builds on the idea that fan shops were at the centre of a diversity of trades. It examines Wilson’s association with female consumers, through an original study of the relationship between the content of his fans and conduct literature. It foregrounds the evolution of manners and conduct literature in the eighteenth century, highlighting societal desire for rules of conduct, and its outward expression, to be set in written and visual form. It demonstrates that the tropes featured on Wilson’s fans, together with decorative elements, facilitates their effectiveness as a carrier of stories. It draws attention to the idea of how Wilson translated the idea of conduct onto his fans through a study of one of his fan print designs, *The Lady’s Adviser, Physician & Moralist*, which illustrates his use of opposites, un/healthy bodies and un/healthy conducts. This chapter argues that not only did fan sellers and makers trade in a range of conduct-related literary formats but that some fan makers began to incorporate tropes associated with social types first commented upon in these writings on to the fan leaf. This chapter then focuses on the social types represented on Wilson’s fans and the ways in which they relate to ideas around conduct, helping them to become an important development from traditional literary forms of female learning.

Chapter Three, ‘The Fan as a Novel Form of Spectatorship and Readership in the Capital’, focuses on how eighteenth-century fans, and particularly Wilson’s fans, relate to novelty, spectatorship and readership, taking the fan and conduct into the public sphere. It emphasises how novelties opened up new types of conduct and threats to normative conduct. For the purposes of this thesis, I define the notion of ‘novelty’ as

that outlined by Joseph Addison in 1712. Addison linked novelty to ‘uncommonness, an object possessing a flexibility that is constantly changing’ and I extend his summarisation of what the concept of novelty constituted to include unfamiliar sensory and social experiences encountered in the city environment.¹²⁹ This chapter proposes that Wilson’s fan print designs dealing with literary themes provided a novel form of dissemination on which textual and visual sources relating to behaviours were experienced. It explores how he did this visually through the form of the fan. It contends that Wilson reacted quickly to the establishment of new literary picture galleries – exhibition spaces that ‘fus[ed] grand exhibition schemes [...] with equally ambitious engraving [...] projects’ – with the aim of reviving the fortunes of history painting.¹³⁰ These galleries clustered around London’s Pall Mall, which facilitated an important form of novel entertainment that started to align the written word with its visual interpretation.¹³¹ In so doing, I contend he rapidly responded to contemporary interest in the novel, entertainment and spectacle, and aided different sensory ways in which a female owner could learn about, and understand, conduct.

The final chapter in this thesis is titled ‘Lady Charlotte Schreiber and Fan Leaf Collecting in the Nineteenth Century’. The previous chapters have cumulatively built up details of Wilson’s professional life, his trading activities and his nexus of connections in London. This chapter adopts a transtemporal approach by exploring the meaning of Wilson’s fans for a nineteenth-century audience and Lady Schreiber. It establishes Lady

¹²⁹ Quoted in Robin Dix, ‘Addison and the Concept of ‘Novelty’ as a Basic Aesthetic Category’, *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 26:4, 1986, 385.

¹³⁰ Rosie Dias, “‘A World of Pictures’: Pall Mall and the topography of display, 1780-99”, Charles W. J. Withers and Miles Ogborn (eds), *Georgian Geographies: Essays on Space, Place and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century*, Manchester, 2004, 93.

¹³¹ Luisa Calè, *Fuseli’s Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, Oxford, 2006, 6.

Schreiber's involvement with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers, networks of connections and unusual collecting practices, to reveal her intentions for her own collection and importance as a collector. It maintains that Lady Schreiber's collection of every known fan design created by Wilson helps to create reflect his standing as a fan designer in his own time. Additionally, Chapter Four suggests that Lady Schreiber's tracing of the development of caricature on the fan leaf format highlights her own interest in the relationship between an owner and fan in its original usage. Therefore, Chapter Four concludes that Lady Schreiber's collection of Wilson's fan print designs speaks to the fact that they must be understood as innovative artworks, in which narrative, form, function and ownership intersect in complex and sustained ways.

The conclusion draws together the main lines of enquiry from this thesis and corroborates the fact that the eighteenth-century engraved English narrative fan must be (re)established as a complex and significant artwork in its original period of production. It determines that Wilson's fan prints, alongside fan leaves produced by his contemporaries, were at the centre of a multiplex relationship with other types of printed artwork available to purchase, as well as novel forms of spectacle, in the 1790s. It confirms that the study of the printed narrative fan can develop current understanding of eighteenth-century prints and print culture and contributes to an awareness of eighteenth-century social conduct. Importantly, well-established and newer modes of behaviours were issues both played upon, and reinforced by, fan makers' reuse of print and literary material, and so, in turn, contributed to modern debates during this period. Thus, this thesis ends by asserting that contemporary viewers should consider the eighteenth-century engraved narrative fan, especially those examples produced by

Wilson, as potentially empowering in terms of their association with female agency. But it is to Chapter One that focus must now turn so as to highlight the centrality of Wilson, his fan shop, and other such fan shops and shops selling fans, to the nexus of trades relating to print making, fashion and novelty in eighteenth-century London.

CHAPTER ONE

PLACE, PRODUCTION AND DISPLAY OF THE ENGRAVED FAN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON

This chapter contextualises the fan making business in eighteenth-century London. Fan shops instituted one of the most important commercial spaces in London and increasingly so towards the turn of the nineteenth century. Crucially, fan shops brought together a diverse range of objects, notably fans, prints and books; all of which helped ally the fan leaf format in the mind of the customer with the subject matter these other visual and textual forms displayed for sale. It demonstrates that fan shops, together with other establishments selling fans, constituted a significant type of commercial space in the city and were at the centre of a variety of trades relating to print making, fashion, novelty and shopping. By doing so, I argue that the fan maker George Wilson was securing a consumer base that overlapped with the popular print market. Moreover, this chapter highlights the significance of the locality of his own trade in the Pall Mall area to his success. The exact dates of Wilson's practice are unknown, but he was active from before 1795 to after 1801, and his shop was situated in a well-established fan making industry in the fashionable West End of the city, partly evidenced by the

number of advertisements taken out in newspapers by the fan maker and seller Martha Gamble (active before 1710 to after 1740).

This chapter proposes that Wilson's network of relations played a part in securing his own success in the fan trade, as well as impacting upon the type of fans he made (all surviving fans are printed) and the narratives these fans depict, such as those carrying cyclical themes. The fan industry included some leading female fan makers and this chapter suggests that Wilson's collaborations with the Master Fan Maker and seller Sarah Ashton, in particular, was valuable in his approach to fans.¹³² As later chapters in this thesis will demonstrate, this is particularly evident in his combination of text and image, drawn from contemporary conduct literature.

Here we see that that fan shops proved an ideal environment for the mixing of different types of visual and literary formats, available to Wilson's customer base. It considers the fact that female customers viewing Wilson's combination of visual and textual forms may have helped ally the fan leaf format in their minds as serving an alternative pedagogic purpose to conduct texts. This chapter also reveals close connections between the publishing strategies of fan makers and print makers, such as publishing fans as part of a series annually, showing how the study of print making in eighteenth-century London needs to also consider the production of fans.

¹³² Sarah Ashton was appointed Master Fan Maker in 1770 according to the Worshipful Company of Fan Maker's C. Master List 1726-1939, in 'Fan Makers' Company - This Being the Records of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers and Other Interesting Articles', unpublished manuscript, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS21156-8.

In the first half of the chapter, the importance of the Pall Mall area for fan makers and fan shop owners is examined, and Wilson's own fan making activities and network of partnerships are established within the context of this centre of fan production and sale. I then consider the collaborative and gender aspects of Wilson's fan making in this area. The case study of Gamble, who owned a fan shop in St. Martin's Court in the first half of the eighteenth century, highlights the fact that there was a well-established history of fan shops operating in this area before Wilson's own fan trade was set up in St. Martin's Lane by the 1790s. Wilson's collaboration with Ashton is then investigated. The second half of this chapter turns emphasis to analyse the different types of shops selling fans that existed in the mid to latter half of the eighteenth century and the marketing and publishing strategies they utilised to sell and promote engraved fans. Included in this discussion is a look inside the commercial space of the fan shop and its role as a key site for bringing together visual objects and literary texts. I suggest that the viewing of different formats together possibly helped to highlight that the fan leaf format could serve a distinctive type of instructional and entertaining purpose. The last part of this chapter offers an examination of how Wilson's fan production reflected these practices by detailing an overview of the types of motifs and themes he was selling. It is important to note in this chapter that even when some evidence is not obtainable, like the exact number of fans brought in London in the 1790s, there is sufficient proof available – by way of analysing such things as trade cards – to help build up a sense of the viewing and purchasing context in which women brought fans.

St. Martin's Lane and the Pall Mall Area as a Place of Fan Production

Wilson's business was located at No. 108 St. Martin's Lane, in the Pall Mall area of London, as hand-written on two of his fan print designs (Fig. 1 and Fig. 3). Richard Horwood's *Map of London, Westminster and Southwark shewing Every House, 1792-1799* (Fig. 23), featuring the immediate vicinity, reveals the yard of St. Martin's Court, with two alleyways extending its length from the thoroughfare of Charing Cross Road to St. Martin's Lane. The shops located along these streets included such businesses as jewellers, cabinetmakers, as well as bricklayers, china and book sellers.¹³³ An appreciation of the closeness of the shop fronts to the open space of St. Martin's Court can also be gleaned from two plates depicting east and west looking views of St. Martin's Court for the twentieth volume of the 1881 *Survey of London*, focusing on the range of St Martin-in-the-Fields (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25). They capture the sense of prosperity that this street must have held at the time of Wilson's period of operation. Even as it stands today, No. 108 St. Martin's Lane (Fig. 26) retains something of its imposing nature that customers would have experienced upon their arrival outside its entrance when under Wilson's management. Taking an expansive view of the bottom half of St. Martin's Lane (Fig. 27), (in which No. 108 is situated at the end on the right-hand side), reveals how the site of Wilson's fan shop would have been desirable for a merchant to place themselves in the hope of securing trade. The church of St Martin-in-the-Fields would have attracted visitors and regular congregations to the area. Furthermore, the cross-roads that lie next to St Martin-in-the-Fields would have given a sense of this location to all those who visited as both the geographical and entertainment centre of the capital.¹³⁴

¹³³ G. Gater and F. Hiorns (eds), *Survey of London: Volume 20: St Martin-in-the-Field, Pt III: Trafalgar Square and Neighbourhood*, London, 1940, 297-300.

¹³⁴ Lucy Inglis, *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, London, 2013, 110.

As Lucy Inglis reveals, an early description of the vicinity of St. Martin's Lane comes from John Strype's *Survey of the Cities of London & Westminster*, published in 1720. In this text, Strype explains how a visitor to this area may first encounter 'Cecil-Court [...] a new built Court, with very good Houses, fit for good Inhabitants, and hath a large Passage, with a Freestone Pavement, into Castle-street, and out of this Court is a Passage into St. Martin's Lane'.¹³⁵ Nikolaus Pevsner also notes the number of newly constructed eighteenth-century courts, which led off St. Martin's Lane.¹³⁶ Strype's description confirms the fact that the area surrounding Wilson's fan shop would have possibly attracted a customer base mostly comprised of the middling and upper-classes due to the respectable nature of this area. As Helen Berry argues 'shopping was mainly seen as a [...] plausible activity [for] middling and upper sorts in Hanoverian England, a distinctive yet every day part of life, especially in London'.¹³⁷ Indeed, Angela Rosenthal states that most printed fan designs could be bought for a couple of shillings (under two pounds in today's money), with a single copper-plate printing enabling up to ten thousand runs of a fan print design after techniques improved in the early 1730s.¹³⁸ This fact points to the likely circulation of many thousands of different engraved fan designs in London by the 1790s and the high demand for this product by a customer base comprising a clientele from both the middle and higher echelons of society. Certainly,

¹³⁵ John Strype, *Survey of the Cities of London & Westminster*, London, 1720. Quoted in Lucy Inglis, *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, London, 2013, 110.

¹³⁶ Simon Bradley and Nikolaus Pevsner, *London 6: Westminster (The Buildings of England)*, New Haven and London, 2003, 360.

¹³⁷ Helen Berry, 'Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12, 2002, 375.

¹³⁸ Angela Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender: Women and the "Secret" Sign Language of Fans in Hogarth's Work', Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (eds), *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, London, 2001, 123.

this was a period in which an emergent polite shopping culture was being created, wherein novel patterns of acquisition and leisure were being set.¹³⁹

An anonymously engraved illustration *St. Martin's Lane, Central London* (Fig. 28), produced in 1820, at a time when Wilson may have still have been trading, highlights the bustle of trade, transport and pleasurable promenading that characterised the length of this lane. A closer examination of this illustration shows gas street lamps and wide pavements as two prominent features of St. Martin's Lane, helping to make walking along it an enjoyable experience as passers-by could better view the wares displayed inside bay-fronted shop windows. As Jerry White explains, the introduction of street lighting in the early 1790s gave the crowds a better view of what other sights were on offer.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, as White argues, the 'cunning device' of displaying wares behind large windows, as shown in this engraving, meant that the novel enjoyment 'faced two ways – looking and being looked at' – with shop keepers and fan shop owners able to get the measure of potential customers from the other side of the glass.¹⁴¹ The engraving also depicts well-dressed women and their children, a woman carrying a textile bundle on her head (possibly a seller heading towards, or from, her own shop) and a horse-drawn carriage and cart occupying the roadway. Strype's description of this area of the capital confirms its suitability for 'good' inhabitants to live in, many of whom would

¹³⁹ Berry, 'Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England', 375.

¹⁴⁰ Jerry White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, London, 2013, 79.

¹⁴¹ White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 188.

have frequented the various shops and retail outlets in the area as customers partaking in a kind of ‘shopping circuit’.¹⁴²

Wilson’s fan shop was also advantageously situated in proximity to the commercial establishments that were located within the greater expanse of Pall Mall and Leicester Fields. Inglis describes the Pall Mall area as one ‘full of creative types and pioneers’.¹⁴³ She draws attention to the many ‘engravers, painters and intellectuals [who] lived on or close to the street [St. Martin’s Lane]’.¹⁴⁴ If a marked map of St. Martin’s Lane and the wider Pall Mall area (Fig. 29) is analysed, showing some of the commercial establishments, entertainments and exhibition venues in operation at the time of Wilson’s period of trading, a sense of how key this area of London was to Wilson’s commercial activity can be garnered.

Furthermore, observation of the geographical situation of the annotated locations on this map indicates that this was an area that fan purchases could interact with a variety of visual material. For example, just eight doors away from Wilson’s fan shop a prominent organ making shop was in business at No. 100 St. Martin’s Lane, while to the left of Wilson’s establishment, on the opposite side of the Lane, was a print shop owned by William Humphrey (the brother of the print seller Hannah Humphreys).¹⁴⁵ Nearby, the respected artist supplier John Middleton’s colour and paper hanging shop stood at No.

¹⁴² Inglis, *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, 110.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁴⁵ J. Thompson’s engraved trade card, advertising his taxidermist shop at No. 5 St Martin’s Lane, features detailed animal imagery, including animated depictions of a lion and a tiger.

81 St. Martin's Lane, neighbouring New Slaughter's Coffee House.¹⁴⁶ In addition to these trades, a plethora of book shops were spread across the length of St. Martin's Lane. For instance, Alexander Copland's book shop could be found at No. 67 (he is recorded as operating from this address in 1797) and Francis Benedict's book shop was sited in Great May's building at No. 4 St Martin's Lane.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, Richard Dartnall's book shop occupied No. 26 St. Martin's Court, just off St. Martin's Lane, during this period.¹⁴⁸ Listings recorded between 1791 and 1797 by the Philological Society in *The European Magazine* also evidence such persons operating in St. Martin's Court as including a gingerbread maker, a jeweller, a cane-merchant, a China seller and, significantly, as shall be seen in the following chapter, a circulating library.¹⁴⁹

What is more, Wilson's business was located in an area occupied by different types of artists, such as James Gillray (1756-1815) and Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827), both caricaturists and printmakers who produced great numbers of engraved political and social satires in the 1780 and 1790s.¹⁵⁰ As Vic Gatrell states, 'local skills multiplied' in and around the Pall Mall area from the 1750s, with Long Acre and Great Queen Street crowded with 'workshops for coachbuilders, goldsmiths, barrow-beaters, colour-makers, artists' tool-makers, modellers and fan-mounters'.¹⁵¹ Throughout the eighteenth century, Old Slaughter's Coffee House, founded in 1692 at Nos. 74-75 St. Martin's Lane, played host to a remarkable array of printers and painters residing in and around

¹⁴⁶ Anonymous, *British Artists' Suppliers, 1650-1950*, <https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-suppliers/n>, accessed 13 September 2018.

¹⁴⁷ Anonymous, *History of London Book Trades (LBT)*, http://lbt.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mediawiki/index.php/History_of_the_Project, accessed 11 September 2018.

¹⁴⁸ Anonymous, *History of London Book Trades (LBT)*.

¹⁴⁹ The Philological Society, *The European Magazine, and London Review; Containing the Literature, History, Politics, Arts, Manners and Amusements of the Age*, 1, 1791-1797, 52.

¹⁵⁰ Anthony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550-1820*, London, 2016, 124, 282, 283+341.

¹⁵¹ Vic Gatrell, *The First Bohemians: Life and Art in London's Golden Age*, London, 2013, 47.

Pall Mall's fashionable stretch.¹⁵² These figures included William Kent (1685-1748), the French engraver Hubert-François Bourguignon (commonly known as Gravelot) (1699-1773) and the writer Henry Fielding (1707-1754). It additionally catered for a band of artists called 'the St. Martin's Lane Group [Academy]', set up by the painter and engraver William Hogarth (1697-1764) in Peter's Court in 1735, and which was a precursor to the Royal Academy of Arts.¹⁵³

The St. Martin's Lane Academy included a number of prominent British and continental male engravers (women were not eligible to join) and was formed on the basis of a club rather than a rigidly hierarchical structure, each member having an equal vote.¹⁵⁴

Members of this Academy drew from life models, taking it in turn to pose as the figure, as well as sometimes drawing from casts.¹⁵⁵ The Victorian author Walter Thornbury, in the third volume of *Old and New London*, published in 1878, offers a commentary on Pall Mall's artistic inhabitants and visitors, mentioning that 'many of the houses in St. Martin's Lane have historic and artistic associations'.¹⁵⁶ He relates that opposite Old Slaughter's Coffee House, the painter Nathaniel Hone exhibited his *Conjuror* painting in 1775, adding that *Conjuror* was intended as a satire on the way in which Sir Joshua Reynolds composed his pictures, who lived in St. Martin's Lane, along with the painter Sir James Thornhill.¹⁵⁷ That Thornbury also notes the foreign-born artists Henry Fuseli (1741-1825) and Louis-François Roubilliac (1695-1762) studied in St. Martin's Lane as

¹⁵² On the function of coffee houses, see Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991, 226. Jerry White discusses the eighteenth-century coffee house in relation to its role at the centre of business and sociability in London (Jerry White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, London, 2013, 175).

¹⁵³ Michael Rosenthal, *Hogarth*, London, 2005, 27.

¹⁵⁴ Matthew Craske, *William Hogarth*, London, 2000, 7+25.

¹⁵⁵ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 25.

¹⁵⁶ Walter Thornbury, *Old and New London: Volume 3*, London, 1878, 159.

¹⁵⁷ Thornbury, *Old and New London: Volume 3*, 159.

part of the St. Martin's Lane Academy, though neither of them lived there, suggests that this Lane also attracted artists from overseas, a number of whom were listed among Middleton's clientele.¹⁵⁸

Additionally, commercial activities were conducted in coffee houses like both the New and Old Slaughter's Coffee Houses, including the auction of nearby freeholds, and the selling of auction catalogues, such as the sale in March 1772 of items including 'elegant snuff boxes' at the George and Vulture Tavern in Cornhill.¹⁵⁹ As Thornbury puts it, if the houses on St. Martin's Lane 'have not been tenanted by artists, [they] have been the haunts and homes of extensive picture-dealers'.¹⁶⁰ As the map indicates, Wilson's fan shop was located only a two-minute walk from the furniture maker Thomas Chippendale (Junior)'s cabinet-making premises, and a ten-minute amble from thriving commercial spaces such as James Christie's auction house at the 'Great Rooms' at Nos. 83-84 Pall Mall, which 'specialis[ed] in high-quality pictures'.¹⁶¹ Also, Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley opened their porcelain showroom on Great Newport Street, just off the top of St. Martin's Lane, in the late 1760s.¹⁶² Consequently, auspicious businesses like that of Christie's would have brought wealthy customers to the immediate locale. Their clients or speculative buyers would have brought a discerning eye both to the artwork displayed in their selling rooms, as well as to the print shops and warehouses dotted around the auction house.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 159-160.

¹⁵⁹ Anonymous, Classified Adverts, *Public Advertiser*, March 1772, n.p.

¹⁶⁰ Thornbury, *Old and New London: Volume 3*, 159.

¹⁶¹ Inglis, *Georgian London, Into the Streets*, 110.

¹⁶² Gatrell, *The First Bohemians: Life and Art in London's Golden Age*, 48.

Additionally, as Kate Smith has highlighted, shoppers in eighteenth-century London were exposed to a multitude of different types of physical interactions as they touched, viewed and sometimes listened to objects – such as tapping bronze busts or porcelain objects to check their originality – in order to comprehend their quality and function.¹⁶³ Thus, the act of carrying newly purchased fans from premises like Wilson’s shop – which could be opened, closed, tapped, viewed, touched, as well as being used for poking and prodding in the hands of a purchaser – would have heightened a customer’s sensory experience of buying and consuming goods in the commercial spaces of the capital. Customers would have likely visited shops selling various forms of visual art, including fan shops, on their way to and from Christie’s, mingling with regular customers and artisans. Accordingly, they would have participated in transporting visible, and mobile forms of print and paintings after purchasing from these vendors.

An example of just this sort of ‘shopping circuit’, including the purchase of a fan, is described in fictional novels of the era, such as those by the author Henry Fielding. Fielding’s first volume contains a satirical play, *Several Masque’s* (1728), in which a character called Lord Formal recalls his own circuit of shopping in the centre of London. He lists his day’s activities as follows: ‘I have found a brace of chairmen this morning. I have been, sir, at 3 milliners, 2 perfumers, my booksellers, and a fan shop!’¹⁶⁴ This extract, albeit satirical in nature, acknowledges the number and type of shops men and women may have visited in their daily routine.

¹⁶³ Kate Smith, ‘Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of Design History*, 2:1, 2012, 1.

¹⁶⁴ Henry Fielding and Andrew Murphy, *The Works of Henry Fielding, Esq; with the Life of the Author, In Twelve Volumes. A New Edition*, London, 1783, 21.

At the same time, novel forms of visual spectatorship began to proliferate in the Pall Mall area as the public's individual and collective vision was gaining significance. The geographical concentration of these new types of visual spectacle are particularly important, as Wilson's fan shop was located nearby, and his clientele could have interacted with the imagery they displayed. Rosie Dias points out that Pall Mall turned into, as she coins it, 'a world of pictures' by the 1780s, and pervaded all aspects of public life (in the area) by the 1790s.¹⁶⁵ There were several key art galleries that populated the Pall Mall area in the period Wilson was known to be trading. The Historic Gallery, situated at Schomberg House at No. 82 Pall Mall in the 1790s, displayed the paintings produced by the miniature painter and publisher Robert Bowyer (1758-1834) for his illustrated edition of David Hume's *Histories of England*. In 1789 the print seller John Boydell (1720-1804) opened the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery at No. 52 Pall Mall (only a fifteen-minute walk from Wilson's fan shop).¹⁶⁶ Ten years later, in 1799, Fuseli established the Milton Gallery at No. 118 Pall Mall, which showed his artistic interpretations of the poet John Milton's (1608-1674) literary work *Paradise Lost*, first published in 1667.¹⁶⁷ In 1789 John Macklin (1752/53-1800) opened the Poet's Gallery at No. 125 Pall Mall (the old Royal Academy), which contained paintings illustrative of the British poets, as well as biblical scenes.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Rosie Dias, "'A World of Pictures': Pall Mall and the topography of display, 1780-99', Charles W. J. Withers and Miles Ogborn (eds), *Georgian Geographies: Essays on Space, Place and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century*, Manchester, 2004, 92.

¹⁶⁶ David Irwin, 'Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Unpublished Letters', *The Burlington Magazine*, 101:681, December 1959, 436-437+439-440, 436. See also Luisa Calè's *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, Oxford, 2006.

¹⁶⁷ Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, New Haven, 2013, 88.

¹⁶⁸ Anonymous, *The Times*, April 1794, 3.

However, exhibition spaces were not the only artistic draw in the area.¹⁶⁹ While places like Fuseli's Milton's Gallery commanded much press and public attention, the streets surrounding the area 'extended this artistic topography of Pall Mall'.¹⁷⁰ Included in this list were the Imperial Museum, which housed Old Master paintings until 1787. The Great Room at Spring Gardens exhibited artwork produced by members of the Royal Academy of Arts from 1761 to 1772, before the collection's temporary move to Old Somerset House and then its permanent transfer into purpose-built apartments in the first new wing of New Somerset House in 1780.¹⁷¹ After this time, displays such as Henri Maillardet's 'Automatical Exhibition', exhibited in 1798, were held at the Great Room.¹⁷² As well, there were a variety of print sellers and fan shops, including Hannah Humphrey's print shop, which was first located at No. 37 New Bond Street between 1794 and 1797 and then moved to No. 27 St James's Street thereafter.¹⁷³

Dias draws attention to the fact that newspapers remarked on the sight of 'fashionable pedestrians' congregating around Pall Mall, eager to partake in consuming new aesthetic experiences.¹⁷⁴ *The Times* observed, in April 1794, that this discerning section of the public now frequented a growing number of art galleries:

[Art galleries] have enough room to engage their [the public's] attention in Pall Mall, exclusive of the constant Auctions at Christie's [...] [T]he old Shakespeare on the North side, the Historical Gallery, the New Shakespeare, with the Polygraphic Pictures, on the South Side [...] are all so worth notice, it would be

¹⁶⁹ Dias, "'A World of Pictures': Pall Mall and the topography of display, 1780-99", 95.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁷² Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London*, Massachusetts, 1978, 250.

¹⁷³ Dias, "'A World of Pictures': Pall Mall and the topography of display, 1780-99", 95.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 93.

doing discredit to the National taste and curiosity to suppose almost any person should leave town without seeing them.¹⁷⁵ So, it is evident that art galleries were considered to be of interest to local residents, as well as travellers from further afield, more on which will be explored in Chapter Three.

There were a number of other, more temporary forms of public spectacle situated near to Wilson's commercial establishment that a fan purchaser could view too. 'Laterna Magica', or magic lantern shows for example, were staged in and around the open spaces of London's Pall Mall. These visual displays were developed in the 1600s by a Dutchman named Christian Huygens as a type of image projector employing painted pictures on sheets of glass, a lens and a light source – as Johann Zahn's *Oculus Artificialis Teledioptricus Sive Telescopium* (Fig. 30), published in 1685, illustrates – but which gained renewed interest from the 1770s.¹⁷⁶ A similar type of moving imagery that entranced a late eighteenth-century audience was that of phantasmagoria or fantasmagorie/a.¹⁷⁷ Premiering on the London entertainment circuit after the magic lantern, phantasmagoria were a form of theatre, which used a modified magic lantern to project images onto walls or smoke, frequently using rear projection, in this way 'appearing to suddenly advance upon spectators'.¹⁷⁸ Invented in France by a Belgian physicist in the late eighteenth century, it gained popularity from the 1790s.¹⁷⁹ A print of

¹⁷⁵ Anonymous, *The Times*, 3. These galleries included exhibitions housing Old Master pictures, for example in the Imperial Museum, as well as more commercially minded spaces like Thomas Macklin's Poet's Gallery and John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery.

¹⁷⁶ Altick, *The Shows of London*, 117. An advert placed in the *General Evening Post*, in January 1790, authored by a Mr Scott, champions the use of the magic lantern in one's own household. In this advert Mr Scott declares that his magic lanterns 'are contained in neat boxes, each LANTERN WITH TREZOLE SLIDES, on which are finely painted about SIXTY grotesque figures, shown by reflection, are magnified from a miniature, as large as nature [...] wonderful to those not in on the secret'. So, this form of viewing, focused around a magic lantern, like the fan, could take place within a domestic environment.

¹⁷⁷ André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac and Santiago Hidalgo, *A Companion to Early Cinema*, London, 2012, 1.

¹⁷⁸ Altick, *The Shows of London*, 218.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

an engraved advertisement for Paul de Philipsthal's *Phantasmagoria* (Fig. 31), first enacted on stage at the Strand's Lyceum Theatre in 1801, only a ten-minute walk from St Martin's Lane, shows the type of subject matter that was typically projected on stage, normally including supernatural themes.

The eidophusikon was a comparable type of moving image invented in the 1780s and was first staged to the public in the geographical vicinity of St. Martin's Lane. The eidophusikon was more akin to a work of art rather than an illusory visual effect and was created by the French scenery painter Philip James de Louthembourg (1740-1812). De Louthembourg opened his eidophusikon in Leicester Square in 1781. This was described by newspapers of the day as 'Moving Pictures, representing Phenomena of Nature'.¹⁸⁰ De Lougherbourg's pen and grey ink depiction of *A view of Philip James de Louthembourg's Eidophusikon* (Fig. 32), completed in 1782, conveys a sense of the mechanics of how this would have worked. The eidophusikon was one of a 'legion of mechanical shows' staged in London during the 1700s, alongside that of 'speaking automatons' and jewel-encrusted mechanical animals displayed at James Cox's Museum at the Great Room in Spring Gardens. Wilson's fan buyers could have engaged with these spaces of visual spectacle while visiting the Pall Mall area.¹⁸¹

The area in which Wilson was making and trading his fans also incorporated the painter Robert Barker's painted topographical panoramic views by the early 1790s. Barker's *Panoramic View of London* (Fig. 33), completed in 1792 as a coloured aquatint mounted

¹⁸⁰ Anonymous, *London and Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 8 March 1781, n.p.

¹⁸¹ White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 316.

on linen, envelops the viewer into experiencing a continuous panoramic vision. In 1793 Barker moved his panoramas to a purpose-built building in Leicester Square, charging viewers to stand on a platform under a skylight.¹⁸² As Barker explained, his panoramic paintings could offer ‘an entire view of any country or situation as it appears to an observer turning quite round’.¹⁸³ This immersive experience involved the structural design of the building, comprising a rotunda with two levels and a path between the platforms designed visually to ‘plunge spectators into darkness and, by obliterating the memory of the first, prepare them for a second illusion’.¹⁸⁴ Hence, Barker created a picture viewing experience in which the spectator could stand back from and take in the whole image, giving one an impression of standing within a new environment.

Wilson’s own lack of advertising – there are no surviving records, or any other documentation penned by, nor pertaining to, him – was perhaps due, in part, to the fact that he worked in the centre of this area of commercial and social activity, surrounded by theatres, as well as craftsmen’s businesses. The plethora of theatres located around Covent Garden and the Hay-Market, for example, were all closely situated to Wilson’s fan shop, thus providing theatre-goers the opportunity to purchase a fan before a performance and utilise them in the nearby public entertainment venues. Some fan shops themselves sold tickets to theatre performances, as shall be touched upon later in this chapter. This also raises the question of how Wilson used the products he created and sold to promote his business. Here it should be noted that Wilson signed fan leaves he produced with his name, and then variously: ‘Geo. Wilson, invent. et del.’ (original

¹⁸² Bernard Comment, *The Painted Panorama*, New York, 1999, 24.

¹⁸³ Reprinted in Laurent Mannoni, Donato Pesenti Campagnoni, and David Robinson (eds), *Light and Movement: Incunabula of the Motion Picture, 1420-1896*, London, 1996, 157-158.

¹⁸⁴ Comment, *The Painted Panorama*, 24.

designer and drawer), ‘As the Act Directs by G. Wilson 108 St. Martins Lane’ and ‘G. Wilson, delt.’.¹⁸⁵ These signatures indicate that he was both the creator and maker of these works; he drew the designs and these originated as a product of his own ingenuity, conferring a sense of his distinction as a fan maker.

George Woolliscroft Rhead remarks in *History of the Fan*, published in 1910, that Wilson’s name ‘appears on a number of fans of this period both as a designer, engraver, and publisher’, leading Rhead to conclude that he may have ‘supplied designs, or stock, to other publishers’.¹⁸⁶ Such comments point towards Wilson’s range of practice within the London trades linked to print making and cultural consumption in the 1790s. As Susan Mayor states, after the 1734 Engraving Copyright Act, it became standard practice for some English printed fans to include the name of the publisher, and commonly their address and date of publication too.¹⁸⁷ However, this thesis’s research demonstrates that it appears to have been far rarer for a fan designer or engraver, rather than a publisher, to include their name and place of business on the fan leaf surface, as

¹⁸⁵ The number of known fan leaf designs signed by Wilson are as follows: the hand-coloured version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512), *The Good Swain* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.483) and *A Selection of Beau’s Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; Or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511), all produced in 1795; *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482) and *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.1010.32), both produced in 1796; *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart (untitled)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510), *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,495) and *The Female Seven Ages (1)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415), all produced in 1797; *Peace Restored by the Genius of Happiness* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415), produced in 1800: and, lastly, *The United Sisters* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415), produced in 1801.

¹⁸⁶ George Woolliscroft Rhead, *The History of the Fan*, London, 1910, 265.

¹⁸⁷ Susan Mayor, *The Collector’s Guide to Fans*, London, 1995, 47.

Wilson did, unless they were a celebrated painter or engraver, such as the Italian printmaker Pierre Antoine Martini (1733-1800).¹⁸⁸

Wilson's unusual practice of signing his works as designer and/or maker may be related to issues of copyright. According to Mayor, copyright did not present any problems for an engraver creating original designs until the development of printing in the late fifteenth century; it was the need to sell multiple copies of a single printed work before a final profit could be made which raised the question of securing copyright.¹⁸⁹ From 1554 until 1924 copyright was normally secured by registration with the Stationers' Company in London at Stationers' Hall.¹⁹⁰ The Archive at Stationer's Hall holds Wilson's fan leaf registrations, which are potentially valuable primary sources. Wilson showed diligence in securing registration and thus copyright of his fan print designs at Stationers' Hall – perhaps illustrating his professionalism as a fan maker and the importance he placed on the original design of many of his printed fan leaves. Unfortunately, Stationer's Hall currently cannot provide archive access to researchers. After the completion of Stationer's Hall's archive relocation project, I hope to examine Wilson's registrations.

However, there was widespread disregard of the registration procedure by eighteenth-century craftspeople and printers.¹⁹¹ This was partly because of the fees payable to the Stationers for registration, but also due to the obligation of providing complimentary

¹⁸⁸ Antony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, London, 2016, 71.

¹⁸⁹ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to Fans*, 47.

¹⁹⁰ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 104.

¹⁹¹ Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to Fans*, 47.

copies for copyright libraries.¹⁹² Stina Teilmann-Lock makes the point that the 1734 Engraving Act protected the engraved image as an ‘intangible work’, and only artists who designed and engraved the work could seek copyright, not those engravers reproducing imagery from paintings.¹⁹³ Hence, copyrighting an engraved image could confer ‘a sense of status, recognition’, protect it from unauthorised copies, as well as increase profits.¹⁹⁴ So, it appears likely that Wilson adopted print making practice to fans by registering his fan print designs to secure his works, bestow on them a sense of eminence, as well as increase their saleability. In addition, he may have desired his fan print designs to be regarded in the same way as single-sheet prints by clientele.

While Wilson seems unusual in copyrighting his works, he also appears to have operated outside the official trade body for fan makers, the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers. The Worshipful Company of Fan Makers was officially incorporated as a company after its Charter was granted in 1709 by Queen Anne (1665-1714).¹⁹⁵ The Fan Makers’ Company, still active today, is the youngest of London’s Livery Companies.¹⁹⁶ After its incorporation, fan makers were then able to own property, set up seven-year apprenticeships, as well as enforce legislation against imported fans.¹⁹⁷ For a fan maker to be granted Master Fan Maker status during this period enabled them to oversee two

¹⁹² Mayor, *The Collector’s Guide to Fans*, 47.

¹⁹³ Stina Teilmann-Lock, *The Object of Copyright, A Conceptual History of Originals and Copies in Literature, Art and Design*, London, 2015, 161-162.

¹⁹⁴ Teilmann-Lock, *The Object of Copyright*, 162.

¹⁹⁵ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 104.

¹⁹⁶ Anonymous, 1709 Charter of the Fan Maker’s Company, Worshipful Company of Fanmakers Archive, unpublished handwriting, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS21156-8.

¹⁹⁷ Anonymous, ‘1709 Charter of the Fan Maker’s Company, Worshipful Company of Fanmakers’, Manuscript MS21156-8.

Wardens and a Free Warden, who was responsible for controlling local fan making.¹⁹⁸ A Master Fan Maker was also in charge of a Foreign Warden, who was responsible for reducing the import of fans into London from elsewhere in Britain and abroad.¹⁹⁹ He/she could also condemn fans not up to standard made in the Cities of London and Westminster.²⁰⁰ Additionally, all members of Worshipful Company of Fan Makers had to be Freemen.²⁰¹ Freemen qualified as Freemen of the City, allowing them the vote in Parliamentary and Civic elections.²⁰²

The Company archive reveals no record granting Wilson either Master Fan Maker, Free Warden or Assistant status by the Company.²⁰³ It is not known, despite this author's research, if Wilson was eligible to join or whether he did not seek membership of the Company. Clearly, as expanded upon above, there were benefits to being a member, including controlling the quality of fans produced in the area and imports of fans from abroad. It appears its constitution did allow signing of fan designs, although surviving eighteenth-century fans made by Master Fan Makers that evidence them as 'invent' or 'delt.' seem rare from this author's investigations. However, it may be reasonably proposed that Wilson most likely measured it to be of no significant personal advantage to join the Company or to undergo the required period of apprenticeship to progress towards becoming a Master Fan Maker. After all, this was a time when many fan

¹⁹⁸ Anonymous, '1709 Charter of the Fan Maker's Company, Worshipful Company of Fanmakers', Manuscript MS21156-8.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 100.

²⁰³ Anonymous, Fan Makers' Company - This Being the Records of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers and Other Interesting Article, unpublished manuscript, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS21156-8.

makers also worked in such professions as haberdashers and book sellers, and the number of recorded apprentices registered by the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in this period had fallen to under four a year.²⁰⁴

Alternatively, Wilson could have held Freeman status, although there is no evidence to support this. Freeman status was traditionally gained by having a parent who was a liveryman of the Company, serving a requisite number of years as an apprentice or upon paying a fee.²⁰⁵ Therefore, for Wilson to be able to operate outside this professional framework, further strengthens the argument that he was situated in the middle of a thriving commercial environment. It was thus perhaps not necessary to rise to a Master Fan Maker of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers, to both survive and consolidate a widespread fan making reputation of excellence. Moreover, as shall be argued throughout this thesis, Wilson's creation of his engraved fans reflected interconnections across a diversity of trades that was much in the spirit of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers' motto, 'Arts & trade united'.

It is relevant at this point to highlight that female fan makers were important contributors to London as a fan-making centre. Women, like their male counterparts, were crucial in the growth of printed fan leaf production and dissemination from the 1730s onwards, much like they were with regards to the production and dissemination

²⁰⁴ For example, as will be mentioned further on in this chapter, the mid-eighteenth-century trader Elixabeth [sic] Molyneux, located at the Golden-Fan and Dove in the Strand, sold all manner of haberdashery items, in addition to fans, as indicated by her trade card.

²⁰⁵ White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 100.

of prints.²⁰⁶ A number of women were granted Master Fan Maker status were women, including Anne Martin in 1749, who lived near Haymarket, and later Sarah Ashton, who was admitted in 1770 as she carried on the business in Little Britain Street after her husband died.²⁰⁷ Indeed, the importance of St Martin's Lane as an area for fan makers in Wilson's time, can be largely attributed to the highly regarded female fan maker, Martha Gamble, who owned The Golden Fan in St. Martin's Court, approximately fifty years before Wilson established his trade, and helped settle this area as a prime location, both for fan makers to work in and for a predominantly female clientele to travel to in order to buy fans.²⁰⁸ Gamble was responsible for putting a number of print images onto fans. The reputation of The Golden Fan as an establishment built upon Gamble's renown for her regular publication of fans featuring satirical subject matter directly transposed from narrative print series, created by artists such as Hogarth.²⁰⁹

Gamble sold copies of Hogarth's modern moral narratives transposed into engraved fan print designs, including the narrative series of six paintings and engravings that comprise *A Harlot's Progress* (Fig. 34), completed between 1732 and 1733, which she repeatedly advertised.²¹⁰ As Gamble announced in an edition of the *Evening Post*, issued in July 1732:

FANS of the Harlot's Progress, This Day is publish'd [sic], FANS of the Harlot's Progress, exactly engraved from 'the Original prints of Mr. Hogarth; in which

²⁰⁶ Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender', 124.

²⁰⁷ Anonymous, Membership Records, Worshipful Company of Fanmakers, unpublished manuscript, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS21419-37.

²⁰⁸ Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender', 125.

²⁰⁹ Martha Gamble placed a number of adverts for prints and fans in magazines in the 1730s, such as one titled 'PROPOSALS', in an edition of *Country Journal or the Craftsman*, published in 1734, which explicitly note these wares are to be brought from The Golden Fan.

²¹⁰ Rhead, *The History of the Fan*, 238.

the characters are justly preserved and beautifully published in various Co'ous [sic]. Sold by Mrs Gamble of *The Golden Fan*'. N.B: Gentlemen and Ladies may enclose them in [fan] cases, and send them to any part of England.²¹¹

This passage is significant as it positions fan prints of *A Harlot's Progress* as novel, desirable and high-quality artwork, and as objects which were ideal to be brought as transportable gifts. This version of *A Harlot's Progress* was produced by Giles King (active between 1730 and 1750), an engraver who specialised in reproducing printed images made by the Dutchman Arnout van Aken (active in the early eighteenth century) in alliance with Gamble.²¹² Gamble's advertisement confirms that narrative prints were transferred directly onto fans themselves. It evidences the use of the surface of a fan as a mobile vehicle on which to present widely-known and popular narrative series of prints. It appears that Gamble, like Wilson after her, knew her customer base well, and had a shrewd eye for making a profit, this fan leaf print proving successful commercially, each selling for a pricey 2s. 6d (approximately £14.72 in today's pound sterling currency).²¹³

That Hogarth first achieved commercial success with engravings of *A Harlot's Progress* and they were then transferred by Gamble to a printed fan indicates that the selling of fans with narrative subject matter could prove equally commercially successful. The circulation of his prints on fans likely also benefited Hogarth. Additionally, the fact that

²¹¹ Martha Gamble, Classified Adverts, 'FANS of the Harlot's Progress', *Evening Post*, 15-18 July 1732; Issue 722, London, n.p. Containers, normally formed in the shape of a box, for fans in the seventeenth and eighteenth century were used for storing and carrying fans around on the person of the owner. Many of these boxes retain the original fan maker's label. Most eighteenth-century fan boxes were made of paper maché lined with printers' studio waste and have a long hexagonal or elliptical canister shape with a removable cap.

²¹² On Van Aken, see Stephen Bury, *Benezit Dictionary of British Graphic Artists and Illustrators, Volume One*, London, 2012, 637.

²¹³ Martha Gamble, Classified Adverts, 'Fans after *A Harlot's Progress*', *The Craftsman*, 1 July 1732, n.p.

it was translated straight onto the fan leaf surface demonstrates that the fan leaf format was interconnected across different visual formats. In this advert Gamble advertises the design of cases to match this specific fan print design, too, suggesting this fan print was a sought-after luxury item and potentially replaceable in order for the owner to keep up with the latest fashions as they changed. After all, as Porter puts it, newspapers, magazines and ‘tea-table conversations’ centred on the novelty of the latest fashions.²¹⁴ That Wilson traded in such close proximity to Gamble’s former shop, serves to indicate that Wilson was indeed following in her footsteps. As such, this factor may have aided his fan making reputation, as well as consolidating the area’s standing as one of innovative and fast-paced fan production. And with St. Martin’s Lane evidently a well-established space in which to set-up a successful fan business, it also gives an indication of the prominence of Wilson as a fan maker and designer.

It can be argued that Wilson’s collaborations with successful female publishers and fan makers aided the success of his own trade, the most noteworthy of these collaborations appearing to be Sarah Ashton, active before 1750 to 1807.²¹⁵ Ashton’s place of business was No. 28 Little Britain Street (a twenty-minute walk from St. Martin’s Lane). Not only did Ashton design and print her own fans for sale, she published at least thirteen engraved fan designs, seven of which were made by Wilson, illustrating the collaboration between the pair in the 1790s.²¹⁶ Wilson designed all of the fans which Ashton published, and that his name is included on these fan print designs points

²¹⁴ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991, 222.

²¹⁵ Anonymous, C. Master List 1726-1939, Fan makers’ Company - This Being the Records of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers and Other Interesting Articles, Worshipful Company of Fanmakers, unpublished, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS21156-8.

²¹⁶ Examination of the British Museum’s collection database reveals Ashton published at least thirteen fan prints and the exact number is likely to be higher.

towards a relationship in which Wilson's talent and status was both recognised by Ashton and considered a draw for her customers. As is made explicit by the title text of the stipple-engraved fan leaf, *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* (Fig. 10) designed and produced by Wilson and published by Ashton and Hadwen (first names unknown) in 1797, Wilson and Ashton also combined ideas over fan leaf design on occasion.²¹⁷

While Wilson engraved *The Quiz Club*, it appears that Ashton had a measure of input into the idea behind it, as shall be shown in the following chapters, in a similar manner to which women could contribute to some conduct-related publications in the late eighteenth century.²¹⁸ *The Quiz Club*'s subject matter depicts twelve beaus sporting six sets of contrasting characters and postures, each of whom have lines of first-person speech underneath their portrait roundels further revealing their character. Ashton's probable contribution to the conception and creation of this fan print design can be demonstrated by the fan's central roundel, which it declares is '*Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart*', 'S.A' likely being the initials of Sarah Ashton. Ashton died at the age of sixty-nine in 1807 so her collaborations with Wilson evidently came when she was well-known and respected, possibly indicating that there was a growing collaboration between fan leaf

²¹⁷ *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Quiz Club*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510.

²¹⁸ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, London, March 1775, n.p.

engravers, publishers, as well as sellers during this period.²¹⁹ Ashton demonstrates that women were involved in fan making and in designs that dealt with conduct subject matter, which forms the focus of following chapters to encourage, or warning against, certain behaviours. This aspect of Wilson's fan print designs is explored further in Chapter Two and is important to bear in mind because he collaborated with prominent female fan makers, and women's perceptions, interests and preoccupations, then, by implication, are part of the ideas his fans promote in relation to conduct.

Fan Shops and Shops Selling Fans in Eighteenth-Century London

So far, Wilson's fan shop has been identified as being at the centre of London's fan making industry. It has been ascertained, too, that he developed collaborative ties to successful female fan makers and prominent publishers working in this period.

Considering the centrality of female conduct to this study in subsequent chapters, it is central to establish how developments in the structure of commercial establishments facilitated new ways for a female clientele to view, touch and discuss fan leaves for sale. As Claire Walsh confirms, by the mid eighteenth century, many shops in London began to have fixed bay windows installed, wherein objects could remain positioned for external view for longer than a day.²²⁰ Indeed, John Styles reminds his reader that decorating a window 'became a crucial tool in shopkeepers' promotional strategy'.²²¹

Just such a display is illustrated on the mid eighteenth-century 'Trade Card of John

²¹⁹ Various, *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronical, For the Year MDCCCVII, Volume LXXVII, Part the Second*, Nicolas and Sons, London, July 1807, 686.

²²⁰ Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 8:3, 1995, 163.

²²¹ John Styles, *The Dress of the People, Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, New Haven and London, 2007, 167.

Flude/ Pawnbroker and Silversmith' (Fig. 35). This trade card, depicting Flude's glazed shop bay window, shows how a presentation of goods could be arranged and catch the eye of passers-by. Flude's bay window, for example, features a variety of different sized and shaped material goods, exhibited along its lower half, while artfully draped cloth and fabrics feature across the top.

Newly fashionable glass shop windows would have allowed for the effective display of fan leaves to potential purchasers peering in from outside. Hand-coloured fan prints would have possibly been put on show in the fan shop window display for best advantage and to attract the crowds in the hope that they would sell quickly. As Walsh contends, capturing the public's gaze was a concern to eighteenth-century shop owners and a key part of the experience of shopping in this period.²²² Shop vendors and craftsmen making objects for sale considered 'display, seduction, glazing and a controlled selling space' important to characterise their own commercial premises, and, as will be shown, was an aspect especially true of fan shops.²²³ The addition of a bay window to a shop's front could also help attract customers inside to enquire about other items that may not be on show. Fan stick makers like the fan maker and seller Edward Vaughan, as well as Ashton, produced and sold separate fan sticks (also referred to as mounts).²²⁴ These would have normally been stored behind the shop counter or separately off the main shop floor space. The fan shop's strong links to a diversity of trades relating to print making, fashion and carpentry additionally drew unwanted

²²² Claire Walsh, 'Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century', Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger (eds), *The Landscape of Consumption: Shopping Streets and Cultures in Western Europe, 1600-1900*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2014, 37.

²²³ Walsh, 'Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century', 37.

²²⁴ Sarah Ashton, 'News', *Public Advertiser*, 5 October 1775, n.p.

interest on occasion. Ashton placed a notice in the *Public Advertiser* on 5 October 1775, in which she reports a robbery of fan sticks from her fan shop in Little Britain.²²⁵ She describes how she was asked by a group of youths ‘to see some fan mounts [...] which were showed’ before they stole them, indicating fan leaf parts were sometimes considered valuable enough to become the target of theft.²²⁶

Along with shops, another widely used term describing some commercial establishments in the late eighteenth century was a ‘warehouse’. The design historian Clive Edwards has defined a warehouse as ‘a large building where raw materials or manufactured goods may be stored [and sometimes sold in the case of fan warehouses] prior to their distribution for sale’.²²⁷ Edwards explains that ‘by the middle part of the eighteenth-century, these kinds of “warehouse shops” saw an expansion in both numbers and in the splendour in which they were fitted out’.²²⁸ My research extends Edwards’ study by studying fan warehouses. Warehouses may have been at least five storeys high and sometimes incorporated a families’ living quarters. In Rudolph Ackermann’s hand-coloured engraved illustration of a London haberdasher warehouse interior, commissioned for the periodical *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics* (Fig. 36) in 1809, the high ceiling and ornate windows that enclose its interior space can all be noted. This scene depicts several stylishly dressed women, as well as a young couple, all engaged in viewing, touching or discussing expensive fabrics displayed in front of them. A number of rolled fabrics stored on racks either side of the floor and counter space can also be identified.

²²⁵ Ashton, ‘News’, n.p.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, n.p.

²²⁷ Clive D. Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture*, Manchester, 1996, 52.

²²⁸ Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture*, 52.

Likewise, a late eighteenth-century illustrated trade card advertising James Wheeley's 'Paper Hanging Warehouse' (Fig. 37), depicts a couple in fine dress scrutinising an unrolled section of 'paper hang', a type of early wallpaper. The woman holds a closed fan to her chest as she looks at the paper hang, perhaps in anticipation of using it to touch or point to it. Meanwhile, in the background of this scene, hundreds of rolls fill up the racks of shelf space behind the warehouse owner, himself richly dressed.

Warehouses could occasionally incorporate many craftsmen and printers on site, as was probable in the case of fan warehouses.²²⁹ A good case in point is Ashton's own commercial establishment in Little Britain Street, which she refers to in adverts as a wholesale fan warehouse.²³⁰ More than this, it is likely Wilson worked, or at least traded his fans, at Ashton's fan warehouse on occasion, especially as seven of his fan leaf designs were either solely or co-published by Ashton at her warehouse. Ashton's publication of Wilson's, as well as her own, fan leaf designs, would have included the process of preparing and issuing fans for sale.²³¹

As well as shops and warehouses, there is a final type of commercial establishment that sold and traded in fans in the eighteenth century. The image hand-painted onto the surface of the mounted fan *A London Fan Shop* (Fig. 38), anonymously produced in 1745, reveals a fan seller sitting inside one of the most mobile of all selling establishments, a 'bulk'. The term 'bulk' indicates a type of stall which had a semi-

²²⁹ Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture*, 52.

²³⁰ Ashton's advert in Roger Wakefield, *Wakefield's Merchant and Tradesman's General Directory for London, Westminster, Borough of Southwark and Twenty-Two Miles Circular from St. Paul's, for the Year 1794*, London, 1794, 10.

²³¹ Wakefield, *Wakefield's Merchant and Tradesman's General Directory for London, Westminster, Borough of Southwark and Twenty-Two Miles Circular from St. Paul's, for the Year 1794*, 10.

permanent structure – was sometimes blurred with that of a ‘stall’.²³² Walsh verifies that the word ‘bulk’ could refer both to a ‘basement-level outlet drawing attention to itself by a glass showcase on the pavement’, or, as seems to feature in *A London Fan Shop*, a structure situated in front of a permanent shop combined with ‘a trestle table set up by a shopkeeper outside their four-walled shop’.²³³ She states that bulks could variously take the form of ‘a simple wooden shed, a wooden booth leaning on to the face of another building, or refer to a retail-outlet existing within the frame of another building’.²³⁴ However, Walsh does not refer to fan bulks in this essay, and this chapter extends her research by studying fan bulks.

A passing customer trade can be assumed to have brought from such bulks as featured on *A London Fan Shop*, as well as from stalls. The stall or bulk display, too, may well have drawn customers passing on the street into the more formal setting of the shop interior, as its structure pushes forward, in the same way as a print stall ‘spilled out from the shop environment and into public spaces’, therefore helping to compel female passers-by to purchase.²³⁵ This bulk is situated at the centre of a scene involving a well-heeled woman handling an unfurled mounted fan, whilst a female fan seller sits within its interior, holding out another mounted fan ready for inspection. Various fan mounts and mounted fans can also be seen scattered along the desk. Displays like that depicted on *A London Fan Shop* would have created a sense of immediacy for its clientele in terms of allowing a closeness to the goods on display, as well as letting them see the full

²³² Walsh, ‘Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century’, 38.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 38.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

²³⁵ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 337.

extent of a trader's wares.²³⁶ The subject matter of this fan may have been considered ideal for a fan maker and seller as its mobile form could facilitate its use as both a souvenir and as an effective form of advertising, unlike the more fixed form of a single-sheet print. It could additionally alert an owner's attention to that fact that women were highly active in the fan trade, as well as visually confirm that fans were considered objects of key importance for female buyers.

A London Fan Shop pictorially reinforces the argument that eighteenth-century fan shops were a lively, and intrinsic, part of London's streets. Fan warehouses operational in the capital may have directly supplied traders selling fans in stalls and bulks. This method of fan leaf distribution would have furthered the influence of fan makers, and the impact of their fan leaf designs, upon the print culture of London. In a final note regarding *A London Fan Shop*, it is useful to point out that this fan leaf depicts the shopping experience for women in the 1750s, clearly evidencing them as sellers in the fan trade and showing that fans were mainly the preserve of women as purchasers. As Elisabeth Eger has stated, 'women played a vital role [...] as consumers and leaders of fashion and as the manipulators of a new culture of regulated pleasure and opulence'.²³⁷ Even though this subject matter was perhaps uncommon as a fan narrative, the very fact that a fan indicates expenditure by a woman, suggests that the fan maker who produced this fan knew exactly who the main buyers of fans were and/or creating that market. In a sense, the fan leaf imagery itself signals how key the shopping environment was to

²³⁶ Walsh, 'Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century', 39.

²³⁷ Elisabeth Eger, 'Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed', Maxine Berg and E. Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century, Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, London, 2003, 191.

entice female customers to make a purchase and the importance of the fan as an object of conspicuous consumption.

Equally, there would have been ample opportunity for the mixing of speculative customers outside print and fan shop windows. Just such a scene is depicted in Carington Bowles' satirical hand-coloured mezzotint *Spectators at a Print-Shop in St. Paul's Church Yard* (Fig. 39), produced in 1774. In this mezzotint, a crowd is depicted outside a print shop in London, all viewing the imagery on display, as well as each other, unwittingly mirroring the caricatures shown on the printed imagery inside the shop. The subject matter of the prints fixed to the inside of this shop window appear to constitute a number of coloured satirical narrative prints offering commentary on such things as the ruling elite and modern fashion. On the bottom row a print illustrating a woman holding an outstretched fan can be made out. The woman outside the shop mirrors this as she holds a closed fan and is using it as a pointer to draw her male companion's attention to a print of a clergyman, or to the print of the couple below, suggestive of the multiple uses of fans and its physical impact on London's public spaces. Not only does this fan serve a useful function for its owner but alerts the viewer to the two dramas being played out in front of the print shop itself, the second being the man next to the woman surprised by a warrant for his arrest. This narrative, then, is the subject of *Spectators at a Print-Shop in St. Paul's Church Yard*, which, in turn, would have been available to buy inside print shops and commercial establishments selling fans. The figures and their actions included in *Spectators at a Print-Shop in St. Paul's Church Yard* also indicates that closed fans may have been utilised as forceful physical pointers and as markers of one's own space, as well as that of others. In contrast, it

seems that open fans helped communicate specific messages about those around them, and revealed something about a holder to a wider audience. More will be explained on this language of fans in Chapter Three.

Such types of communal gatherings outside print shops has led Berry to suggest that ‘shopping ritual[s] [was] a crucial feature of the urbane urban landscape’.²³⁸ She explains that the shop interior and exterior were a venue for ‘the interaction of social relationships, leisure and commerce’.²³⁹ The street spaces outside print shop windows, then, become a spectacle for the passing public. Print shop windows also attracted crowds when new editions were published by famous caricaturists, such as Gillray, probably in the same way as original fan print designs. Thus, the outside space of a fan shop would have reflected the fan’s connection to a diversity of trades in the same way as its interior. Print and fan shops allowed members of the public perhaps unable to attend art exhibitions to view and purchase reproductions of artworks displayed within such exhibitions in an engraved format. Furthermore, the fan format allowed its imagery to be transported and seen all at once. What is more, printed fan leaf imagery had a broad circulation beyond the people who initially bought them. Prints and fan prints could be exchanged, sold to collectors, as well given as gifts to friends or as romantic gestures.²⁴⁰

Fan Shop Display and Customer Bases

²³⁸ Berry, ‘Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England’, 375.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 375.

²⁴⁰ Mayor, *The Collector’s Guide to Fans*, 47.

In the first half of this chapter the geographical context in which fan shops and related commercial establishments operated in St. Martin's Lane and the wider locale of Pall Mall has been established. The collaborative nature of Wilson's fan making practices, particularly with those female fan makers and sellers, and the likely significance of these networks, has also been outlined. This section contends that the space inside the fan shop, as well as those premises selling fans alongside single-sheet printed narratives, facilitated a unique mixing of objects, literary texts and customer bases. It argues that the display of print and fan print pictorial motifs, as well as literary tropes, could be viewed by a variety of customers and, in so doing, create connections between these formats.

So as to highlight the assortment of fan, single-sheet print and other visual and literary material that was presented for sale within such trading institutions, it is useful to mention the diverse goods sold in these spaces. As already mentioned, the selling of tickets for theatre performances in fan shops appears to have been a common occurrence. Tickets for masquerades could be purchased in some fan shops, including Mrs Prichard's commercial premises.²⁴¹ The selling of tickets may have drawn in new customers, in addition to influencing who may have entered these fan shops and then viewed the wares set out for sale. Other adverts demonstrate the variety of goods sold in the premises of at least two fan shop owners;

Mr. Samuel Major, Sir. / [I attest] to the mighty Virtue of your Imperial Royal Golden-Snuff, I send you this with A bundle of Thanks [...]. The Above

²⁴¹ For example, *The Daily Advertiser*, dated March 1745, announced that tickets would be issued at Mrs Prichard's place of business 'on Monday 25th March, [for] a masquerade, call'd [sic] COMUS [...] Tickets to be had of Mrs. Pritchard's [...] and of Mr. Vaughan, fan-maker' (Anonymous, 'Classified Adverts', *Daily Advertiser*, Saturday, 2 March 1745; Issue 4408, London, n.p).

mentioned Golden Snuff, price 6.d. a Paper, with a Bill of Direction, is to be had of Samuel Major [...]; and at Mr. Peake's; a fan-maker, at the Sign of the Golden Fan, at the end of Old Broad Street, next to Royal Exchange.²⁴²

This advert, taking the form of a fictitious letter of recommendation, reveals both the range of the products a fan shop sold and the shrewdness which fan sellers employed to market their products. Other fan shops owners and makers, like the mid-eighteenth-century trader Elizabeth Molyneux, located at the Golden-Fan and Dove in the Strand, as indicated by her trade card (Fig. 40), sold all manner of haberdashery items, in addition to fans. Molyneux makes clear that she was both a fan maker and seller, displaying an assortment of 'necklaces, flowers, gawse [sic] handkerchiefs, ribbons, patches [...] cloaks, capuchins, hoods, lavender & hungary [sic] water [and] all sorts of Haberdashery wares' for the delectation of the customer.²⁴³ It follows that these displays would have attracted a customer base in need of practical, functional, as well as more fashionable, clothes, furnishings and accessories.

Molyneux's trade card evidences that fan shops displays were at the centre of a multiplicity of London trades linked to print-making, modish fashion, exotic perishable items and novelty accessories. Not only this, it shows fan shops were at the forefront of creating attractive shop displays that could make a customer actively participate 'in a sophisticated cultural activity', which involved pleasurable window shopping and the application of sensory skills.²⁴⁴ The fact that Molyneux advertised her availability to have 'fans mended and new mounted on reasonable terms', indicates that she may also have received visits from servants and craftsmen with broken fans in the employment of

²⁴² Anonymous, 'Classified Adverts', *London Evening Post*, March 1748; Issue 3183, London, n.p.

²⁴³ These lines are written on Elizabeth Molyneux's trade card.

²⁴⁴ Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', 157.

those of the ‘middling’ sort.²⁴⁵ It also indicates that in some cases at least, the fan print itself was repaired and remounted, rather than necessarily replaced with a new purchase.

While Molyneux traded in material goods and pictorial items, in other fan shops, perishable and exotic goods were routinely sold. Such items are advertised on the copper-engraved billhead issued by William Blathwyat in 1755, who was located at the ‘Golden Fan in Bucklersbury near Stocks Market’ (Fig. 41). This billhead includes an engraving of the tradesman’s sign of an open fan at the top of the invoice, stating the purchase of ‘tea, mangos, pink paper and Hungary water’ by a customer. It verifies that Margas’s shop was a specialist establishment, selling to a wealthy clientele. Certainly, Margas was noted by the antiquarian and Whig politician Horace Walpole to be a ‘tea and china importer and fashionable china dealer in Buklersbury’.²⁴⁶ Hence, it can be deemed likely that patterned and printed china would have been exhibited together with a variety of fan print designs in his shop, drawing attention to the fact that there was a ready clientele for printed imagery on a number of mobile forms of artwork, including that of the fan.

As well as selling expensive goods, some fan shops, significantly, sold catalogues of library books on behalf of the estate of individuals, demonstrating that the selling of fans crossed over into a number of trades closely linked to their topographical location.²⁴⁷ For instance, as aforementioned, there was at least one circulating library

²⁴⁵ Margaret R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort, Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680-1780*, California, 1996, 1.

²⁴⁶ Horace Walpole, *Horace Walpole’s Correspondence with George Selwyn, Lord Lincoln, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Henry Fox [and] Richard Edgewood*, Volume 30, New Haven, 1961, 116.

²⁴⁷ Mr Gordon, ‘Classified Adverts’, *Daily Post*, 13 May 1737; Issue 55713, London, n.p.

operating off St. Martin's Lane in the 1780s and 1790s, not far from Mr Gordon's fan shop, The Golden Fan and Crown, located in Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, which specialised in trading books of libraries belonging to the estates of deceased gentlemen.²⁴⁸ Texts sold in fan shops such as that of Mr Gordon often comprised subject matter of a spiritual nature alongside more scientific, as well as fictional, literary works, turning the trading space into a kind of book shop.²⁴⁹ Alongside this, fan shops sometimes marketed library books collected by wealthy men, which included religious scriptures, as well as more contemporary stories and 'curious' assemblies.²⁵⁰

Moreover, analysing such adverts highlights the fact that fan shops served eclectic functions and housed a diverse array of objects for sale and emphasises the fan's interconnectedness across both visual and literary forms of instruction and entertainment. Libraries were regularly sold through auction, booksellers and fan shops, often including Classical works, collected together with texts like Gibson's *Camden*.²⁵¹ Accordingly, a more learned clientele visiting certain fan shops in the capital and interested in purchasing subject matter of an entertaining, educative, as well as a religious tone, must be taken into account when considering a fan shop's custom. Tracing such connections helps to show how fans were aimed at a bibliophile market

²⁴⁸ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 235.

²⁴⁹ Mr Gordon placed an advert in the *Daily Post* on 13 May 1737 proclaiming that 'This Day is publish'd [sic] [...] Catalogue of the fine Library of the late Richard [...] Newton. Curious collection of Bibles and Common Prayers, [...] Plays and Novels, bound in an elegant manner' (Mr Gordon, 'Classified Adverts', *Daily Post*, 13 May 1737; Issue 55713, London, n.p).

²⁵⁰ Mr Gordon placed an advert within the pages of *Mist's Weekly Journal, World* in December, [1729], informing buyers that the 'Bibliotheca Curiosa. Bibliotheca Walteriane, a collection of the learned library of Walter of Marlborough, is now able available to buy from his fan shop' (Mr Gordon, 'Classified Adverts', *Mist's Weekly Journal, World*, 18 December 1729; Issue 3197, London, n.p).

²⁵¹ Thomas Payne and Son, *A Catalogue of a Very Large and Curious Collection of Books; Including the Libraries of Jonathan Scot, Esq; the Rev. Mr. Laxton*, London, 1786.

and, as shall be revealed in coming chapters, this is essential in indicating how closely the subject matter of fans related to literature and prints.

One final point to make regarding the selling of texts in fan shops is that the physical mingling of the erudite with comic, literary subject matter would have chimed well with Wilson's own textual and pictorial preoccupations. As shall be explored in Chapter Two, the fact that texts carrying serious and amusing tenors were readily available to buy also points towards the close connection between the subject matter of fans and that of literature and prints. Clientele would have been familiar with the virtuous and satirical literary tropes Wilson garnered for his fan print designs, and could thus easily identify the associated modes of conduct that went with such tropes on the fan leaf surface. That women desired to read about narratives of both a highbrow and mirthful nature indicates the translation of subject matter equally entertaining and instructive in tone onto Wilson's fans made them effective mobile conduct instructors, as will be seen in the next chapter. It must also be noted that the sale of illustrated literary journals of a satirical nature peaked towards the 1790s.²⁵² A display of this range of printed material inside a fan shop would have enabled customers to form connections between imagery relating to conduct displayed in print, text and fan format. Understanding that satirical literary subject matter would have been sold alongside fans, it becomes apparent that Wilson was marketing his fans to attract these same customers, as Chapter Two will argue.

²⁵² Frederick Burwick (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Romantic Literature: Volume One*, London, 2012, 1038. The Royal Court Jester appears a good case in point, published in 1795 and written anonymously under the tongue-in-cheek title of 'a member of Comus's Court' (Written by a Member of Comus's Court, *The Royal Court Jester; Or, a Choice and Fashionable Collection of Witty Sayings, Anecdotes, both Ancient and Modern. By a Member of Comus's Court*, London, 1795).

Fan shops also sold high-quality prints aimed to cater specifically for a collector's market, alongside fans. An advert placed in February 1734 by Gamble illustrates just such a commercial venture. This announcement proclaims:

This day is published PROPOSALS by Arnold Vanbaceken and Giles Kin, Painter and Engraver, for performing from the Life in the beautiful prints, engraven [sic] on copper plates [...]. The Wonders of the Deep, representing the most agreeable Disposition, all kinds of Fish, [...] in Seas, Rivers, Lakes, Lakes and Ponds. 1. Every fish is in its prime Season painted while alive, and paintings and prints may be seen at Mr Vanbordens House in Belton Street, [...] and at *The Golden Fan* in St. Martin's Court near Leicester-fields, at which address, proposals may be had.²⁵³

This advert indicates that Gamble sold a number of different types of prints in her fan shop, including those produced by Mr Vanbordens' Print House, linking her craft with the production of fashionable prints, whether printed onto a fan or single-sheet print surface. It was clearly beneficial to both Gamble and Vanbordens to advertise and sell jointly in this manner; and it is possible that Vanbordens sold Gamble's fans on his premises as part of their commercial arrangement.

Fans sold in the same premises as single-sheet prints were also often issued in series and editions, following the marketing processes first utilised by print makers. Fan makers and sellers, like Wilson, published popular designs in just the same way as magazine publications sold in fan shops were issued monthly or annually, sometimes in updated format.²⁵⁴ Perhaps the most prominent artist in the eighteenth century to create complex

²⁵³ Martha Gamble, Classified Adverts, 'PROPOSALS', *Country Journal or the Craftsman*, Saturday, 14 February 1734, n.p.

²⁵⁴ *The Rangers' Magazine and Man of Fashions*, for example, was sold by the fan shop owner J. Sudley, who advertised that these satirical stories would be issued monthly. See Written by a Member of Comus's

sequences of single-sheet print narratives was Hogarth. He created a number of engraved narrative series after first producing them in painted form, as is the case with the eight paintings that together comprise the story of *The Rake's Progress*, completed on canvas between 1732 and 1734, then engraved in 1735 (Fig. 42). Hogarth also completed series of plot-linked imagery straight into engravings, exemplified by the series of twelve engravings, *Industry and Idleness* (Fig. 43), published together in 1747. Hogarth's printing practice involved the production of both satirical and more moralistic imagery, designed to be seen in isolation, but more often as one part in a narrative series telling a story with a clear beginning, middle and end.²⁵⁵ He produced a few etched and engraved tales combining text and image so that they may be 'affordable to lower sections of the market'.²⁵⁶ I would argue that the meaning of Hogarth's series, such as *The Rake's Progress*, when engraved in print format after the paintings, allowed for a diverse and broad audience to view them, both in a domestic and public setting, as well enabling a more personal connection to be made with the image.

Besides, when Hogarth's imagery was transposed onto engraved fans I would suggest the link between morality, conduct and the person of the holder became even more intrinsically linked. Shelia O'Connell notes that during the course of the eighteenth century, while traditional subjects and topics persisted, the printing trade expanded greatly.²⁵⁷ As Griffiths sums up, the status of prints increased as the market for prints which could be framed for display grew and the public anticipated that a print, or series

Court, *The Royal Court Jester; Or, a Choice and Fashionable Collection of Witty Sayings, Anecdotes, both Ancient and Modern. By a Member of Comus's Court*, London, 1795, 57.

²⁵⁵ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 20.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁵⁷ Sheila O'Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, London, 1999, 187.

of prints, could potentially cost more than a painting upon which the narrative may have been based.²⁵⁸

In a similar way, fan makers, exemplified by Wilson's fan printing practice, sometimes published fan print designs a year apart, intended to be viewed in succession to one another, as part of a series. This adoption by fan makers of print makers' narrative, production and marketing strategies can clearly be demonstrated by Wilson's publication of the stipple-engraved fan leaf *The Good Swain* (Fig. 2) (1795) depicting the life, and happy old-age, of a virtuous swain and his wife, over the course of three narrative scenarios. This fan print was published exactly a year before the stipple-engraved fan print *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (Fig. 3) (1796), picturing the demise of a couple's relationship due to the actions of the ne'er-do-well swain in three roundel scenes, demonstrating the fact that fan makers worked like print makers to sell series.²⁵⁹

Alongside single-sheet prints sold in fan shops, it can be suggested that print shops saw a brisk trade in fans, which were sold in numerous London based stationers. The etched and engraved trade card produced by Carrington Bowles for Mrs Dorothy Mercier's 'Print Seller and Stationer Shop' – 'The Golden Ball' (Fig. 44) – located in Piccadilly, usefully registers the spectacle of a display featuring various shapes and sizes of print, as well as books and journals, inside her upmarket establishment. Mrs Mercier was the wife of the celebrated French engraver Philip Mercier, and her trade card boasts of

²⁵⁸ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 265.

²⁵⁹ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

stocking not only ‘fanns [sic] for Ladies in a New and Elegant manner’, but ‘Selling all Sorts of Italian, French and Flemish Prints [...] Black, Red and White Chalk, English, Dutch and French Drawing Paper’, as well as ‘Buy[ing] and Sell[ing] all manner of Old Prints’.²⁶⁰ The fact that artists’ materials, some imported from Europe, were available in Mrs Mercier’s shop, would have attracted artists and craftsmen working and living in nearby Pall Mall as customers. Indeed, Gatrell draws attention to the fact that the development of the artistic identity in the Pall Mall area was dependent upon ‘auction rooms, picture-framers, printshops and colour-shops’, which led to an increasingly commercialised and professionalised art industry.²⁶¹ It is helpful to take note that Wilson himself would have considered himself an artist and stationer, as well as ‘invent, et delt.’ as he wrote at the bottom of his fan print designs, so may have numbered among and Mrs Mercier’s and Middleton’s shoppers for artistic supplies.

The way in which prints and fans were exhibited in shops show close associations between the way prints and fan prints could be ‘read’, tracing a narrative across the print, or fan leaf, surface. A closer examination of the prints and paintings on display in Mrs Mercier’s illustrated trade card show hanging on the wall: a profile-portrait of a lady; small landscape prints; a series of small prints set in a square format; images of flowers; a shelf of print portfolios and, above this, a row of books; and two framed paintings or prints of landscape scenes. Hallett’s analysis of the way paintings may have been read across the walls of the Royal Academy suggests that the public would have

²⁶⁰ Nancy Cox draws attention to Mrs Dorthey Mercier and evidence of selling her fans in the form of handbills in the footnotes of one of her authored chapters, ‘Small Luxuries for Ordinary People’, contained in *Retailing and the Language of Goods, 1550-1820*, London, 2015.

²⁶¹ Gatrell, *The First Bohemians: Life and Art in London’s Golden Age*, 51-53.

drawn connections across those images and their sitters, and the objects depicted in Mercier's shop wall hang may point towards a similar interpretation.²⁶² Hallett identifies the most centrally placed work as the most important. The print depicted on the wall in her trade card is that of a female portrait, surrounded by landscape scenes in less prestigious placement, instantly associating the figurative print (and of a woman) as the most desirable type of print to purchase in a potential customer's mind. Moreover, the series of small figurative prints, draw a viewer's attention to the way in which figurative prints can be understood in isolation or in relation to a number of other printed pictures, as exhibited in minute scale on many of Wilson's fan print designs.

Wilson's Fan Production and Popular Subjects

The previous section argued that London's fan shops and those commercial establishments selling fans were at the intersection of a diversity of trades relating to print making, crafts, fashion and novelty. In this section, I give an overview of the types of fans Wilson created. I analyse a print illustration designed and sold by Wilson, previously unknown to scholars, which will directly evidence the close connection between his print designs and wider print culture. Having determined Wilson's interest in print illustration, I subsequently suggest a visual affinity between two of his fan print designs and popular printed visual motifs that will elucidate his engagement with issues of topicality. Finally a coloured fan design printed onto silk will be analysed that shows Wilson's awareness of the desire on the part of his clientele to purchase a visual memento proclaiming ideas of nationhood and to consume printed imagery on novel

²⁶² Mark Hallett, 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the British Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37:4, Summer 2004, 585.

luxury forms. These different fans are analysed in detail to show how, in turn, he was responding to contemporary events of relevance and furthermore, how closely he was following age-old pictorial motifs found on single sheet prints.

This thesis argues that Wilson's subject matter was intended to appeal directly to a female customer and was closely connected to single-sheet prints. As such, I will now examine this in relation to a summary of the themes he dealt with and then a close study of his fans. These in turn relate to childhood and education; rural and matrimonial idylls; and women's interest in current affairs, contemporary threats to social and political harmony, and the Act of Union of 1801. Indeed, all of Wilson's case studies discussed in this section clearly evidence that he was responding to both contemporary and age-old motifs through his fan subject matter and that he was making it relevant to contemporary events to increase saleability. Furthermore, such analysis reveals a real sense of how attuned Wilson was to different types of popular prints and how he used these for his own work.

Cyclical subject matter features in Wilson's fan print design, whether it be male and female life-cycles or the passage of time over a day, as well as the changing seasons of the year. That the stipple-engraved fan print *The Female Seven Ages (I)* (Fig. 45), produced in 1797, illustrating the 'Seven Ages' of a woman's life in printed form, was also sold by Wilson would have alerted female shoppers to the fact that they could view

an idealised version of their own life-cycle.²⁶³ Wilson developed the theme of sentimental rustic life for one fan print design, while for another he drew on more obscure, complex concepts and motifs, such as the stereotype of a gloomy old woman surrounded by cats, in order to convey positive and negative states of a woman's mind. As well, the age-old trope of a world upturned is twinned with an updated depiction of a multitude of contemporaneous follies of man in another highly sophisticated fan leaf composition. The political undertones it carries are fully developed in two similar fan print designs that carry the theme of nationalism as the 1801 Act of Union is celebrated in allegorical form. Lastly, the maxim 'shun deception's flames' provides the idea for Wilson's only known print illustration. All these printed designs, and likely numerous others, would have been sold at No. 108 St. Martin's Lane at certain points between 1795 and 1801.

The close links formed by Wilson's output to the flourishing print culture in the Pall Mall area during the 1790s can be confirmed by his sole surviving stipple-engraved print illustration, *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* (Fig. 46), produced and sold in 1796.²⁶⁴ An analysis of Wilson's *Progress* in a wider context begins to show how it

²⁶³ Heidi Brayman Heckel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England, Print, Gender, and Literacy*, Oregon, 2009, 35. *The Female Seven Ages (1)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as 'Seven Ages (1)'. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.

²⁶⁴ *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* print illustration, hereafter referred to as 'Progress'. V&A Museum Number: RENIER.421. I am very grateful to Assistant Curator Elizabeth Jacklin, based at the Victoria and Albert's Blythe House Repository in London, for her assistance in answering several enquires surrounding the interesting provenance history of *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge*. I am also thankful to Jacklin for providing me with additional background information on *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* and reason for its survival, which indicates its didactic function. Although it is not known how this print illustration entered this collection, it is included in the 'Anne and Fernand Renier Collection of Historic and Contemporary Publications for Children'. Thus, it appears that they regarded George Wilson's print illustration as a significant visual tool of instruction for the young, and deemed worthy of collection. The inclusion of *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* in this anthology confirms its probable use to serve as a tool of childhood education through the inventive visual illustration of a maxim contained within a relatable, entertaining storyline.

shares visual affinities with other single-sheet prints produced in the period, which also incorporate proverbs in an illustrated format. Secondly, this print reveals the probability that his fans and prints were aimed at women, which will become more compelling the more fans that are analysed in detail. The (re)discovery of *Progress*, showing the progress of a boy as he learns through physical hurt, evidences the fact that he sold at least one engraved maxim illustration design for children to take instruction from, likely brought by mothers and tutors from his fan shop. No scholar has yet considered the significance of Wilson's *Progress*, now housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum's Blythe House Repository. The creation of *Progress* confirms Wilson was making at least one type of single-sheet print in the 1790s, and that he intentionally adopted similar pictorial motifs and composition details on this print to that of his fan print designs. *Progress*, focusing on the modish theme of childhood experiences, is published in print illustration form by Wilson. This print illustration is also didactic for mothers, in terms of child rearing.

Wilson's incorporation of text and imagery in this illustration shows his interest in tapping into the emerging literature for children's instruction sold in the capital to mothers and teachers, as well as its visual manifestation, which emerged in the last decades of the eighteenth century. *Progress* is comprised of three roundels placed in a semi-circle. The title text '*The Progress of Infantine Knowledge*' is positioned directly under three roundel images. Each of the roundels contains part of a 'progress' as Wilson terms it. The first roundel, placed to the far left of the design 'Learning to Walk' (Fig. 47), shows a baby boy propped up by a 'Go-cart', as he learns to walk. Below, the first stanza of verse reads 'Dear little Babe, Whose rosebud lispng tongue,/ With innocence,

the Era doth greet,/ Mind what thy Mother, oft has sung,/ “Dear Timmy mind, & keep your feet””. The second roundel ‘Getting into Mischief’ (Fig. 48), pictures the boy with his leg placed on a chair as he leans across a table to reach to a lit candle and sets alight a piece of paper. Below, the second stanza reads ‘The Go-Cart’s gone, the lad now walks/ The matron’s pleas’d & tells her tale,/ But O’ fond heart, while yet she talks,/ Impending dangers Assail’. The third image ‘Growing Wise by Experience’ (Fig. 49), shows the aftermath of the boy’s mischief, as it illustrates the boy holding a bandaged right hand and pointing to it with his left hand. Below the final stanza reads ‘His fingers hurt! The maxims true/, Which bids us “shun deceptions flame”./ Yet painful tale/ tho’ no ways new/ That, Boy & Man thro’ life’s the same!’. This narrative tells the tale of how sometimes painful experiences, both physical and emotional, help to shape and modify a person’s conduct and actions, both as a child and as an adult.

The prevalence of paintings of children produced in the 1780s and 1790s resulted from the attention now bestowed upon them, as cultural interest in the state of childhood and a child’s education increased manifold. O’Connell notes that prints and texts aimed at children also grew in this period, although the emphasis was still on ‘playing them into a knowledge of the letters’.²⁶⁵ Porter remarks that ‘hitherto children had attracted little attention’ and the state of ‘childhood was traditionally seen as a stage of life passed over without much notice’.²⁶⁶ In contrast, literature and artwork relating to all aspects of childhood began to be ‘circulated in the thousands’ in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the publication of his treatise

²⁶⁵ O’Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, 32.

²⁶⁶ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 266.

Emile, or On Education in 1762 prove a useful case in point. Rousseau focused upon educating the child through experience, whilst stressing ‘concern of the wholeness of the individual’, and for ‘the person of the learner’.²⁶⁷ As Porter puts it, ‘from [John] Locke to Rousseau [...] liberal religion and Enlightenment pedagogy argued for the natural innocence of children and hence their potential for rational thought’.²⁶⁸ Ann Bermingham confirms the late eighteenth-century belief that ““naturalness” as a universal truth [was now] condensed into a romantic vision of childhood innocence’, reflected in *Progress* through Timmy’s youthful mischievousness, which leads to his accident.²⁶⁹

As a result of these developments, wealthy families could take pleasure in experiencing their child’s feelings afresh, this ‘model of childhood [giving] new prominence to nurture over nature’.²⁷⁰ These social advances resulted in increased emphasis upon education and ‘the psychology of parent-child and teacher-child relations’.²⁷¹ Thus, the selling of this print illustration would have proved apt as regular trade would have likely comprised a large proportion of the ‘middling sort’ and gentry, with whom novel patterns of acquisition, leisure, as well as tutelage, were being set.²⁷² Thus, *Progress* visually reinforces a newly fashionable model of childhood that encourages learning by way of childish experiences.

²⁶⁷ Michele Erina Doyle and Mark K. Smith, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau on Nature, Wholeness and Education*, [www://infed.org/mobi/jean-jacques-rousseau-on-nature-wholeness-and-education/](http://infed.org/mobi/jean-jacques-rousseau-on-nature-wholeness-and-education/), accessed 7 September 2016.

²⁶⁸ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 266.

²⁶⁹ Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: the English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, London, 1987, 52-54.

²⁷⁰ Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: the English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, 52-54.

²⁷¹ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 266.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 29.

Wilson's work is distinct from Joshua Reynolds's paintings. Reynolds was one of the most important painters of children during this period and his work was widely reproduced in print.²⁷³ For example, Francis Haward's stipple-engraved prints were produced after Reynolds' paintings, including *The Infant Academy* (Fig. 50), engraved between 1775 and 1800.²⁷⁴ *The Infant Academy* depicts four young children set against a theatrical backdrop and with one youngster painting a portrait of one of the others. Here Reynolds, and by extension Haward, presents a playful allegory of the Royal Academy. Reynolds exhibited this oil painting at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1782.²⁷⁵ Wilson would have certainly known this work, but, conversely, his own print illustration is not in any way like Reynolds' image. Rather, Wilson's single-sheet imagery is interested in pictorially illuminating the meaning of a maxim for a youthful viewer. Unlike Reynolds' work, in which the children are allegories of the arts, Wilson was more concerned with using popular maxims when designing *Progress*, which his customer base would have understood. His single-sheet print features a child as its protagonist to involve a young viewer more easily by way of depicting the child's painful experience of playing with fire. *Progress* also affords an opportunity to turn attention towards the theme of proverb print narratives and their relationship to fan leaf composition and function. Manifestations of this theme were found in many artistic formats in the late eighteenth century, such as illustrated children's spelling books.

²⁷³ Sir Joshua Reynolds painted several scenes illustrating mischievous young children, which were then engraved for wider dissemination. Porter notes that, as child portraits became popular, Reynolds could charge up to £150 for each portrait (Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991, 267).

²⁷⁴ Timothy Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, New Haven and London, 1997, 249.

²⁷⁵ Julius Bryant, *Kenwood, Paintings in the Iveagh Bequest*, New Haven, 2003, 412.

The ways in which pictorial illustrations of puns, maxims and proverbs may have entered a close visual relationship with engraved fan leaves, especially those fan prints rarely designed by the same engraver, warrants consideration. Wilson had an evident interest in engaging with themes of childhood and educational instruction, not on a fan leaf but as an illustrated print. It can be argued he employs the same instructional strategy in the design of his one known surviving non-fan print as he did with his fan prints. Lady Charlotte Schreiber, the later collector of these fans, has noted, although Wilson's print illustration operates in a different manner to that of his fan print designs, the existence of such a design confirms a close link between Wilson's interest in print illustration and his fan leaf narratives.²⁷⁶ The inherent link between *Progress* and some of Wilson's other fan print designs is further indicated by their similarities in composition and narrative of virtue. Wilson's use of roundels in *Progress* prove a case in point. Its middle roundel, corresponding meaningfully to the moment that the act of temptation occurs, is executed in the same manner that he encapsulates acts of bad decision making on his fan print designs. Hence, it can be suggested that Wilson imbues both the subject matter of his fan print designs and that of his sole surviving illustration print with the same concern of forearming the viewer with a level of precautionary knowledge.

Wilson's pictorial engagement with the stage of childhood and associated juvenile experiences was also doing something distinct to that of the work of Reynolds. By so doing, he guaranteed the popular appeal of such motifs, which would have been easily

²⁷⁶ Lady Charlotte Schreiber, *A CATALOGUE of THE COLLECTION of FANS AND FAN-LEAVES PRESENTED TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM BY THE LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, catalogue, London, 1893, 90.

understood by adults and youth alike. It is useful then, to contemplate what an eighteenth-century public would have recognised as a maxim, proverb or pun. Thomas Fuller's *Gnomologia: Adages and Proverbs; Wise Sentences and Witty Sayings*, published in 1732, describes how they came into usage, explaining:

observations wise men made from experience; were used to be gather'd [sic], and summ'd [sic] up into brief and comprehensive sentences, which being so contriv'd [sic], as to have something valuable in the Experiences, might easily be remember'd [sic], and brought into Use on Occasion. There are called Adages or Maxims.²⁷⁷

Progress reflects Fuller's description of maxims as being condensed phraseologies, as he (Fuller) clarifies:

the Man of Business, and the common people, that they might in their Affairs and Conversation, signify and communicate their Sense and Meaning in short, with Smartness or with Pleasantness, fell into customary little Forms of Words, and trite Speeches [...] call'd [sic] proverbs and common sayings.²⁷⁸

Maxims were popularly used to illustrate educational stories aimed at children. Susan Stewart has observed that 'the two faces of children's literature, the fantastic and the didactic, developed at the same time as the miniature book'.²⁷⁹ Stewart continues 'instead of offering nuggets of wisdom for the child to consume, these books presented a [...] fabulous world which had the capacity to absorb the child's sense of reality', and bearing this fact in mind, it seems likely Wilson's print was aimed at educating children.²⁸⁰ *Progress*, whether included in a children's illustrated proverb book, framed on a wall or held in the hand, would have been understood by mothers in their social role as educators as an amusing, but potent, visual tool whereby they could teach their

²⁷⁷ Thomas Fuller, *GNOMOLOGOIA: ADAGES AND PROVERBS; Wise SENTENCES AND Witty SAYINGS, ANICENT and MODERN, FOREIGN and BRITISH*, London, 1732, 4.

²⁷⁸ Fuller, *GNOMOLOGOIA: ADAGES AND PROVERBS; Wise SENTENCES AND Witty SAYINGS, ANICENT and MODERN, FOREIGN and BRITISH*, 4.

²⁷⁹ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, North Carolina, 1992, 43.

²⁸⁰ Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, 43.

children about behaviour throughout life. Most children from middle-class and wealthy homes would have been familiar with viewing printed sheets of series of small images, often picturing animals with their names written next to them, called ‘lottery books’, designed to help with reading and writing.²⁸¹ Therefore, *Progress* offers a slightly more complex series of images that draw a figurative narrative across a time frame designed to engage a child’s mind and senses.

The maxim Wilson chooses to illustrate, ‘Which bids us “shun deceptions flame”’, has a similar meaning to the phrase ‘like a moth to a flame’, an allusion to the well-known attraction that moths have for bright lights. Such phraseology was first used in the seventeenth century to mean someone who was tempted by something that would lead to their downfall.²⁸² But Wilson’s phrasing of the words, including them in a sentence placed under the *Progress*’s final roundel – ‘His fingers hurt! The maxims true/, Which bids us “shun deceptions flame”./ Yet painful tale/ tho’ no ways new/ That, Boy & Man throu’ life’s the same!’ – draws in a young reader through the integration of a maxim within a diverting tale. Wilson’s creation of *Progress*, depicting an instructive story involving a child as its protagonist, created a visual vehicle by which to incite cautionary behaviour and self-regulation. He chooses the realistic lure of playing with lit candles and the potentially disastrous results of this, to captivate the mind of a child with a dilemma to which they could easily relate. As Wilson’s scenes on *Progress* demonstrate, proverbs ‘have something of the Obscure and Surprize, which as soon as understood, [marks] them pretty and notable’, aiding a child’s memory of their

²⁸¹ O’Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, 32+33.

²⁸² Malcolm Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, London, 2010, 237.

message.²⁸³ This characteristic of several single-sheet prints is also suitably demonstrated by illustrated proverb and maxim prints pertaining to juvenile instruction published in the late eighteenth century.

It can be argued the forty pictorial and textual narrative compilations featured on John Bewick's *Proverbs*, illustrated 'By Pictures from Real Life' (Fig. 51), a wood-engraved broadside letterpress completed in 1790, creates a close narrative analogy to *Progress*. *Proverbs* combines wood-engraved lettering of simple proverbs, including phrases such as 'Look before you Leap', coupled with corresponding contemporary scenes drawn from life. This series of illustrated proverbs is designed to aid understanding of such age-old sayings in a late eighteenth-century world, in a similar manner to which Wilson twins an age-old maxim with an original storyline and accompanying roundels in *Progress*. Though, whilst Bewick's image presents a series of unrelated proverbs, Wilson picks one maxim to illustrate to maximise its instructional value. Interestingly, *Proverbs* titled illustrations could be brought 'as packs of cards, bound as small books or as large sheets', reinforcing the mutability of printed format from the 1750s.²⁸⁴ Consequently, Wilson's practise of producing fan print designs would have likely aided his ability to produce single-sheet prints aimed for the moral education of child, broadening the diversity of prints targeted at this particular audience.

Progress, although not made into a fan, was published by Joseph Read, who notably published some of Wilson's other fan designs in their unmounted forms. Important

²⁸³ Fuller, *GNOMOLOGOIA: ADAGES AND PROVERBS; Wise SENTENCES AND Witty SAYINGS, ANCIENT and MODERN, FOREIGN and BRITISH*, 4.

²⁸⁴ O'Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, 32.

conclusions can be drawn from this. Firstly, Read seems to have published all Wilson's fan and print illustrations between 1795 and 1796. This indicates that the same publishing processes were undertaken for both Wilson's print and fan designs. Moreover, it also indicates that this infant print was possibly a pre-design for a fan, but then published as a print illustration. Secondly, it becomes clear that Wilson treated the publishing process of his fan engravings and single-sheet engravings in the same manner, not choosing a different publisher to publish this single-sheet print. The fact that publications of both visual formats were undertaken by a publisher who did not differentiate between them in any way, publishing them both at No. 133 Pall Mall, reveals an inherent link between Wilson's narrative design and composition on both formats.²⁸⁵ Upon close examination of *Progress*, a semi-circular plate imprint can be detected curving around the outside of its imagery. This shows that Wilson engraved this design onto a semi-circular shaped metal plate. It seems Wilson stipple-engraved the three roundels, their accompanying text, as well as the letter-press title, before choosing to print the engraving without adding any additional verse or imagery. The audience that it was intended to be used by possibly influenced its final format as a single-sheet print. It might be supposed then, that Wilson conceived this in the same way as a fan design but printed it as a rectangle shape, thereby blurring the material distinction between his process of fan leaf and single-sheet printing.

²⁸⁵ Joseph Read's location of publishing business, No. 133 Pall Mall, is written on the surface of Wilson's fan print designs which he published. These fans list as follows: the hand-coloured version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (I)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512); *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; Or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511); *The Three Ages of Man (untitled)*, produced in 1795 (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.484); *The Good Swain* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.483); and, finally, *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482).

Progress establishes an intrinsic material link between Wilson's single-sheet and fan print work. Other fan print designs show his practice of adapting subject-matter featured on popular genre single-sheet prints.²⁸⁶ If Wilson's fan, *The Good Swain*, is compared to J. Young's *Rustic Ease* (Fig. 52), a mezzotint from 1800 after a painting by George Morland (1763-1804), featuring a woman and a man outside a cottage within a woodland vista, several parallels can be identified. When *Rustic Ease* is contrasted against *The Good Swain*, replication of the pictorial motifs of a family, picturesque abode and countryside backdrop can all be identified on the fan leaf surface. *The Good Swain* is introduced by the far-left roundel 'The Morning of Youth' (Fig. 53), illustrating a young man proposing to a woman. The middle roundel 'Mid-day of Life' (Fig. 54), depicts a family sat outside a dwelling, while the far-right roundel 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age' (Fig. 55), imagines an elderly couple cheerfully smoking pipes outside their house.

Characteristics of *The Good Swain* suggest that it is not just the portrayal of the virtuous rural poor in Young's work that could have influenced Wilson. *The Good Swain* bears visual similarities with prints such as *The Gypsy-Fortune-Teller* (Fig. 56), a hand-coloured mezzotint produced in 1783, showing a gypsy woman in a village setting reading the palm of a girl, and a crayon illustration (Fig. 57), sketched by John Whessell, again, after Morland, in 1796. The grouping of a family around a rural residence included in *The Good Swain*'s 'Mid-day of Life', can be identified as a key feature of rustic depictions like Whessell's sketch, which pictures a couple seated outside the front of their cottage, each supporting one of their two children. Together,

²⁸⁶ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 375+378.

these characteristics of *The Good Swain* begin to show how closely Wilson seems to have been familiar with, and reused, pictorial motifs from popular eighteenth-century prints. Furthermore, I would assert that Wilson linked a harmonious relationship between the genders, and the positive influence of an honourable wife, with good conduct in the same way as is inferred in images such as Whessell's drawing.

One of the most significant features of *The Good Swain*, which suggests that genre prints likely influenced the inclusion of specific types of visual motifs and literary tropes found on Wilson's fan leaves, is the depiction of pipes smoked by the 'good swain' and his wife in *The Good Swain*'s final fan leaf roundel 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age'. Smoking a pipe in a bucolic environment was a recurrent trope in widely-circulated prints and was symbolic of contentment: it is often accompanied by the depiction of a pitcher of wine (Fig. 57). Moreover, the pipe refers to the literary trope of 'Old Darby' and Wilson's innovative placement of this well-established trope, and subsequent pictorial motif, indicates that the fan's function was for gentle edification. By including the pictorial motif of a pipe in 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age', Wilson integrates the narrative of the life of the 'swain' – defined as 'a young lover or country youth' – with that of the literary trope of an aged couple named 'Old Darby' and 'Old Joan'.

'Cheerful Evening of Old Age' shows the pair sitting together outside their rural home, taking fulfilment in their surroundings as 'Old Darby' holds a pitcher and both characters puff their pipes in unison. The sense of ease evoked in this image is reinforced by the text placed underneath, reading 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age'.

Wilson has included the lines: ‘Together they totter about, or sit in the sun at the Door, And at night when old Darby’s pipe’s out, Old Joan will not smoke one whiff more’.

Wilson’s employment of ‘Joan’ and ‘Darby’ as characters in his story was synonymous with the representation of a merry elderly pair, which became common during the 1730s. Defined by Henry Sampson Woodfall as ‘a happily married couple’, the characters John Darby and his wife Joan were first mentioned in a poem published in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* by Woodfall in 1735, under the title of *The Joys of Love Never Forgot: A Song*.²⁸⁷ Woodfall wrote this ballad whilst working as an apprentice in London to a man called Darby, a publisher whose wife was named Joan. The poem is presumed to be based on this couple and began to appear in single-sheet prints that replicate this story. Wilson’s choice of subject matter is therefore not only fashionably pastoral, but through his addition of text, he also contrives to draw a connection between the work and the printing industry.

Images that closely relate to the characters of ‘Old Darby’ and ‘Old Joan’ include a 1750 etching attributed to John June, *Old Darby and Joan* (Fig. 58), and a mezzotint and engraving published throughout the 1780s and 1790s by Bowles and Carver, also titled *Old Darby and Joan* (Fig. 59). Bowles and Carver’s image (which again depicts an elderly man and woman smoking their pipes outside a cottage) is directly comparable to Wilson’s ‘Cheerful Evening of Old Age’. The pictorial transformation of the ‘good swain’ into ‘old Darby’ in ‘Cheerful Evening of Old Age’, presents the fan owner with a positive image of old age, as well as a type of honourable manly conduct that facilitates living in an enduring marital union. Wilson furthers the function of *The Good Swain’s*

²⁸⁷ Henry Sampson Woodfall, *The Joys of Love Never Forgot: A Song*, London, 1735, 153.

narrative by its close visual association to that of genre prints, enabling the fan leaf narrative to extol the merits of living, and recognising, a good life. Here, Wilson is clearly borrowing from the visual language of single-sheet print culture, albeit in more complex ways. His use of stock characters from the pictorial and literary trope of ‘Old Darby’ and ‘Old June’, along with the elements of pastoral life, visually relate to rural representations in print. Bermingham argues that ‘the eighteenth-century taste for nature and the natural reached an apogee during the 1790s in the cult of the picturesque [...] – especially in such humble aspects as woodland scenery’.²⁸⁸ She confirms nature and its pictorial representation began to embody ‘supreme social value’, as the hastening of the Enclosures Act gave rural land new economic and cultural worth, and, as a result, unprecedented significance.²⁸⁹ So, the values newly embedded in late eighteenth-century illustrations of country life would have been recognised in corresponding fan leaf imagery.

Likewise, other topical issues Wilson’s fan print deal with would have tapped into concerns of the fashionable female Pall Mall shopper, such as the French Revolution (1789-1799), which brought with it concerns of the world upside down. Wilson’s creation of *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* (Fig. 7) in 1797 gives indication that the theme of a world upturned found new cultural, political and visual resonance in the 1790s.²⁹⁰ So, Wilson was engaging with current trends and reacting to them rapidly on the fan leaf format to attract a politically aware clientele in the heart of London. The fact that both Wilson’s fan print and the engraving *The World Turned*

²⁸⁸ Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: the English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, 1+57.

²⁸⁹ Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: the English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, 1.

²⁹⁰ *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

Upside-Down or the Folly of Man (Fig. 60), published in 1790 by the engraver John Evans as the third edition of a print design first published in the 1690s.

The Folly of Man displays a central roundel, containing its title text '*The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy*' (Fig. 61), along with lines of accompanying verse. This is surrounded by twenty-five miniature scenes that describe an unfolding narrative of folly and inversions in nature and society. Narratives placed to the left-hand side of *The Folly of Man* describe, in numbered order: two pigs playing cards; a Frenchman kicking the globe as a football; an Englishman with his back turned on a meal of roast beef; a husband in a corner kissing a servant whilst the wife looks on from behind a door; the figure of Jupiter extending his hand to a critic whilst sitting on a cloud; a King reduced to cobbling whilst a cobbler looks on, wearing a crown; a collective of monkeys standing next to a lectern; a lawyer waving away a fee from a personification of Indigence; a narrative depicting a poet holding a conversation with Apollo; a personification of Scandal, doing penance for abusing the world by standing on a stool in front of a crowd; a moll sitting surrounded by lambs in a rural setting; and a wit examining a strongbox.

Positioned to the right-hand side of the fan leaf are: an image of a butterfly floating in the countryside; a dejected lover standing next to a pool of water; a husband kissing a servant whilst the wife looks on; an old bachelor talking to Cupid across a table; a Clown beating a wife in an interior setting; a miser carrying his possessions out to disperse them to the poor; a young Duchess sitting across a tale from a personification

of Time discussing saving her charms; a woman standing next to a personification of Death, pointing to her husband whilst she holds a faithful dog; a personification of Flattery with his back turned to a man who is shutting the door on him; a personification of Venus and Cupid carrying their Turtle Doves to market to subsist on; a personification of Vice being carried away by the personification of Virtue; and, finally, Lucifer standing, about to put his head in a noose to hang.

The trope of a world turned upside down, inversions in nature and abuses in social hierarchies has a long tradition in Western European print culture. Malcolm Jones states that the history of the notion of inversions expressed in written and pictorial form goes back at least to the sixteenth century. In the mid-1550s, a Marian Catholic Father, John Christopherson, wrote a rhetorical text *An exhortation to All menne to take hede and beware of rebellion* asking whether the period after Wyatt Rebellion in 1554 was a time in which the natural laws of the universe and established societal roles had been reversed.²⁹¹ Clayton suggests that the motif of a ‘topsy turvy world’ originated with the Dutchman Maerten van Heemsglobe’s engraving issued in Antwerp in the early 1500s, but was superseded by the ‘fool’s cap’ motif, used by J. Theodor de Bry as a frontispiece for his *Emblemata Saecularia*, published in 1596.²⁹² However, as Clayton confirms, another Dutchman, Crispijn de Passe, inverted the world-orb so that it is, literally, a world turned upside down, populating it with scenes of destructive human

²⁹¹ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, 286. The Wyatt Rebellion (named after its leader Thomas Wyatt) was a revolt that occurred in 1554 in England in protest against Queen Mary I’s (1516-1558) decision to marry Philip II of Spain (1527-1598), which was an unpopular policy.

²⁹² Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 286.

folly.²⁹³ The Italian etching *Così v'è il Mondo* (Fig. 62), produced by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli and published in 1685, offers a more abstract visualisation of the theme of the topsy-turvy world, introducing such pictorial conceits as the surreal image of a half-moon trapped in a tree.²⁹⁴

One of the earliest known British prints depicting the natural world in unnatural revolt is a woodcut dated to 12 March 1656, illustrating a cat's castle being besieged by rats. An English version is an inexpensive engraving published by John Overton a year earlier, in 1655, entitled *The Cat's Castle* (Fig. 63). By the late seventeenth century, the figure of the fool was often associated with the age-old trope of the world turned upside down and pictorially illustrated verse. Thus, imagery featuring the world upturned often combined those defining characteristics of a fool as understood in its traditional sense, as a visual critique of contemporaneous society and a reminder of people's innate ability to act foolishly. The illustrated poem *The World Turn'd Upside Down, or, The Folly of Man; In Twelve Comical Relations Upon Uncommon Subjects*, published in 1736, demonstrates the theme's continued relevance into the eighteenth century, and exemplifies the viewpoint of seeing the changing environment as one that generates a continual process of inversion.²⁹⁵

In the 1790s, at a time when the French Revolution was raging across the English Channel, Wilson's sophisticated printed fan leaf composition, picturing a

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 286.

²⁹⁴ R. Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, unpublished MA by Research, University of York, 2012, 106.

²⁹⁵ Anonymous, *The WORLD Turn'd Upside Down, or, The FOLLY of MAN; In Twelve Comical Relations UPON Uncommon Subjects*, London, 1793.

contemporaneous world reversed, would have added significance for a purchaser. Not only would a handler be able to instantly link the perceived inversions in society placed across *The Folly of Man*'s surface to the more general theme of a universe in disarray, but also connected abuses being enacted in the time and place in which they lived to the misconducts being enacted on the near continent. Perhaps most ingeniously, though, is that the fact that female owners of a mounted *The Folly of Man* could have slowly or quickly swivelled the fan leaf upside down upon its pivot if so desired, thus literally turning the entire image on its head. Consequently, a female owner using this fan could have intimated that they held the ability to, albeit symbolically, facilitate, or help correct, men's follies.

Similarly, Wilson's *The Folly of Man* draws on a long iconographic print tradition in relation to the theme of man's innate foolishness.²⁹⁶ The pictorial origins of this concept date back to the peculiarities of medieval iconography, which features the figure of the 'foolish man', symbolising man's propensity for foolishness. As early as 1590, in its depiction of a globe encapsulated inside a jester's cap, *A Map Made Like a Fool's Head* (Fig. 64) inextricably links the universe with human folly. Similarly, the allegorical iconographic trope of 'the ship of fools' – a ship's crew made up of dysfunctional and foolish men – originating from Plato's *Republic*, a Socratic dialogue written around 380 BC and concerning the character of the just city-state, contributed to the visual culture of Europe in the sixteenth century.²⁹⁷ The book *Ship of Fools*, published in 1494 by the German theologian Sebastian Brant, served as inspiration for

²⁹⁶ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, 124.

²⁹⁷ Plato, *The Republic*, London, 2003.

the Dutch artist Hieronymus Bosch's (1450-1519) painting on wood, *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 65), painted in the 1490s originally as part of a triptych series.²⁹⁸ This *Ship of Fools* depicts a delusional collective of people setting sail from the Swiss city of Basel, journey bound for the fictitious 'paradise of fools'.

An eighteenth-century print that helped re-introduce this particular trope is the anonymously produced *We are Seven* (Fig. 66), dated 1770 and sold in large numbers at London's Bow Church Yard. Within this distinctive image, a group of assorted foolish figures is depicted in an unfamiliar rural landscape, making up one less than the title suggests so that the viewer makes up the last in number by virtue of observation. The text at the bottom of *We are Seven* spells out the intended comparison between the viewer and the inherent folly of all men, exclaiming, 'Welcome my friend thus long we have been even/ Now thou art come thou makest our number Seven/ A perfect number foe men doe it call/ As perfect are we in our follies all'. In the eighteenth century the theme of folly appeared in an engraving by William Dicey, *The Folly of Man or The World turn'd upside-down* (Fig. 67), originally published in the 1690s but then republished in 1720. This print (this impression) was again issued as J. Cobb's *Folly of Man Expos'd or the World Turned Upside Down* (Fig. 68), between 1793 and 1832, but, as already mentioned, also republished in a slightly different edition in 1790 by Evans as *The World Turned Upside-Down or the Folly of Man*. In all of these three print editions the natural state of the world is presented in sixteen separate narratives, each focusing on an imagined inversion in nature. Each narrative is arranged sequentially in a grid pattern, from top left to lower right. In contrast, the minute

²⁹⁸ *Ship of Fools* now exists as a fragment of the original triptych painting.

images placed across Wilson's *The Folly of Man* are arranged in a startlingly novel, and apparently random, fashion, suitable to visually convey a world in turmoil and societal upturn. Its composition is its most distinctive aspect when compared to his other fan leaf designs, which are much more didactic and linear, and its medley format indicates the inventiveness that Wilson brought to his updating of traditional themes when creating narrative printed fan designs.

Hence, Wilson's innovative updating of the topic of *The Folly of Man* onto the fan leaf surface, in particular, can be seen as an important 'player' in the diversity of visual culture in the last decade of the eighteenth century. On one hand, a female fan owner could laugh at the topical follies occurring on *The Folly of Man*, while, at the same time, feel a sense of injustice at the events being presented to them on the fan leaf's surface and, in turn, try to morally educate others. *The Folly of Man*'s minute pictures depict instances of normally hidden abuses against women and, importantly, its physical form would have allowed for a handler to carry this fan print into London's public spaces to expose it to a wide viewership made of both men and women. I would argue *The Folly of Man*'s cascading medley of narratives draws attention to misbehaviours enacted against women, such as unfaithfulness, and thereby invites questioning of the status quo in the format of a complex pictorial complement to published texts, such as that authored by the writer Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797). Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, published only three years before the production of *The Folly of Man*, advocates for the

‘national education’ of women and for their rights and duties to be respected.²⁹⁹ In a sense, *The Folly of Man* provided an innovative caustic visual language that can be connected with the growing calls for equality in women’s rights and duties, which manifested in literary form in the 1790s.³⁰⁰

More than this, the fact that Wilson states the year 1797 within the devil’s speech bubble indicates that he deliberately relates the follies pictured occurring across the fan leaf to events in this year and, by extension, the contemporary context in general. The metaphor of the world upside down itself would have proved highly appropriate in the late eighteenth century for a few reasons. Porter calls the 1790s ‘explosive’ in terms of the political and social upheavals that occurred within the decade.³⁰¹ The Gordon Riots had swept through London ten years previously and the American Revolutionary wars had ended in defeat for Britain in 1783. However, it was the violence that characterised the French Revolution (1789-1799) which sent the greatest shock waves through British society during this period. Porter argues that that ‘new dawn’ of the 1790s provided impetus for ‘the tocsin of *Liberté Egalité, Fraternité*’ to give ‘fresh heart to normally insular radical liberals this side of the channel’, and that, consequently, the ‘prospect of civil strife and even bloody revolution in the 1790s’ was ‘sudden and traumatic’.³⁰² English ‘ministers quaked, terrified that violence might erupt just about anywhere’, as the world that people had hitherto understood became fundamentally destabilised.³⁰³ As Richard Taws has recently commented in relation to the development of printed

²⁹⁹ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, Philadelphia, 1794, iv.

³⁰⁰ Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, v.

³⁰¹ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 101.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 348.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 101.

ephemera produced during the Revolutionary years in France, the public on both sides of the English Channel ‘came quite literally to see the world differently’.³⁰⁴ Scenes on *The Folly of Man*, such as ‘a Frenchman kicking the globe as a football’ and ‘an Englishman with his back turned on a meal of roast beef’, to be discussed in detail in the next chapter, thus reflect contemporary anxieties. Wilson was therefore a savvy designer; pictorial engagement with the traditional metaphor of the world upside down during this turbulent time would have resonated with, and secured him, a buying public.

Thus far, how pictorial translations of themes of a world unturned on paper and its relationship to the London print trade in the 1790s proved timely has been analysed. Now attention turns from the French Revolution to the 1801 Act of Union and an unusual survival of a silk fan design. Wilson sold at least one form of commemorative fan design at No. 108 St. Martin’s Lane. *The United Sisters* (Fig. 18), produced by Wilson and co-published by Ashton on 1 January 1801, proves an interesting case in point, indicating the extent to which I argue his trade was interconnected to a diversity of trades linked to fashion and politics, as well as print making. Wilson produced this fan print design in quick response to the 1801 Act of Union between the countries of Scotland, Ireland and England and it was published on the day the Act came into force. This dating therefore also serves as a memorial or souvenir of that event, as well as the date of production. The Act of Union enabled free trade between Britain and Ireland and allowed Ireland to be represented at Westminster.³⁰⁵ However, this union was largely symbolic, having no social or cultural basis, and was contested by many people in

³⁰⁴ Richard Taws, *The Politics of the Provisional: Art and Ephemera in Revolutionary France*, Pennsylvania, 2013, 9.

³⁰⁵ Douglas Hay and Nicholas Rogers, *Eighteenth-Century English Society*, Oxford and New York, 1997, 13.

Ireland and Britain.³⁰⁶ It resulted in the Anglican Church becoming the head of the Head of the Irish Church and citizens of the Catholic faith being unable to hold public office or have the right to vote.³⁰⁷ *The United Sisters* can be seen purposefully to combine fine and decorative elements in order to help promote and foster an idea of a nation-state whose stability and prosperity rested not only on women's influence but on a female buyer to carry this fan print design patriotically. The material and illustrative elements of *The United Sisters* seem to be designed to appeal to women, both on a sensory and emotional level.

The United Sisters shows, in relation to this unification, three bold, hand-coloured figures with a female allegorical personification of England occupying a central position, exhibiting a confident pose as she provides the joining force in the picture, symbolically holding the hands of Scotland and Ireland. The gold-tinted colouring of the Unicorn's horn, and the female allegorical personification of Ireland's embellished, carved golden harp, standing to the far right of the image, positively reinforce the theme of a newly united British nationhood (and sisterhood). The symmetrical placing of figures is completed by the female allegorical personification of Scotland, placed to the far left of the image. The three figures bear similar facial features, rosy red lips, and long flowing dark brown hair, providing an attractive and persuasive outward image of a harmonious nationhood. Below this image bear the words 'Fair Sisters, Isles of ancient fame!/ Commerce, Arms, & Arts ye same/ Long may sweet Union bind you three./ Each blessing each, and blest as free'. So, Wilson not only represents the three

³⁰⁶ Hay and Rogers, *Eighteenth-Century English Society*, 13

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 13

allegories as embodying liberty, justice and virtue, but as figures that personify business, the military and the visual arts, therefore uniting these occupations through a feminine agency.³⁰⁸ As Eger argues, ‘liberty and luxury both used women as a yardstick for the relative health or degeneracy of the nation and required the idealisation of the female subject as a means of representing the model state’.³⁰⁹ Moreover, the purchase of a fan titled ‘*The United Sisters*’ may have made its female owner feel an implicit part of this sisterhood if they carried a mounted version of the fan print. Therefore, it can reasonably be suggested that women who may have read Wilson’s fan leaf narratives about foolish men together would have likely felt a sense of alliance, as well as disclosed stories of their own experiences with acts of male misconduct.

The United Sisters would have no doubt enticed clients to purchase such a beautiful image. After all, this is an unmounted colour engraved fan leaf on silk. As silk was expensive to produce and purchase throughout the course of the eighteenth century, it is likely Wilson bought samples or cut offs from nearby haberdashery shops.³¹⁰ William Farrell has noted that in the latter half of the eighteenth century, silk ‘received considerable state attention because of the prestige derived from its core market of elite consumers, the high value of its products, and the sophistication of the technology and skills involved in its production’.³¹¹ Government prohibitions on foreign silks promoted

³⁰⁸ Hay and Rogers, *Eighteenth-Century English Society*, 191.

³⁰⁹ Eger, ‘Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed’, 191.

³¹⁰ William Farrell, ‘Smuggling Silks into Eighteenth-Century Britain: Geography, Perpetrators, and Consumers’, *Journal of British Studies*, 55:2, 2016, 270.

³¹¹ Farrell, ‘Smuggling Silks into Eighteenth-Century Britain: Geography, Perpetrators, and Consumers’, 272.

domestic production, imbuing native woven silk with a distinctive sense of Britishness, thus *The United Sisters* combines this idea with the notion of nationhood.³¹²

Griffiths remarks that while the printing trade did sometimes use specially prepared copper-plates for printing directly onto fabrics such as silks, they were almost never used for paper impressions and, therefore, did not carry any publication lines and rarely the names of the producers.³¹³ However, there exists a separate, uncoloured mounted version of *The United Sisters* (Fig. 69), completed on paper and published in the same year as the fan design (in 1801) on silk. This impression, printed onto a paper surface marked with both its publication lines and maker's name, as well the royal coat of arms, evidences several points. Firstly, it demonstrates that Wilson was keenly aware of the diverse nature and spending abilities of his customer base.³¹⁴ Secondly, it draws attention to the fact that *The United Sisters* print design was likely widely circulated in London, which means it was a popular fan print design. Finally, it attests to the point that Wilson's fan designs formed innovative interconnections across popular prints, material consumption, politics and nationalism, that it will be argued enabled them to act as mobile conduct instructors in the following chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the eighteenth-century fan shop as an important and dynamic location for the convergence and circulation of a wide variety of visual culture

³¹² *Ibid.*, 272.

³¹³ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, 32.

³¹⁴ Williams, *Printed Books, Maps & Documents, Children's & Illustrated Books & Literature*, 16 & 17 December 2015, 137.

that proliferated in London in the eighteenth century and as largely a women's domain. It has established how important the fan shop location was for the meeting of diverse visual material that was circulating in eighteenth-century England. Examination of the environs in which Wilson worked confirms Pall Mall was one of the most creative and cultural boroughs of London. Investigation of the emergent types of spaces in which fans, as well as other types of artwork and literary texts, were sold, speaks to the appeal of such selling establishments based in and around the Pall Mall area. Similarly, this chapter indicates the importance of the fan shop in the daily lives of many Londoners, as well as the astute nature of its owner/s.

It becomes apparent that fan shops acted as a focus point for women with increasing consumer power and experience of changing social circumstances to purchase items within these commercial spaces. Wilson's network of collaborators, notably with prominent female fan makers like Sarah Ashton, likely played some part in securing his own success as women were key purchasers and sellers of fans; Wilson positioned himself into that market, partly by working with female makers, dealers and publishers. Examining the production of a few of Wilson's fan print designs in relation to the way he engaged with broader making and selling strategies employed by fan makers and shop owners draws attention to the range of associations this neglected branch of print making had across visual imagery, novelty, making, shopping and affairs of the state. Analysis of the variety of material his fan designs were printed on, and the topical issues they deal with, gives an indication of how they were at the intersection of fine and decorative arts, innovative in their updating of age-old themes and visualisations of nationalistic political agendas. Hence, Wilson's enterprise expands current

understanding of the circulation, and fluid interplay, of images in the latter half of the eighteenth century, their relationship to popular culture, novelty and manufacture; and their relationship to prints. In Chapter Two, I will examine Wilson's combination of text and image, and his connection with female customers, through an original study of the relationship between his fans and conduct literature.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FAN AND CONDUCT-RELATED TEXTS

This chapter further analyses George Wilson's association with female consumers, through an analysis of the relationship between his fans and conduct literature. I argue that not only did Wilson sell a range of conduct-related literary texts in his shop, but that he also incorporated virtuous and satirical tropes associated with the various social types first described and commented upon in these writings onto the surface of the fan itself. It proposes that several of Wilson's fans appear to relate closely to sources of conduct-related literature, such as the erotically charged *Bon Ton Magazine: or, Microscope of Fashion and Folly* (Fig. 70), which explored issues of gender, race and identity. The *Bon Ton Magazine* was published between 1791 to 1796 and took the form of illustrated hardback literary annuals, published in a series of volumes in the 1790s, more on which will be explored in subsequent discussion. This chapter deals primarily with the subject matter of Wilson's fans and argues for the transformation of conduct-related texts into mobile conduct instructors. The fan as portable conduct instructor; and the significance of social types in relation to conduct, will be analysed through a study

of one of Wilson's fans that deals very directly with conduct literature. It establishes Wilson's narrative engraved fan to be a noteworthy and hitherto unidentified development of traditional text-based forms of conduct literature.

This chapter makes the case that Wilson transposed conduct instruction from texts that carried an amusing and educational tone and, moreover, that his engagement with comic satirical tropes enabled him to develop fan leaf narratives that interweave educational, amusing and visually attractive subject matter. It argues that this development in fan function addressed the increasing preoccupations in society with outward appearances and modes of conduct.³¹⁵ Moreover, it seeks to reveal that Wilson sometimes overlaid the tropes included in his fan leaf designs with ingenious satire and wit to educate its owner, as well as to alert them to the dangers of what can follow if normative protocols of conduct are disregarded. Ultimately, it contends this development in engraved fan design increased their appeal for fan owners, who could thus turn to their fans for daily guidance.

This chapter firstly draws attention to the importance of the cultural formation of manners for the rise in, and popularity of, published forms of conduct-related literature during the eighteenth century and how they may have articulated notions of gender and sexuality. It examines what was deemed to be good and bad conduct during the period, as well as the consequences of not adhering to sanctioned behaviour. It explores the most prevalent types of advisory texts which dominated this period and what kinds of

³¹⁵ Ben Wilson, *Decency and Disorder, 1789-1837*, London, 2007, 6.

conduct they encouraged and discouraged. It is important to note that the fan user and reader of conduct literature are considered by this author to be in a similar position, in that they both, in effect ‘read’ the fan, and in this sense the fan might be considered a type of mobile conduct book. In my analysis, I discuss this translation from conduct literature to fan, through a close study of Wilson’s stipple-engraved fan print *The Lady’s Adviser, Physician & Moralist or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody* (Fig. 8), produced in 1797.³¹⁶ This fan print design usefully foregrounds the issue of how Wilson translated the ideas of manners and conduct onto the surface of his fan leaf designs. It discusses themes of balance, binaries, opposites, healthy bodies and healthy conduct, alongside the meaning of different social types in relation to conduct literature. Following on from this analysis of translation from text to fan, the chapter then investigates the main social types outlined on Wilson’s fans, and how they relate to concepts around upholding or destabilising conduct, examining in turn: the figure of the wife; the figure of the swain; the figure of the beau; and, lastly, the figure of the fool.

The Development of Conduct Literature in the Eighteenth Century

Before outlining a history of conduct and the process whereby the concept of a ‘civilised’ society began to emerge in eighteenth-century Britain it is necessary to examine how conduct literature developed in tandem. During the eighteenth century, conduct literature was disseminated by an increasingly diverse range of commercial establishments, which in turn produced a consumer market for such writings. Roy Porter comments that circulating libraries made thousands of texts available to

³¹⁶ *The Lady’s Adviser, Physician & Moralist or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Lady’s Adviser, Physician & Moralist*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.501.

subscribing members of the public for a few guineas, numbering over 120 in London by the turn of the nineteenth century.³¹⁷ The bookseller James Lackington reflected upon this advance in book storage and lending in 1792, declaring circulating libraries to:

have greatly contributed towards the amusements and cultivation of the other sex; by far the greatest part of ladies now have a taste for books. Ladies now in general read, not only novels, although many of that class are excellent, and tend to polish both the head and heart [...].³¹⁸

This reference to a circulating library operating in St. Martin's Court in a similar period to which Wilson was working, is of significance for this thesis. This suggests that Wilson would have ready access to the types of books women read, which could 'polish both the heart and the head', typified by texts relating to good conduct, and could therefore have gleaned the elements he wanted from such educational literature to attract a similar customer base.³¹⁹

Conduct literature has a long history in Europe. As a distinct genre of text, they began to be read in courtly circles in the Middle Ages in the form of courtesy books or 'book of manners', and focused on issues of etiquette, behaviour and manners.³²⁰ Courtesy literature can be traced back to thirteenth-century Germany, when 'learning-poems' were read, either out loud or to oneself, as a memory aid to learning.³²¹ The latter half of the Renaissance period (1300-1600) saw new ideals of manners and courtesy emerge in tandem with the re-emergence of urban civilisation in the Italian city-states, such as Mantua, which drew on the earlier civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome.³²²

³¹⁷ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 235.

³¹⁸ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 235.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 235.

³²⁰ G. J Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility, Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Chicago, 1992, 70.

³²¹ Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility, Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, 79.

³²² *Ibid.*, 79.

However, after the turn of the eighteenth century, conduct literature, and particularly those texts published in Britain, started to take on more innovative forms, like the magazine and journal format. Moreover, these writings, while filling a similar role on guidance in manners and morals as that of earlier conduct literature, placed an importance on the secular aspects of a woman's life and their mental well-being. In addition, they often incorporated satirical fictional scenarios and 'epistolary exchanges' to further involve, and make relevant, their content for a reader.³²³ As Jones explains, in the eighteenth century conduct literature 'formed a significant sub-genre among the hundreds of books and periodicals [...] which offered instruction in all areas of social, domestic, and professional behaviour to a rapidly growing readership'.³²⁴ Conduct literature of all kinds played a crucial role in 'defining an ideological identity for the emergent middle class', to which was added a great number of 'fictionalised forms of advice literature [...] also popular'.³²⁵ Forms of advice literature circulated alongside prints, pamphlets, cartoons and narrative series, among others, in London by the turn of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, this chapter considers different types of conduct literature from books to poems to articles.

It must be noted here that conduct literature aimed at male readers also flourished throughout the eighteenth century. In order to establish there were many types of conduct literature and a growing trend for diverse conduct literature for both sexes and because it demonstrates that women wrote them too, I will now expand upon some of these different forms of text and the nature of the kind of conduct they advocated. By

³²³ Nadine Berenguier, *Conduct Books for Girls in Enlightenment France*, London, 2016, 10, 28+29.

³²⁴ Jones, *Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity*, 14.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

conduct literature I mean a range of literary genres, including instructive, as well as entertaining, categories. Together with conduct literature that took the form of a kind of letter, often sectioned into different chapters, such as Reverend Wilkes' *Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice*, published in 1740 and directed for a female audience, conduct literature that took a magazine format cultivated a wider, mixed-sex readership. This magazine format enabled the articles included in each edition to blend entertainment and instruction, containing such things as dress-patterns, quizzes and even pornographic stories. Books cost more than magazine editions to purchase, with book sellers publishing them in parts to spread costs, as well as to develop a loyal following and secure new audiences, in the same way as printed fans were routinely advertised.³²⁶

Satirical texts, like the anonymously written *Monsieur Kaniferstane*, published in 1790, constitutes just such an example of a specific form of conduct instruction. This story, focusing on the sea bound voyage of the fictitious 'little French marquis' and his arrival at an island castle, typifies a humorous form of conduct writing that presents a masculine embodiment of misconduct, which the reader can learn from.³²⁷ He travels around this island after his passage across the ocean ends, marvelling at the good fortune of the castle's owner, 'Monsieur Kaniferstane'. The marquis proclaims Kaniferstane to be the luckiest man in the world because of his wealth until he sees a funeral procession taking place a few days after. Upon enquiring as to who's funeral it is for, he is told it is for Kaniferstane himself, and is thus shocked into realising that

³²⁶ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 235.

³²⁷ Anonymous, *Monsieur Kaniferstane*, London, 1790. Contained in the anonymously edited *The Cabinet of Momus; A Choice Selection of Humorous Poems*, Philadelphia, 1809, 46-49.

expensive possessions and status do not save anyone from the inevitability of death. Therefore, the various misconducts identified in this story include ignorance and jealousy.³²⁸ Such specific satirical characterisations are based along the same nationalistic lines as a number of Wilson's printed social types, which also convey similar kinds of behavioural transgressions. As shall be discussed later in this chapter, eighteenth-century conduct literature's practice of aligning certain behaviours with being representative of a people from one country or another could then help persuade a reader to think of some nations as good, and others as bad, in terms of morality. So, it could be suggested *Monsieur Kaniferstane* encouraged a reader to behave with traditional British values of common sense and open-handedness, rather than to adopt foolish and envious conduct, aligned in the story with French effeminate men.

Personal letters imparting advice, characterised by texts like *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, first published in 1761, represent another distinct kind of conduct writing. As Gregory explains in the introduction to this compilation of letters, 'the anxiety I have for your [his daughters] happiness has made me resolve to throw together my sentiments relating to your future conduct in life'.³²⁹ In this text Gregory advocates modest reserve, retiring delicacy and easy dignity, marrying a man of equal taste, sentiment and decency, while warning against jealousy and speaking too candidly.³³⁰ Gregory implies that a woman's conduct should encompass an awareness of choosing a husband with similar values and tastes but also advocates passivity and a discouragement of any emboldening behaviour. Hence, Gregory's *A Father's Legacy to*

³²⁸ Anonymous (ed.), *The Cabinet of Momus; A Choice Selection of Humorous Poems*, 48.

³²⁹ Gregory, *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, 14.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 110.

His Daughters articulates a notion of an honourable woman as one subservient to her spouse and able to suppress any strong sexual or romantic desire.

Pocket conduct books, too, represent another more intimate form of conduct literature. Many of these minute books were sold in leather pocket cases (Fig. 71), akin to the way mounted fan leaves were often sold in hard fan cases of a similar size.³³¹ Thus, the physical form of some types of conduct book could be likened in material form to the fan. Both the mounted folding fan and the pocket conduct book were able, by virtue of their mobile natures, to be pulled close to a woman's body, collapsing any distance between them, and be viewed in secrecy, in partial visibility or in full prominence if so desired. Characteristically, eighteenth-century pocket conduct books contained such things as fashion plates illustrating women in modish fashions to view as a mobile conduct book in true form. Many pocket conduct books, like John Shirley's *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities: or, The Ingenious Gentlewoman and Servant-Maids Delightful Companion*, first published in 1706, additionally included advice for carrying out daily domestic chores, how to prepare recipes and even heal wounds.³³² Hence, it can be suggested that a number of conduct books on this scale were aimed as a female readership made up of mistresses of houses, as well as their house keepers and kitchen maids. These type of small conduct books would have simultaneously upheld and destabilised gender roles to an extent. They would have provided knowledge as to how to carry out duties traditionally assigned to women, but

³³¹ Martha Gamble, for instance, sold a number of printed fans in hard cases so that they could be sent across the county as gifts (Martha Gamble, Classified Adverts, 'FANS of the Harlot's Progress', *Evening Post*, 1 July 1732; Issue 722, London, n.p).

³³² John Shirley, *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities: or, The Ingenious Gentlewoman and Servant-Maids Delightful Companion*, London, 1706.

also given them useful knowledge of basic tasks and activities that could be used to effectively dictate the domestic schedule of a household.

It can be contended that late eighteenth-century magazines such as *The Lady's Magazine or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* (1770-1832), like the pocket-book conduct publications, conveyed a similar kind of pleasurable functionality. *The Lady's Magazine* was a periodical that ran for sixty-two years from 1770, when it merged with its former rival, *The Ladies Museum*. *The Lady's Magazine* was issued monthly, and its main function was to provide a 'regular periodical that contained material designed for the entertainment and improvement of women', accessible to, in its own words, 'the "house-wife as well as the peeress"³³³. *The Lady's Magazine* thus appealed to women across the class divide. *The Lady's Magazine* also includes the word 'entertainment' in its full title. This indicates the shift in the desire on the part of the reader and viewer to consume educational advice by way of humorous textual and visual instruction by the 1770s, reflected in the enormous range of topics carried by publications like *The Lady's Magazine*. Such conduct-related literature, too, elaborated upon characteristic examples of good conduct, constituting aspects of self-control, self-awareness and the ability to reason freely. Equally, these writings illuminate real and imagined examples of immodest, indecent, excessive and ill-judged behaviour, constituting the key hallmarks of bad conduct.

³³³ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, London, August 1770, Preface.

Although much conduct literature was written by men, women too sought to voice their own opinions in this form of text. Keeping this point in mind, it seems possible Wilson was intentionally referencing female concerns raised in some conduct literature written by women on his fans, which tend to take a less authoritative tenor than that written by men. Although publications like Mary Astell's *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, originally published in 1696, represented a small percentage of female authorship, women did contribute in a greater number to literary annuals, such as the *Bon Ton Magazine*. Additionally, *The Lady's Magazine* included conduct-style reports and amusing moralising tales and accompanying illustrations, such as one story recounting a fictitious visit to a masked masquerade, supplemented with an engraved narrative of its female protagonist preparing for it in her bedchamber. It encompassed within each issue a variety of texts, some written by women to be read by women.³³⁴ Porter points out that female 'agony column' writers were a characteristic feature of these types of magazines, their advice published in response to the intimate personal dilemmas of their female readers.³³⁵ Certainly, one of the most unique aspects of such magazines was their reliance on articles written by readers on current events for content. Readers of *The Lady's Magazine* could contribute essays, poetry and short stories, as well as other forms of written content without charge.³³⁶ This gave women a platform to declare their opinions or recognition among male and female peers, as well as providing an outlet for literary creativity.

³³⁴ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), 2.

³³⁵ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 277.

³³⁶ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), 'To Correspondents' Page.

Likewise, some late eighteenth-century magazines invited women to submit pieces of writing gave middle-class women the opportunity to enter the male dominated world of literary print and write for ‘repositor[ies] for the fugitive production and first essays of genius, especially of female genius’.³³⁷ To an extent, this ‘feminised space’ of the conduct text and related publications is reminiscent of the visibility of female fan makers in the same period in London. For instance, a feature of *The Lady’s Magazine* was the ‘agony aunt column’, titled ‘The Matron’. This ‘Matron’ was, in actuality, a Mrs Grey, who sat on the magazine’s editorial board.³³⁸ Over the course of seventeen years (1774-1794), Mrs Grey was able to bestow ‘comforting advice, maternal wisdom and instruction to readers who wrote in sharing their grievances’, in a mutually beneficial arrangement.³³⁹ The emergence of strong associations between women authors, some writing under pseudonyms, and readers was reflective of wider cultural and social developments in London in the mid to late eighteenth century. I argue that Hannah Greig’s argument in relation to the significance of London’s leisure venues for the creation of interpersonal relations and the practice of fashionable sociability could also apply to the often reciprocally valuable networks created between female fan makers, sellers and customers.³⁴⁰

Some female authors, such as the writer whose letter was printed in a March issue of *The Lady’s Magazine* in 1775 (under the satirical pseudonym of ‘S. Vainlove’), shared

³³⁷ Various, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), 2.

³³⁸ Various, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, London, March 1775, n.p.

³³⁹ Various, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (March 1775), n.p.

³⁴⁰ Hannah Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London*, Oxford, 2013, 65-66.

personal experiences to act as warnings so that fellow readers might safeguard themselves against suffering the same injustice.³⁴¹ In this letter, ‘S.Vainlove’ explains to her readers that a suitor she accepted at a ball turned out to be disreputable, while at the same ball she had made the mistake of snubbing an honourable gentleman because he was plain-dressed.³⁴² She reveals her experience so as to advise female readers not to follow her example in judging a potential suitor on outward appearance, but rather to take the time to assess their character properly. Thus, it appears evident that women were writing and contributing to wider debates about conduct at the time of Wilson’s activities in the 1770s, and this factor is important for later discussions in this chapter on Wilson’s fans. Analysis of magazines like *The Lady’s Magazine* suggests they were not a self-regulating form of conduct literature, but provide an insight into how women appropriated some types of conduct literature as a form of collective self-protection in a period when women were vulnerable. I would argue Wilson’s fans can also be viewed as a form of collective mobile self-protection for women.

Mention is also made in some magazines of the perceived association between healthy bodies and healthy morals. A good case in point is provided by a column titled ‘On Modern Empirics’, included in a 1770 edition of *The Lady’s Magazine*. In this column the disease of the spleen is discussed in relation to its being a cause of ill disposition – a focus on the health of a body as a reflection of a state of mind replicated, as shall be

³⁴¹ Various, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (March 1775), n.p.

³⁴² Various, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), n.p.

surveyed, in Wilson's fan print designs.³⁴³ These connections echo William Hogarth's concern with visually aligning a person's physical appearance and deportment with their moral worth in order to convey the pedagogic message of narratives, such as featured in his narrative series of six paintings, collectively titled *Marriage A-la-Mode*, completed in 1735 (Fig. 72), more on which will be discussed below.

Conduct literature, it is becoming clear, encompassed a range of topics and correlated closely with the print market during the eighteenth century, particularly as magazines like the *Bon Ton Magazine: or, Microscope of Fashion and Folly* featured accompanying illustrations, normally involving social scenes in domestic interiors, in each edition. Conduct writing, too, took a multitude of formats, including that of a journal, magazine, periodical, annual or letter, and was written by men and, in some cases, women. As shall be shown in the analyses of Wilson's fans later in this chapter, Wilson clearly borrowed from, and was influenced by, the currency of ideas carried by conduct-related literature, allowing him to create saleable fans, a number of which simultaneously upheld and destabilised traditional gender roles at this time. Coupled with this, Wilson's likely knowledge of such texts suggests that the entertainment value created by conduct-related literature was important for his clientele, as it was for aiding his creativity as a fan designer.

Conduct in the Eighteenth Century

³⁴³ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), 82.

The fan played a central role in debates about conduct, hiding an owner's identity and natural behaviours when desired, as it could shield the face of a woman from the middling and upper levels of society from the scrutiny of others and literally be brought as a mask fan with the aim of concealing one's true self. However, before considering Wilson's fans in detail, the process whereby the concept of a 'civilised' society began to emerge in eighteenth-century Britain is necessary to outline a history of conduct. Differences between the polite and impolite classes were established, in part, through the enactment of certain personal/social behaviours. To begin this examination, it is advantageous to highlight what an eighteenth-century public may have perceived to be virtuous behaviour and the dangers of deviating from such a model. As Paul Langford argues, good conduct was bound up with associations of Englishness and 'those distinctive aspects of national life that struck either outsiders or insiders or both as characteristic'.³⁴⁴ Langford notes it encompassed such qualities as politeness, industry, modesty, a sense of fair play, honesty, practicality and even a level of melancholy.³⁴⁵ To define some of these aspects a little more, 'industry' might, for instance, encompass a high level of self-discipline.³⁴⁶ Reserve could indicate self-control and self-awareness.³⁴⁷ Honesty and a sense of liberty were considered hallmarks of good English conduct, facilitating eccentricity, informality and the ability to 'think' freely.³⁴⁸ Sadness, too, was thought to be an emotion intrinsically linked to English character and freedom.³⁴⁹ As Langford explains, 'a standard mid-eighteenth-century belief was that a

³⁴⁴ Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, Oxford, 2000, 2.

³⁴⁵ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, 2.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 184-185.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 225.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 225.

free state placed a burden on the shoulders of its citizens'.³⁵⁰ Matthew Craske remarks that virtuous conduct was not a courtly ideal of manners, although its roots were in courtly conduct.³⁵¹ Rather, it was a mode of behaviour that was recommended to the 'middling sort', this being a section of society that defined itself as civic on the basis of its politeness, wealth and social status.³⁵² As Craske puts it, good conduct was publicly centred 'on values of the control of a man's appetite for pleasure, not its complete subjugation', and outwardly manifest most perceptibly in good taste, civility and decorum.³⁵³

What qualities best characterised virtuous behaviour can be thrown into clearest light when visualisations of the consequences of deviating from it are examined. While a large proportion of Hogarth's artistic output deals with distinguishing social pleasures from destructive excess, *Marriage A-la-Mode* illustrates the 'human tragedy' that results when boundaries of good conduct are infringed, and foreign customs and tastes adopted.³⁵⁴ The *Marriage A-la-Mode* series charts the cost for a fictitious impoverished Earl's son and a wealthy merchant's daughter of being wedded for the sake of convenience in order to save the Earl from destitution and to link the merchant's future lineage with that of aristocracy.³⁵⁵ As David Bindman suggests, in the theatre-like room settings against which Hogarth places his characters in this series 'a fatal impropriety undermines even the constancy of false taste'.³⁵⁶ The second painting in this narrative,

³⁵⁰ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, 55.

³⁵¹ Matthew Craske, *William Hogarth*, London, 2000, 41.

³⁵² Craske, *William Hogarth*, 41.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 41.

³⁵⁴ David Bindman, *Hogarth and his Times*, London, 1997, 115.

³⁵⁵ Bindman, *Hogarth and his Times*, 115.

³⁵⁶ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 41.

Tête à Tête (Fig. 73), conveys the consequences of digressing from honourable conduct. This painting shows Lady Squanderfield, the daughter-in-law of the old Earl, and her husband, after their wedding. She stretches as she sits by a table at breakfast in the couple's expensive home – now in disorder – as she looks slyly across at her husband, who appears just returned from a night spent away from home. While the wife appears to have given a card party the previous evening, the husband's activities seem to have included sword fighting and visiting a mistress.³⁵⁷

The chaotic material arrangement of the domestic interior shown in *Tête à Tête* symbolises the couple's lack of moral discernment over choosing examples of foreign art to display, and simultaneously 'acts as a catalyst to the action and comment on it'.³⁵⁸ The couple's respective physical postures also denote the results of straying from protocols of good conduct.³⁵⁹ Viscount Squanderfield, in particular, as Christoph Lichtenberg declares, 'is the very image of exhaustion itself following upon the wildest debauchery of every kind', as he continues 'the configuration is a product of the laws of pure inertia, the coincidence of spineless marionette and rigid chair'.³⁶⁰ Additionally, Viscount Squanderfield bears the possible mark of syphilis, likely contracted through his sexual indiscretions outside the marriage, covered by what looks like a black patch on his neck.³⁶¹ And in the final scene in the *Marriage A-la-Mode* series, *The Lady's Death* (Fig. 74), the sins of the father's misconduct have apparently already marked his child's face, who bears a similar large black mark, symptomatic of an inherited venereal

³⁵⁷ Arthur Wensinger with W. B. Coley (eds), *Hogarth on High Life*, London, 1970, 36.

³⁵⁸ Bindman, *Hogarth and his Times*, 112.

³⁵⁹ Wensinger with Coley (eds), *Hogarth on High Life*, 36.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

disease.³⁶² Thus, Hogarth's series has a strongly moral narrative. It suggests that rejecting native English attributes in favour of foreign ways leads to ruin; participating in unfaithful activities, indulging in luxurious excesses, displaying disregard for those around him and practising ill-educated taste were key characteristics of bad conduct. They were, as Hogarth illustrates, aspects of eighteenth-century misconduct that conduct literature implied could lead to mental and physical degeneracy and even the end of a family line.

When looking at why conduct in the eighteenth century was so important, the German sociologist Norbert Elias's work helps to think about reasons for matters of conduct gaining national meaning during this period. As Elias points out, both the French and English concept of 'civilisation' can equally refer to 'political or economic, religious or technical, moral or social facts'.³⁶³ For Elias, the concept, and process, of civilisation refers primarily to a person's behaviour or conduct.³⁶⁴ This was an evolution that incorporated the development of self-refinement and self-awareness, providing instigating factors as to how society moved towards 'civilised' conduct.³⁶⁵ Self-regulation through social observation was a key part of this. Such scrutiny of behaviours is recorded by the Philological Society in *The European Magazine*, published in February 1782. An anonymous author warns its readership 'You cannot throw about you one inviting glance – you cannot harbour one lurking leer – [...] – you cannot

³⁶² Wensinger with Coley (eds), *Hogarth on High Life*, 100.

³⁶³ Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process, History of Manners*, Oxford, 1978, 4.

³⁶⁴ Elias, *The Civilising Process, History of Manners*, 5.

³⁶⁵ Wensinger with Coley (eds), *Hogarth on High Life*, 5.

observe one tempting twitter – without being observed’.³⁶⁶ Such mind-set led to an increase in people tending to observe and regulate their own actions, as well as those of friends and rivals.

Codified manners had implicit meaning concerning emotional expression and performance during the eighteenth century, made explicit through the art of dancing, which gained a celebratory status during the period. A number of dancing masters from France relocated to England to teach the fashionable art of dancing, central to which activity was the display of grace and movement.³⁶⁷ Printed fan designs were key to the dissemination of mobile visual instruction for women pertaining to modish dance movements. For instance, an advert placed by the daughter of the deceased fan shop owner Mr R. Delamotte, published in 1789, mentions the regularity of the publication of an engraved dancing fan design, stating:

This Day is published, by L. Sudlow, FAN MANUFACTURER [...]. Wholesale, Retail, and for Exportation, No. 191, opposite St. Clemet Church, Strand. ‘A NEW FAN, called THE COUNTRY DANCE FAN. Eighteen of the most new and favourite country Dances, with the Music and Figures, properly adapted to each, as performed at Court, Bath, and all public places of assembly. To be published annually.’³⁶⁸

Such announcements explicitly show the fan’s usage to instruct an owner in the most up-to-date dances with music and figures. Its physical form had the advantage of being easily transportable to a ball to check that dance steps were correct, or, equally, used in the privacy of a domestic environment to practice these movements in order to get them right when in public company. So too, the reference to ‘Court, Bath, and all public

³⁶⁶ Anonymous, ‘Literary Address’, *The European Magazine, and London Review; Containing the Literature, History, Politics, Arts, Manners and Amusements of the Age*, 1, London, 1782-1826, 93.

³⁶⁷ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 304.

³⁶⁸ The Daughter of the late Mr. R. Delamotte, ‘A New Fan’, *English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, December 1789; Issue 1598, London, n.p.

places of assembly' is indicative of the type of audience these fans were aimed at, which was women at the higher levels of society with some social and economic power.

Graceful movements set down in illustrative form were included in several dancing manuals published during this period, such as *The Art of Dancing Explained by Reading and Figures* (Fig. 75), first published in 1735 and authored by the choreographer Kellom Tomlinson, who set up as a dancing master in Holborn the same year.³⁶⁹

Although not a conduct book in the strictest sense, its text and imagery are precise and informative to the viewer. Dancing masters like Tomlinson were able to produce manuals that aided instruction in bodily conduct, such as walking gracefully and 'shewing the beautiful Attitudes [...] of the Performers', which they knew would find a ready audience and sell well.³⁷⁰ It can be argued that Wilson's fan *The Female Seven Ages (I)* (Fig. 45), produced in 1797 as a stipple-engraved fan print, conveniently combined the function of a dancing manual and conduct text in a transportable and innovative manner, as it combines instructive figurative images with text.³⁷¹ That Wilson produced at least one print of *Seven Ages (II)* (Fig. 17) on stiff board with gold-leaf lining too, also points towards its decorative value, as well as to his own interest in experimenting with fan engraving on different material forms.³⁷² In addition, Wilson's creation of *Seven Ages (II)* strongly implies that the more uncommon formats he

³⁶⁹ Jennifer Thorp, 'Picturing a Gentleman Dancing-Master: A Lost Portrait of Kellom Tomlinson', *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, 30:1, 2012, 70.

³⁷⁰ Kellom Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing Explained by Reading and Figures: Whereby the Manner of Performing the Steps is Made Easy by a New and Familiar Method*, London, 1735, Preface.

³⁷¹ *The Female Seven Ages (I)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as '*Seven Ages (I)*'. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.

³⁷² *The Female Seven Ages (II)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as '*Seven Ages (II)*'. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.723.

printed several of his fan print designs were intended for sale to collectors of some financial means to display or include in a print album.

Conduct books penned by authors who had only originally intended their writings to be read by the example-setting circles became of interest to the middling classes with increasing consumer influence over the type of literature they brought. As a result, codes of conduct practised at the European royal courts had to be routinely updated to distinguish between courtiers and those below in the finely delineated strata of social classes. This development led to those further down the social scale to focus upon refining their own behaviour to order to try to associate themselves with those above in social status, while at the same time attempting to differentiate from those below.³⁷³

Thus, the reading of conduct books would have enabled members of the gentry and middle classes to keep up to date with the latest developments in etiquette and modes of sociable conduct.

If the desire and ability to better oneself socially proved a key motivating factor in terms of conduct, a closely aligned factor was that of the self-fashioning of women. Due partially to an increase in Britain's trading activity, the growing availability of accessories which could be ordered, commissioned or bought, sometimes alongside fans, as discussed in Chapter One, led men and women to focus on methods of fashioning the self. As Roy Porter explains, the overriding notion of relations between the genders was based on the fact that men and women were biologically different and,

³⁷³ Elias, *The Civilising Process, History of Manners*, 73.

as such, should play separate social roles.³⁷⁴ While men were supposed to excel at reason and exploits, women's strength was thought to lie in being passive and maternal.³⁷⁵ Dror Wahrham notes that by the end of the eighteenth century literature was 'strewn with assertions of [...] women's natural "destiny of bearing and nursing children"'.³⁷⁶ Moreover, Nancy Armstrong takes the view that it was 'the new [middle class] domestic woman', who 'first encroached upon aristocratic culture and seized authority from it'.³⁷⁷ In line with these developments, by the late eighteenth century much conduct literature published was written with the idea of positively encouraging women to focus upon family and domestic duties.

Conduct texts such as those written by the Marquis of Halifax, John Gregory and the Reverend Wetenhall Wilkes, including Wilkes' *Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice*, published in 1740, shared the widely held eighteenth-century view that the image of the 'socially desirable woman' should be taught "'natural" femininity on terms of negotiation'.³⁷⁸ Armstrong clarifies this term, as built around conceptions of 'repression and negation', which advocated submissive virtue as a source of strength.³⁷⁹ However, there was growing female opinion in the late eighteenth century, like that expressed by authors such as Mary Wollstonecroft in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, published in 1792, that questioned how usefulness the role of a passive woman could be. As Wollstonecroft

³⁷⁴ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 23.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

³⁷⁶ Dror Wahrham, *The Making of the Modern Self*, New Haven and London, 2006, 7.

³⁷⁷ Nancy Armstrong, 'The Rise of the Domestic Woman', Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (eds), *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays on Literature and the History of Sexuality*, New York, 1987, 96.

³⁷⁸ Wetenhall Wilkes, *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady*, 2010, 25.

³⁷⁹ Armstrong, 'The Rise of the Domestic Woman', 15-16.

remarked, 'have women, who have early imbibed notions of passive obedience, sufficient character to manage a family or educate children?'.³⁸⁰ Therefore, there was a level of female agency, which gained prominence in the 1790s, that challenged advice offered by conduct literature written by men and promoted discussion of the social and domestic situation of women.

Both male and female concern over the choice of a woman's marriage partner concentrated emphasis upon the practising of diligent conduct when contemplating the words of an admirer. The compilation of letters that make up *A Father's Legacy to His Daughter*, penned by the Scottish physician, John Gregory, published after the death of his wife in 1761, acknowledges the pitfalls of courtship, partly as a means of influencing a female readership.³⁸¹ Among these dangers Gregory lists deception, unhappiness, pain and even the risk of contracting venereal diseases.³⁸² This issue was first broached in earlier conduct texts like John Shirley's pocket conduct book, published in 1706, *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities*. Its contents include subjects as varied as how to make wine, soups and how a married gentlewoman should carry herself towards domestic servants.³⁸³ As this pocket conduct text was widely circulated in the eighteenth century, it is likely that Wilson knew of its contents, contained in a format, like his fans, which allowed for ease of use and quick concealment or visible readership.

³⁸⁰ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, Philadelphia, 1794, 57.

³⁸¹ John Gregory, *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, London, 1778, 14.

³⁸² Wilkes, *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady*, 132+136.

³⁸³ John Shirley, *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities: or, The Ingenious Gentlewoman and Servant-Maids Delightful Companion*, London, 1706, 192.

As Langford clarifies, during the course of the eighteenth century, a ‘new world of the old world’ was being created.³⁸⁴ This was an environment where, as Emily Cockayne sums up in relation to the regulation of the senses during the era, ‘moderate behaviour and reactions’ were supposed to prove ‘consistent with a person’s rank, station, gender and age’, which comforted the senses and put observers (or listeners, or smellers) at ease’.³⁸⁵ In a similar way, fans could indicate status through the way they were used to elongate a graceful arm movement while at rest or in motion, as well as the subject matter they showed (as shall be discussed in Chapter Three) or waft away bad smells and shield unwanted sights from an owner, in order to comfort the senses. Moderate behaviour – demarcated ‘on values of the control of a man’s appetite for pleasure’, outwardly manifested by civility and decorum, indicating self-control and self-awareness – relaxed people, as did normative modes of conduct.³⁸⁶ Likewise, unfamiliar senses could provoke unfamiliar conduct, while behaviour could excite, interest ‘or annoy people, both on a physical and an emotional level’.³⁸⁷

The potential tensions between inner character and outward appearance were particularly challenging given the desire on the part of some men and women to acquire fans as part of this self-fashioning process, and to adopt urbane conduct such as they knew would be observed by others, also grew during the eighteenth century. For

³⁸⁴ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, 4.

³⁸⁵ Emily Cockayne, *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England 1600-1770*, New Haven and London, 2007, 230.

³⁸⁶ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 41.

³⁸⁷ Cockayne, *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England 1600-1770*, 230.

example, in 1756, *The Connoisseur Magazine* satirically recorded the judgemental nature of women over ‘the elegance of their apparel’ as:

All the wives and daughters of the most topping tradesmen vie with one another every Sunday in the elegance of their apparel [...]. The ladies immediately on their entrance, breathe a pious ejaculation through their fansticks and the beaux very gravely address themselves to the Haberdashers bills glued upon the linings of their hats.³⁸⁸

This quotation, albeit ironic in nature, indicates that the wearing of fashionable items of clothes could signal both one’s class and quickly facilitate a re-elevation in rank upwards or downwards in the critical eyes of a band of tradesmen and their wives.

However, for many people trying to negotiate between refined feeling and self-delusion gave rise to anxiety that refinement of behaviour could indeed be a façade for bad conduct. Wilkes advises in his 1740 conduct text, *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady*, for ‘caution [...] against affected modesty; which, instead of exulting your character, would raise a fresh attention of the public, to observe and censure your conduct [...]. The part of virtue may be over-acted’.³⁸⁹ Wearing a mask and ‘acting a part’ were thought to mark hypocrisy, in turn, further focusing attention on people’s conduct and leading to a clamour for more natural behaviour.³⁹⁰ The suspicion of ‘moralistic platitudes and mannered language’ did not result just from national identification with plain speaking, but was coupled with an ‘intense hatred of duplicity’.³⁹¹ Many cultural commentators thought that prescribed manners were, in actuality, allowing ‘synthetic behaviour’ to thrive.³⁹² As the cultural historian Max Von Boehn remarked, ‘people wore their morals like their clothes – *a la mode* and with

³⁸⁸ Anonymous, *The Connoisseur*, London, 1756. Reprinted in William Connor Sydney, *England and the English in the Eighteenth Century: Chapters in the Social History of the Times*, London, 1892, 363.

³⁸⁹ Wilkes, *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady*, 83.

³⁹⁰ Ben Wilson, *Decency and Disorder, 1789-1837*, London, 2007, xxxi.

³⁹¹ Wilson, *Decency and Disorder, 1789-1837*, xxi.

³⁹² Wilson, *Decency and Disorder, 1789-1837*, xxxi.

finicky attention to trivial detail'.³⁹³ It is important to note, too, however, that, as Jenny Davidson has recently argued, the eighteenth-century concept of hypocrisy did offer 'advantages', such as lying in certain social situations to reduce embarrassment or awkwardness.³⁹⁴

The hypocrisy that a person could employ regarding their own conduct was a central concern of native and foreign cultural commentators on the English upper-classes.³⁹⁵ So too were the complicated rituals practised by its members. Hogarth's etching, *A Taste in High Life* (Fig. 76), produced in 1746, encapsulates this sense of the slavish adherence by the aristocratic classes to all things foreign. It does this by showing details such as the young servant boy who has been dressed up by the woman in a feathered turban and a couple to the right of the etching who are enthusing over a teacup held by the woman, and its matching saucer, held by the man. Many non-native observers recorded that Britain was, as the Danzig based diarist Johanna Schopenhauer declared, 'an etiquette ridden nation, seeking routine and ritual in private and in public'.³⁹⁶ Such opinion helps confirm that, during the eighteenth century, Britain had become more preoccupied than its European counterparts over matters of social conduct.

Fans as Portable Conduct Instructors: George Wilson's *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moraliser or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody* (1797)

³⁹³ Max Von Boehn, *Modes and Manners: Vol 4, The Eighteenth Century*, London, 1935, 21.

³⁹⁴ Jenny Davidson, *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen*, Cambridge, 2004, 5.

³⁹⁵ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, 167.

³⁹⁶ Johanna Schopenhauer, *Reise Durch England und Scotland*, Vol. 1 of 2, Leipzig, 1818, 16-17.

The first fan which indicates that Wilson was engaging with conduct literature is *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist or, Half an Hours Entertainment at the Expense of Nobody*. Taking account of the full title of this fan print indicates its dual role as an object of amusement and pedagogy. As shall be explored in this section, *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* foregrounds ideas of balance and harmony; correlations between healthy bodies and healthy mental and moral states; and the significance of social types in relation to conduct. Explaining how this fan displays these themes will set-up the subject of how Wilson translated the idea of conduct onto his fans.

There are six narratives displayed sequentially across *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*. These include scenarios that engage with virtuous and satirical tropes associated with a lady's personal conduct, placed side by side. This fan design shows three pairings of roundels, each pair depicting contrasting states of mind, one positive and one negative, set around the outside of the semi-circular shape of the fan leaf. It can be read as an extended narrative from left to right, as is the case with Hogarth's *Marriage A-la-Mode* series, or alone as isolated examples of good and bad conduct. As the fan surface shows all six images simultaneously, the eye is naturally drawn from left to right across them in sequence, with the concluding far right roundel providing a fitting advisory message to end upon. As shall be explored, these complex illustrations present three different types of disagreeable mental states of mind, each paired with either a satirical or serious 'curative' scenario to illuminate how gently to correct such undesirable psychological conditions, which sometimes exhibited physical symptoms.

A level of textual association between Wilson's titling of *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* and traditional conduct literature can be ascertained.³⁹⁷ Wilson's heading of his fan print design as an '*Advisor, Physician & Moralist*' suggests that its primary use is to serve as an '*Advisor*', defined as a person (embodied by a fan in this case) who gives 'counsel; instruction; except that instruction implies superiority, and *advice* may be given by equals or inferiors', rather than as an authoritative source of instruction.³⁹⁸ *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*'s second anticipated role '*Physician*', is an important term and had various meanings. Porter describes the ideal physician as one 'distinguished by his intellect'.³⁹⁹ He adds that a physician's role was to 'take the history, frame a diagnosis, formulate a regime', based on his 'acumen, memory and judgement', and to present 'a model of self-control'.⁴⁰⁰ In a similar way, *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* proposes different tenors of curative solutions to a few serious, as well as satirical, topical ailments, with which an owner may either become physiologically afflicted, or, alternatively, encounter in their daily life.

While *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*'s title indicates its function as a hand-held physician of sorts, so too, its composition and series of linear narratives utilise notions of opposites in terms of behaviours, which aids an understanding of how Wilson translated ideas of conduct onto his fans. Undoubtedly, *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*'s series of roundels show potent, yet comical, examples of the 'natural inconsistency of mankind' by way of the alternate insertion of an instance of a negative

³⁹⁷ Abbé D'Ancourt, *The Lady's Preceptor: Or, a Letter to a Young Lady of Distinction upon Politeness*, London, 1743, 4.

³⁹⁸ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 1, London, 1785, 111.

³⁹⁹ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 143.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

state of mind, set against a narrative situation pointing to a practical or satirical cure or counterbalance for it. For example, Wilson's opening narrative shows a veiled woman who has evidently caught 'the Spleen', a term meaning bad or ill-temper (Fig. 77), sitting alone in a domestic setting, with the curtains drawn behind her and surrounded, not by companions or family, but, instead, by a great number of cats.⁴⁰¹ In purposeful contrast, the following roundel pictures a woman standing against a tree, looking over a group happily making merry in a bucolic landscape, suggesting how to 'Wind' (Fig. 78), or turn around, the lonely situation pictured in the first scenario. This image invites the viewer to imagine themselves in the position of the woman observing the jovial activities unfolding below her by placing the figure of the woman close to the edge of the roundel image, and to consider one scenario over the other. Similarly, the next two narratives, 'How to Fall Very Deeply in Love' (Fig. 79), picturing a couple sitting under the boughs of a tree and its satiric counterpart, 'A Gentle Cure for it' (Fig. 80), showing the same pair. The young woman now stands in an interior setting, pointing to the arrival of a new-born baby to the shock of her lover. A picture on the wall showing a man proposing to a woman under a tree casts the underlying message of this scene into relief, as it reveals marriage to be the solution to the risks of youthful love.

The final pairing of roundels on this fan print design, however, offers a more abstract situation and a curative remedy for it. The first of these two pictures, 'How to Plague Everybody' (Fig. 81) depicts a silhouette of a devil holding a club with the words 'Ill Natured Satire' emblazoned across it and brandishing a shield with 'I spare no one'

⁴⁰¹ Katharine Rogers, 'Finch's "Candid Account" vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen', *Mosaic*, Winnipeg, 22:1, January 1989, 17.

written on it. Behind this figure a nest of snakes and a pen pot with quills, as well as scattered pieces of paper with words such as 'Libel' on them, can all be identified. Here, Wilson seems to signify satire as potentially damaging, particularly that in written form. He uses textual and visual humour and exaggeration to make a sharp critique of the broader satire industry circulating in the same period, which, in this roundel, takes the shape of the devil. So, it can be suggested he is making an argument here that his fans are more polite and educational than satirical single-sheet prints. More than this, a female owner may have understood satire, as characterised in this fan's narrative, to be able to attack anyone, including women at the higher echelons of society who expressed concerns about their social situation towards the end of the eighteenth century. Consequently, Wilson seems to be encouraging a distinct form of conduct that diverges from that of traditional conduct literature and which would have facilitated a female owner to garner a sense of sympathy rather than feel being instructed in a purely didactic way.

The last narrative 'How to Please Most Folks' (Fig. 82) furthers this line of reasoning as it shows a woman in a landscape holding a paintbrush and palette, looking out to the viewer, having just painted the conduct text 'Be just to your Enemy, Sincere to your friend, constant to your Mistress' onto her canvas. This illustration, purposefully titled 'How to Please Most Folks', considering one's 'Enemy', 'friend' and 'Mistress', extends the point that Wilson is likely trying to appeal to everyone and all forms of conduct, alongside critiquing the satire print industry. That the final roundel scene

shows a female artist ironically suggesting men should be loyal to their mistresses would have enabled an owner to take wry amusement from its narrative and appreciate the significance of this character's words. It also highlights that Wilson is alerting his female purchasers to the fact that women can help affect positive change in wider societal conduct, such as advocating consideration for others among family and friends. Hence, it becomes clear that this fan print carries a complex message that, depending on how it is looked at, advocates either cruel satire or a disposition that can aid an owner to lead a life that could generate in themselves and others in a kinder, more even, response and model of good conduct.

Therefore, we can see how Wilson incorporates sets of binaries, alongside concepts of balance – utilised to a great extent in conduct literature – into his fan print designs. In terms of these visual contrasts, Wilson creates opposites in relation to figurative deportment, facial expressions and interior and outdoor environs, while he places types of mental or moral affliction next to a remedy for their cause, such as a child borne out of wedlock, and marriage. He even achieves a harmony of themes within each roundel, cleverly enabled by the inclusion of such details as the framed picture in 'A Gentle Cure for it' of a man bending on one knee as he declares his adoration for his wife (reminiscent of the pair pictured in 'How to Fall Very Deeply in Love'), and deliberately contrasted in the main scene by a couple who are turned away from each other. So, unlike Hogarth, who directs his satire in the *Marriage A-la-Mode* series through 'opera at academic painting', Wilson introduces genre art into the printed form

of the fan, commenting upon a story of rural love upturned through male misconduct.⁴⁰² Thus, a woman carrying and using *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* in society in the 1790s would have both publicly demonstrated the handler's knowledge of men's misdeeds in love, as well as their own ability to act independently of a man's opinion or wishes.

Not only does the surface of *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* utilise balance and opposites in the same way as conduct literature, but it conflates the body and morality, in a similar way to Hogarth in his *Marriage A-la-Mode* series, which will be explored further in the next section of this chapter. However, unlike *Marriage A-la-Mode*, Wilson priorities the female viewer's perspective, and, significantly, suggests potential alternative scenarios. He draws on contemporary satirical prints but because of the nature of mobile fans – held close to the face to view their detail and looking outwards at the world surrounding the fan holder – he offers a way to improve a fan owner's situation by depicting solutions to depressive states of mind, rather than only presenting the negative consequences of disregarding normative modes of conduct. As Wilson explains in a tongue-in-cheek tone by way of this fan print design's central image, it depicts 'an account of the diseases of the Mind', accompanied by a 'Mode of engendering a radical Cure for each by which any person not regularly admitted of the Physicians College, may become useful in the Art of Healing and dispensing happiness'. Thus, this fan proposes that its narratives, in the absence of a trained physician, or in place of it, can act as a modern therapeutic remedy to depressive mental

⁴⁰² Timothy Erwin, 'Chapter 3: Visual Discourse in Hogarth, The Early Novel, and History', *Textual Vision: Augustan Design and the Invention of Eighteenth-Century British Culture*, Pennsylvania, 2015, 115.

states. If the wording that accompanies each of the three roundel pairings featured on this fan is examined, terms such as ‘the Spleen’ and the ‘Plague’ – defined by Samuel Johnson as a disease ‘eminently contagious [...] destructive [and] vexatious’ – together highlight the way Wilson combines the physical and moral health of his characters so as to aid the fan owner’s education.⁴⁰³ Moreover, Wilson casts *The Lady’s Adviser, Physician & Moralist* as a self-regulating fan, rather than as a purely controlling object, as it offers different paths and outcomes for its female owner to choose from in terms of emotional states of mind, by way of subject matter.

Wilson’s inclusion of the narrative titled ‘How to Catch the Spleen’ (Fig. 77), intrinsically links a person’s physical and mental health to signify the correlative effect of ‘diseases of the mind’ upon one’s conduct.⁴⁰⁴ Katharine Rogers explains that ‘the Spleen’, now clinically diagnosed as depression, was commonly known as the vapors and melancholy up until the early 1800s, and could refer to a number of states ‘involving a lack of emotional control, ranging from normal bad feeling to madness’.⁴⁰⁵ Symptoms of this mental illness ranged from apathy and sadness to anxiety and self-doubt.⁴⁰⁶ As Oswald Doughty explains, by the turn of the eighteenth century, several commentators, such as the late seventeenth-century statesman and essayist Sir William Temple (1628-1699), quoted in support of his own opinion that England was indeed ‘the region of spleen’.⁴⁰⁷ As spleen was a mental disease which produced physical symptoms but without any obvious physical cause, it became the object of fascination among

⁴⁰³ Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, (Vol. 2), 317.

⁴⁰⁴ Rogers, ‘Finch’s “Candid Account” vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen’, 19.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴⁰⁷ Oswald Doughty, ‘The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century’, *The Review of English Studies*, 2:7, July 1926, 258.

eighteenth-century physicians, writers and artists alike, seldom far absent from collective thought throughout the eighteenth century.⁴⁰⁸

Wilson's own text placed below the image of 'How to Catch the Spleen', which reads 'If you wish to be unhappy look at the unpleasant side of every object - then reject the society of human beings, & believe only amongst animals & Brutes dwells dear Sincerity' ironically reflects ideas around the spleen as this disease was characterised by apathy, sadness, self-pity and a rejection of the company of others. To which solution Wilson declares 'If you wish to be happy disdain not the agreeable scenes but encourage a virtuous aspiration to partake of them with honour & Moderation'. So, as a remedy for this state of mind and body, Wilson recommends joining in pleasant communal activities like dancing, in which a fan could be used, with balance and self-control. Hence, Wilson's choice to illustrate a fan with the ill-effects of diseases of the mind – of which the 'Spleen' is one of the ways in which that disease is articulated – highlights that such a degenerative state could create a world where 'men and women felt they had a license to behave as they wished', and the need to counter this with the right conduct.⁴⁰⁹

Analysis of *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist's* roundel narratives also exposes the potential for women of Wilson's translation of ideas of conduct onto his fans. The malady of the spleen was seen to predominately strike women. For example, in

⁴⁰⁸ Doughty, 'The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century', 262. Authors such as Sir Richard Blackmore (1654-1729) produced widely disseminated texts on the spleen, including a *Treatise on the Spleen and Vapours* in 1725, as well as *A Critical Dissertation on the Spleen* the same year.

⁴⁰⁹ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 12.

Fielding's novel *Amelia*, published in 1751, a character, upon finding Amelia in the grip of a splenic depression, describes the malady to be 'one of the worst disorders that can possibly attend a woman'.⁴¹⁰ Such opinion echoed earlier discussion of this malady, Dr Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) describing it to be 'a malicious Mood, and contriv'd [sic] of wilful, extravagant and imperious Women, when they are denied, or thwarted in their unreasonable Desires'.⁴¹¹ Wilson's motif of a woman isolated in her home, surrounded by cats, is therefore somewhat of a typical representation of a man's view of the spleen in women. This gender associated narrative usefully points out the multiple interpretations Wilson's fans may have held for women, as it perpetuates an unflattering gender stereotype of women's mental state on the one hand, but also places an emphasis upon a woman herself as the central agency in correcting this mental affliction.

However, what distinguishes *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist's* collective of images from traditional conduct literature is that it offers imaginative solutions to certain psychological states of mind. A woman could slowly or quickly rotate *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* and scrutinise each of the six roundels to reveal a different viewpoint on occurrences of positive and negative attitudes to life. She could then choose to follow the guidance of those she deemed most conducive to lead a contented existence. This differs from most conduct literature as *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* visual condensing of conduct narratives placed across the fan and its combination of text and image allows examples of good and negative moral conduct sit directly adjacent to each other so that an owner can compare them. This is a key

⁴¹⁰ Doughty, 'The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century', 262.

⁴¹¹ Rogers, 'Finch's "Candid Account" vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen', 20.

difference between this fan, conduct literature and morality prints. An owner (more likely a woman) could read across them and relate to them, potentially drawing comparisons with those around them. They could even reshuffle them in their mind, thus enabling imaginative responses in the fan's audiences. Moreover, I would argue this fan allows a female viewer to cast a critical eye over the merits and faults of each of the scenarios pictured, especially that of the first narrative.

Significantly, *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist*, by its evocation as a physician of sorts, casts itself as, and takes on the authority of, an unusual kind of 'scientific' educator. It combines 'science' with humour to make it commercial; and that combination also creates a distinct and nuanced way of learning about conduct.

Wilson's fan offers an unusual but very effective way of learning about conduct by way of binaries, alongside easily identifiable social types in relation to conduct literature.

The second part of this chapter focuses on how Wilson explored issues of conduct through his use of certain social types. I will analyse the social type of the wife, the swain, the figure of the beau and, lastly, the figure of the fool. Taking each figure separately I will show how Wilson related them to various comparative conduct sources in order to both defend and undermine conventional eighteenth-century gender roles.

The Figure of the Wife

The most prominent female social type with which Wilson engaged on his fan print designs, and through which he interpreted ideas around conduct and deportment pertaining specifically to women, is the figure of the wife. *The Female Seven Ages (I)*

(Fig. 45), a stipple-engraved fan print produced by Wilson in 1797, reveals his interest in, and awareness of, the wife. A female fan owner might have a natural curiosity in, or, indeed, identity as this social type. Certainly, the fan print title itself, '*The Female Seven Ages*', signals that this fan is acknowledging and explicitly foregrounding a woman's life experiences. *Seven Ages (I)* presents the viewer with a sustained timeline of a woman's youth, middle-age and death, based on the virtuous trope of prescribed female cycles of marriage and reproduction by men. This is in direct contrast to the disastrous turn of events which characterise the life cycle of Hogarth's Lady Squanderfield in the *Marriage A-la-Mode* series.

Seven Ages (I) illustrates Wilson's creative use of the surface of the fan to engage with women and produce a different type of message for them at a time when most types of conduct literature were still directed towards men. It offers a female version of William Shakespeare's famous soliloquy 'Seven Ages of Man' from his stage play *As You Like It*. As well, it advocates adhering to good conduct and character before and after marriage. The pictures and accompanying text on *Seven Ages (I)* underscore its moral message and charts a woman's life:

1. See first the mother and Babe, with cherub dimpled face/ Smiling & toying in its Mother's Arms/ 2. Then the neat Seamstress, pent in School, To learn the useful arts-to mend and make/ 3. And Then alas poor girl, unskill'd in life, The drooping victim of Love's painful whafits, Sighing in secret, & in secret/ 4. Then comes a good wife with her growing cares, Adventurer- little dreaming of the woes of Sicking Babe, Widows painful lot/ 5. And now a matron grave, severe, & just, Teasing with prudence... many a lesson from experience gain'd/ 6. The sixth age gives the widow relic, musing on the past with pain. Yet trusting Heaven to renew her bliss/ 7. Last scene brings patient resignation. A mind supported by upholding faith to One Unchangeable & Good.

The overall narrative of this fan is that of patience and endurance, devoting oneself to the care of children, bearing the loss of loved ones with good grace and taking solace from religion in one's later years.

Seven Ages (I) prescribes an exemplary model of domestic responsibility to take guidance from and advocates a similar message to *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist's* first two roundel narratives, in which spleen is contrasted against an imagining of looking on the bright side of life to regain a sense of happiness.⁴¹² For instance, the detail of the imagery placed to the left of the second roundel image 'Then the neat Seamstress, pent in School', contains an alphabet book (Fig. 83). Porter explains that literacy during this period, 'was counting for more' due to the emergence of different textual formats, such as magazines and newspapers.⁴¹³ Young women, too, may have been keen to gain literacy and become well-read in order to appreciate fully the writings contained in conduct texts and spiritual guides, as *Seven Ages (I)* appears to promote.

The figure of the good wife featured in *Seven Ages (I)* advocates female contemplation in old age. The final scenario, 'Last scene brings patient resignation' (Fig. 84), focuses wholly on the thoughts and actions of a virtuous lady, defined in the absence of any male presence, to help an owner to identify with, and aid, edification. This subject matter reflects themes first discussed by conduct articles such as 'The Necessity of a

⁴¹² Michelle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 2014, 77.

⁴¹³ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 167.

Prudent Choice in Marriage: A Tale’, included in an edition of *The Lady’s Magazine*, published in 1773. The anonymous author of this advisory column describes the allures of a graceful countenance throughout life, particularly after marriage. This echoes similar sentiments to that expressed by Gregory in the book *A Father’s Legacy to His Daughters*, devoted to advocating the importance of feminine decorum from youth to old-age.⁴¹⁴ Likewise, the dignified reserve of the aged woman sitting alone in the *Seven Ages (I)* concluding roundel image, conveys a poignancy, reflecting Gregory’s viewpoint that ‘one of the chief beauties in a female character is that modest reserve [...] [which] is particularly engaging’ throughout life.⁴¹⁵

Indeed, in *Seven Ages (I)* there appears to be a focus on the visual interpretation of the physical effects of aging on the body and transformation of the human spirit in the later stages of life. This is significant as the fan’s focus on the latter stages of a woman’s life shows a concern with visualising a sympathetic portrayal of the older woman. The image of an elderly woman was mostly caricatured, and even mocked as ‘the old crone’, in topical and well-established prints by artists such as the seventeenth-century engraver Italian Giuseppe Maria Mitelli and the satirist Thomas Rowlandson in the late eighteenth century. However, *Seven Ages (I)* visually ennobles this stage in a woman’s life. As I have argued elsewhere, *Seven Ages (I)*’s displays notions of self-hood, prescribing religious faith in the afterlife to keep oneself strong in later years.⁴¹⁶ It is interesting to note, too, that the last roundel image displayed on *Seven Ages (I)* shows a

⁴¹⁴ Anonymous, ‘The Necessity of a PRUDENT CHOICE In MARRIAGE: A TALE’, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, 3, 1770, 204.

⁴¹⁵ Gregory, *A Father’s Legacy to His Daughters*, 26-28.

⁴¹⁶ R. Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, unpublished MA by Research, University of York, 2012, 78.

shelf containing a large number of books in the background behind the elderly widow, pictorially linking her source of resilience with the act of reading. So, it may be suggested, therefore, that the printed fan leaf format might have become an effective vehicle – at least for this particular fan maker – carrying alternative narratives of women by the 1790s.

Seven Ages (I) textual additions convey the hardships of childbirth, widowhood and loss that most women experienced during their life. *Seven Ages (I)* suggests a visual and textual affinity with changing attitudes towards women as the eighteenth century progressed. As Marlene Le Gates argues, there was ‘a dramatic change in the image of the woman’ during this period and women’s role in society began to be praised.⁴¹⁷ Le Gates explains that early eighteenth-century satirical plays and texts based on the perceived shrewdness of women were exchanged, from the 1750s, with the image of the ‘chaste maiden and obedient wife’.⁴¹⁸ As such, the fan print can be seen to re-align narrative imagery in relation to eighteenth-century reappraisals of, and growing interest in, women, and which also acknowledges the losses they might endure.⁴¹⁹ Alongside this reassessment of the image of a woman, came a reconsideration of the ideals of ‘familial affection, marital fidelity, and female chastity’.⁴²⁰ There was a new stress on love before marriage and friendship after it, as *Seven Ages (I)* visually and textually conveys.⁴²¹ These qualities came to be celebrated in literary and visual forms by the 1790s, an age wherein ‘mothering and domesticity came into vogue’ under the guidance

⁴¹⁷ Marlene Le Gates, ‘The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 10:1, 1976, 21.

⁴¹⁸ Le Gates, ‘The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought’, 39.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 24-26.

⁴²¹ Le Gates, ‘The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought’, 24.

of men.⁴²² Not only does the design of *Seven Ages (I)* point towards the fact that some late eighteenth-century engraved fans carry an emotive tenor, but that they are more sophisticated in the way they adapt pictorial motifs and texts produced in the first half of the century.

Seven Ages (I) visualises the ideal conduct that ‘the new domestic woman’, to which textual sources like *The Lady’s Magazine* were directed at, should embody for the first time in mobile form.⁴²³ It allowed a means by which an owner could carry around a narrative of worthy female conduct that pictorially ‘fixes’ the late eighteenth-century ideal of ‘women’s natural destiny of bearing and nursing children’.⁴²⁴ But this kind of cyclical account would have been seen as problematic to an increasing section of women in the 1790s. During this period authors like Wollstonecraft began to advocate vocally for the rights of women and the need for them to be ‘prepared by education to become the companion of man’, rather than take instruction from ‘books, written by men’ that could ‘enfeeble [them] by false refinement’.⁴²⁵ *Seven Ages (I)* presents an idealistic portrayal of a woman’s behaviour throughout life that men might have wanted their own wives to use, perhaps under a husband’s direct instruction. Wilson evidently appears to be responding to an increasing societal desire to differentiate between the sexes and their assumed roles, which the mobility of the fan leaf format allowed him to do. In so doing, he is reinforcing patriarchal distinctions, which would have pleased men.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴²³ Armstrong, ‘The Rise of the Domestic Woman’, 96.

⁴²⁴ Wahrham, *The Making of the Modern Self*, 7.

⁴²⁵ Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, x-xi.

The Figure of the Swain

The incorporation of the figure of the swain in Wilson's fans introduces the viewer to a masculine social type that simultaneously encompassed notions of good and bad conduct in the late eighteenth century. The key case study examined in this section is Wilson's stipple-engraved fan print design *The Good Swain* (Fig. 2), produced in 1795, and its satirical counterpart, *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (Fig. 3), produced a year later.⁴²⁶ *The Good Swain* depicts the story of an honourable swain and his wife from youth to old age in the countryside, ending in parenthood and companionship in their later years. *Good-for-Nothing*, by contrast presents a similar introductory roundel image, but then reveals the swain as an adulterer and ends with the now loveless couple, pictured as still young, therefore prematurely ending what should be a union throughout life.

I suggest that Wilson's production of *The Good Swain*, and its counterpart *Good-for-Nothing*, highlights his strategy of translating tropes of behaviours from conduct-related texts and combining them with social types to add to the different ways in which an owner could learn about conduct in a humorous and innovative manner. As their titles indicate, *The Good Swain* and *Good-for-Nothing*'s subject matter relates to a specific trope of the 'swain', equally defined as 'a young man', 'a country servant employed in husbandry' and 'a pastoral youth'.⁴²⁷ As such, this masculine social type offers visual and textual interpretations in relation to matters of good and bad conduct and a means

⁴²⁶ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, thereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

⁴²⁷ Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, (Vol. 2), 800.

for Wilson to overlay this trope with satire and humour. *Good-for-Nothing* closely engages with conduct writing's strategy of utilising a type of behavioural conditioning. This disagreeable behaviour is presented by Wilson in such a way that it can be modified or corrected, constituting a tongue-in-cheek therapy of sorts. Such a similarity in tone of writing, wording and storyline also conveys the familiarity he must have had with certain textual sources, especially those contained in late eighteenth-century magazines and annuals. He would have perhaps sold some of these literary texts in his own fan shop, and other fan shops would have been likely to sell them too.

Firstly, Wilson skilfully translates ideas of opposites and harmonies, central to that which characterises conduct literature from this time, onto *The Good Swain* and *Good-for-Nothing Swain* in several ways. Most overtly, these two fan prints, underscored by their titles and compositional features, balance each other in their opposite natures. An owner of both fans could compare them and either try to lead a life in keeping with that of the 'good swain', or, if not, aim for at least somewhere in the middle, as well as read them with a critical eye. For example, the first narrative roundels of *The Good Swain* and *Good-for-Nothing* both picture a young shepherd declaring his love for a shepherdess under the branches of a tree in a rural landscape (Fig. 85). Then, in diametric opposites of conduct, the middle narrative of *Good-for-Nothing* shows 'The Hour of Infidelity' (Fig. 86) of its roguish protagonist, while the central image of *The Good Swain*, 'Mid-day of Life' (Fig. 54), records its happy couple and their children, providing a harmonious contrast to that of its less faithful counterpart. Equally, *The Good Swain*'s final narrative, 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age' (Fig. 55), facilitates a pleasing contrast to that of *Good-for-Nothing*'s concluding image, 'Cupid's Farewell'

(Fig. 87), in which the results of the ‘good-for-nothing’ swain’s infidelity can clearly be observed. Here the dog, who apparently belonging to the ‘good-for-nothing’ swain and the cat owned by his dejected lover are fighting with each other under the table, while their masters turn their faces away from one another, showing the bonds of amorous love undone. Not only do such elements lend a sense of comedy and parody to this tale of a swain’s misconduct, sending up eighteenth-century attitudes towards this social type, they reinforce them, a strategy rarely evident in traditional conduct literature. It is noteworthy to mention that this idea of inversion, subversion and reiteration is a crucial theme running through all of Wilson’s fan print design work, allowing for a multitude of interpretations to have been drawn depending on the gender of their owners and viewers. Additionally, the inclusion of such features helps forewarn a female owner of the consequences of becoming involved with a ‘good-for-nothing’ swain in real life. Here, the fan establishes a relationship between its material form, conduct literature, and poetic verse.

Secondly, Wilson interprets ideas surrounding the swain and his associated modes of behaviour, commented upon at length in conduct-related literature, through his extrapolation and reuse of lines of verse from certain conduct texts. Wilson’s satirical titling of *Good-for-Nothing*’s first roundel as ‘The Vow of Constancy’ proves a good case in point, as it carries a similar meaning to the words made by the anonymous female author of ‘The Complaint, An Eulogy’, contained in the poetry section of a volume of *The Bon Ton Magazine*, published in 1795. As the author declares critically in dramatic verse against male conduct:

He has left me, the youth [the swain] [...],
Beware, ye fond Virgins, nor vanity believe,
The vows which he rashly may swear, for they will flatter, but 'tis to
deceive,
And his vows they are lighter than air [...],
what I tell you is true,
The Swain that prov'd [sic] fake, and inconstant to me,
will never prove faithful to you.⁴²⁸

Wilson effectively distils and conveys the urgent underlying message of these lines of verse, which warn against a swain's 'fake' vows, which will never 'prove faithful to you'.⁴²⁹ A handler of this fan could have thus used it in public as a reminder as to what kind of male dialogue to be wary of, as a visual prompt to discuss their experiences of swains with companions or even to warn men that they were aware of their sometimes dishonest words, as will be analysed in Chapter Three.

Similarly, the text accompanying *Good-for-Nothing's* second roundel image, 'The Hour of Infidelity', can be identified as having been sourced and subtly altered by Wilson from an anonymously produced poem called 'On Disingenuity'. This poem is contained in the author and publisher Ann Slack's compilation of essays and poems *The Pleasing Instructor, or Entertaining Moralist*, first published in 1770 and republished twenty times in new editions up until 1799 due to its popularity.⁴³⁰ 'On Disingenuity' reads:

With soothing wile, he won my easy heart;
He sigh'd and vow'd
– but, ah! he feign'd the smart.

⁴²⁸ Anonymous, 'The Complaint, An Eulogy', *The Bon Ton Magazine; or, Microscope of Fashion and Folly*, London, Vol. V, 1795, 112.

⁴²⁹ Anonymous, 'The Complaint, An Eulogy', 112.

⁴³⁰ Ann Slack (née Fisher) (1719-1778) was a successful author and co-establisher of *The Newcastle Chronicle* newspaper with her husband Thomas Slack in 1764, having previously written two grammar books, as well as managed a girl's school (Victoria E. M Gardner, *The Business of News in England, 1760–1820*, London, 2016).

Sure, of all fiends, the blackest we can find
Are those ingrates who stab our peace of mind.⁴³¹

Wilson's text reads 'Sure of all ills the worst which we can find, And those Ingrates who would wound our peace of mind'. His lifting of the lines of a popular line of verse of conduct literature, focusing on the subject of a swain's underhandedness, dividing it between the first and second image on *Good-for-Nothing*, denotes his astute assimilation of edifying conduct advice concerning the trope of the bad swain. Wilson's process of incorporating a mode of roguishness commented upon in popular topical texts authored by women would have also made *Good-for-Nothing* appealing to a female customer base.

One further point to make here, is that Wilson's intentional reuse of the lines of 'On Disingenuity' stresses his aim of appealing to the same customer base as those women buying literary formats of conduct instruction. That Wilson drew directly from poetic lines of verse from *The Pleasing Instructor, or Entertaining Moralist*, shows he is reusing conduct instruction from texts that carry both an amusing and educational tone. He has chosen stimulating lines of verse, written by a woman, to point out immediately the hurt that a bad swain can inflict on a woman, and simultaneously warn of the dishonest nature of some swains. It is significant that it is the woman who has the key voice concerning *Good-for-Nothing*'s bad swain as this factor indicates the capacity of a female agency to act as a potential protector of their own sex against men. This appears in direct contrast to the masculine first-person text that Wilson chooses to include under the first roundel of *The Good Swain*, 'The Morning of Youth' (Fig. 53). These lines of

⁴³¹ Ann Fisher Slack (ed.), 'On DISINGENUITY', *The Pleasing Instructor, or Entertaining Moralist. Consisting of Select Essays, Relations, Visions, and Allegories*, London, 1770, 253.

verse are spoken by a virtuous male character, who exclaims ‘Unless with my Amanda blest, In Vain the Woodbine Blower, Unless to death her sweeter breast, In Vain I rear the breathing flower’, which then frames the tone for the rest of the fan leaf narrative. His speech declares his love for Amanda, drawing parallels between his adoration for her and the scent of the Woodbine, a plant with pleasant-smelling flowers, often associated with attraction in poetry. Wilson’s creative textual assimilation indicates the extent to which the format of the late eighteenth-century narrative fan had evolved to become an effective means of conveying edifying tales of conduct by the 1790s. In this way, he does not replicate moral stories concerning the swain, instead overlaying them with wit, comedy and satire so as to educate an owner, as well as effectively utilising female opinion to warn them against bad swains, thereby mocking, as well as perpetuating, gender norms in this period at the same time. Having focused in this section on the relationship between conduct texts and the texts on Wilson’s fans, I now turn to an analysis of the visual elements of his designs.

The Figure of the Beau

As established in this chapter, *The Good Swain* presents the fan owner with a model of good male conduct that can form lasting companionship and happy marital union. Yet, Wilson’s translation of an entirely different social type on a number of his fan print designs allowed him a visual means by which to display variant forms of masculine misconduct in 1790s society. The ‘beau’, as shall be described below, is satirically lampooned on a number of Wilson’s fan print designs and features as an important, recurrent trope across them, closely relating to issues pertinent to contemporaneous conduct literature. The examples discussed in this section include the stipple-engraved

fan prints *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* (Fig. 1) and *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* (Fig. 4), produced in 1795, as well as *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* (Fig. 10), produced in 1797 as a stipple-engraved fan print.⁴³² In the following section, I examine how physiognomy may have been understood in the eighteenth century, its visual and textual manifestations, as well as how Wilson uses notions of physiognomy to enable his fans to act as mobile tools of conduct identification and male rectification.

Johnson defines the beau as 'a coxcomb, a fop, a man of dress; a man whose great care is to deck his person' in his *A Dictionary of the English Language*, first published in 1755.⁴³³ By the 1770s, fashions in clothes had become exaggerated in scale, with 'gargantuan' head pieces worn by women and the macaroni style favoured by men. Philip Dawe's satirical mezzotint *The Macaroni. A real Character at the late Masquerade* (Fig. 88), produced in July 1773, features just such a macaroni. This macaroni poses in front of a toilet-table, on which a number of toilet jars are placed, and invites the viewer to admire his ribboned cravat and ludicrously large head piece topped with a three-cornered hat. However, by the 1790s, George Brummell (1778-1840), otherwise known as 'Beau Brummell', was starting to establish a distinct style of dressing, also known as 'dandyism', that favoured tailored bespoke garments. This

⁴³² *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512), *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511) and *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510) fan leaves, thereafter referred to as *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*, *A Selection of Beau's* and *The Quiz Club* respectively.

⁴³³ J. Hamilton (ed.), *Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language, in Miniature*, Oxford, 1807, 22.

mode of fashion was based on well-cut coats and a prominent knotted cravat, which took off in popularity towards the 1790s and became part of the visual spectacle of late eighteenth-century urban society.⁴³⁴ Undoubtedly, a variety of colourful, well-fitted and cravat wearing beaus feature prominently on Wilson's fan print designs, with which his female clientele would likely have been familiar.

One of the ways in which Wilson vividly conveys the character of each of his fan leaf beaus is through an engagement with related concepts of physiognomy. This produces a uniquely interactive mobile instructor, that ingeniously recasts the fan's owner as a physiognomist. A physiognomist is a person who is supposedly able to judge character from facial characteristics alone. The word 'Physiognomy' in *The Quiz Club*'s central text signalled to the user that Wilson was looking toward stock representations of beau characters and borrowing from the catalogue of physiognomy. 'S.A professor of Physiognomy', possibly refers to the initials of Sarah Ashton (Wilson's publisher on occasion), and if so is, suitably, the female message bearer, and 'professor' of physiognomy. The central roundel addresses the fan's owner directly:

THE QUIZ CLUB. Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart./ Dear Madam ask your loving Quiz,/ If here he' spies his own dear Phiz, And if mark'd out some faults he find,/ Like one or two which warp his mind/ Bid the defaulter hence amend/ And be the sexes honour'd friend/.

Here, Wilson is explicitly dedicating this fan to the beau, but directly addressing a female owner, to use it to become a student of physiognomy and improve the conduct of her beau by enabling him to identify his faults and encouraging him to amend them.

⁴³⁴ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 248.

By the 1790s, textual sources that define, and write about, physiognomy were widely circulated. In 1763, John Clubbe first clarifies in his treaty, *Physiognomy*, that physiognomy was ‘founded on careful observations upon the complexities, lines, and shape of the body in general, compared with the manners, tempers, and understandings of man’.⁴³⁵ He explains that by 1750, ‘custom [...] has taken so large a stride as to make Phyz and Countenance the same thing’.⁴³⁶ Phyz and countenance refer to a person’s facial expressions. Just over two decades after Clubbe’s publication, Johann Caspar Lavater’s *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, published in 1789 in German and translated into English the same year, defined physiognomy to be ‘the science or knowledge of the correspondence between the external and internal man’.⁴³⁷ Importantly, Lavater uses the word physiognomy to ‘signify the [...] superficialities of man, in motion or at rest, whether viewed from the principal or by portrait’.⁴³⁸ He describes what he regards as the universality of the physiognomics of appearance. He states ‘there is not a man who does not, more or less, the first time he encounters a stranger [...] compare and judge him, according to appearances [...] all men are daily influenced by physiognomy [and] understand something of physiognomy’.⁴³⁹ Physiognomic discussions were widespread in eighteenth-century sources, including prints, book frontispieces, as well as debated in a number of published letters, novels and conduct texts. My research on Eighteenth

⁴³⁵ John Clubbe, *Physiognomy; Being a Sketch Only of a Larger Work Upon the Same Plan*, London, 1763, 1.

⁴³⁶ Clubbe, *Physiognomy; Being a Sketch Only of a Larger Work Upon the Same Plan*, 1.

⁴³⁷ John Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, 1789, 11.

⁴³⁸ Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, 11.

⁴³⁹ Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, Introductory Address.

Century Collections Online suggests that literary texts citing physiognomy numbered well over 1,200 inclusions in printed form between 1785 and 1800 alone.

Charles Allen's compilation of letters, published in 1788 and titled *The Polite Lady; or, a Course of Female Education: in a Series of Letters, from a Mother to her Daughter*, includes a letter in which a mother alerts her daughter to the importance of presenting a polished outward appearance to stand up to any visual scrutiny she may receive. In this letter, she explains 'you see my dear, there is at least some truth in physiognomy; and that it concerns a young lady to be very careful of her looks. Since her character depends as much upon these as upon any other part of her behaviour'.⁴⁴⁰ The opinion expressed in this correspondence points to the fact that women in the late eighteenth century understood physiognomy to entail the judging of their moral worth through the close observation of their physical appearance and the level of its attractiveness. Similarly, one of Robert Bage's characters in his novel, *Man As He Is. A Novel*, published in 1793, satirically explains how he tried to perceive the hidden character of a man by reading the lines of his face. This man recalls that 'I took a lesson o' physiognomy from Mr. Lavater himself, as I stood behind his chair'.⁴⁴¹ By 1790 Joseph Addison was able to declare in the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, *Guardian*, and *Freeholder* that 'everyone is [now] in some degree a master of the art which is generally described by the name of physiognomy', giving a sense that anybody could be a physiognomist.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴⁰ Charles Allen, *The Polite Lady; or, a Course of Female Education: in a Series of Letters, from a Mother to her Daughter*, London, 1788, 209.

⁴⁴¹ Robert Bage, *Man As He Is. A Novel*, 2 Vols, Dublin, 1793, 218.

⁴⁴² Joseph Addison, *The Papers of Joseph Addison, Esq. in the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian, and Freeholder. Together with his Treatise on the Christian Religion*, Vol. 2 of 4, Edinburgh, 1790, 61.

Such varied types of printed literary forms relating to physiognomy give an indication of how prevalent they were in the same period as Wilson was operating.

It is useful to note that the close association between physiognomic subject matter and print was also established by the 1770s. Clubbe's treatise on physiognomy, which he dedicated to Hogarth, contains a frontispiece engraved by Luke Sullivan after Hogarth's *The Weighing House* (Fig. 89). It illustrates a series of male figures representing different types from the ponderous to the flighty, and its design echoes the semi-circle of a fan shape. The arrangement of figures featured in this print, illustrating gradients of facial emotion from grave to foolish, makes the implied association between facial characteristics and character in a humorous way. Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* too, includes hundreds of men's and women's engraved portrait busts by such artists as Johann Heinrich Lips, sporting different facial expressions as visual examples of various types of external appearances, all of which relate to corresponding internal personalities. It can reasonably be suggested therefore, that Wilson was influenced by such treatise and their associated visual manifestations in print.

The twelve beaus placed in succession across *The Quiz Club* are each encapsulated within a roundel frame. The following figures are depicted on the left-hand side of the fan: a beau dressed in a ruffed shirt, titled a 'Young Spark', indicating he fancies himself as a ladies' man (Fig. 90); an older beau with arrogant features and an upturned face, indicative of the fact that this beau 'can be smart on any subject that comes up' (Fig. 91); a childlike beau holding a hunting stick, suitable for 'fox hunting, Cock fighting, fishing', signifying a simple character (Fig. 92); an overweight beau with a

small snub nose wearing a judge's costume, described as a 'learned Ass' (Fig. 93); and a beau sitting at a table, engaged in 'a game at Cards', having 'played away his Estate [...]', indicating a reckless nature (Fig. 94).

On the right-hand side of the fan we see: an admiral standing dressed in naval uniform, whose hypocritical character is fully revealed by the explanation of him as 'A man of strict honor, that lies, cheats & deceives all who trust him' (Fig. 95); a round-faced beau holding an overflowing wine glass and described as 'A choice Spirit, one that is well known in Covent Garden for his frolics', indicative of a foolish nature (Fig. 96); a sitting beau, gesturing with his right hand as if in conversation, reflecting the description of him as 'A man well acquainted with everyone' (Fig. 97); a thin, cross-looking beau sitting upright in a chair, explained as 'so very peevish, cross & tyrannical', indicating a controlling and ill-tempered personality (Fig. 98); a stout smiling beau with blushed cheeks and round belly sitting reclining in an armchair smoking a clay pipe, called 'A heart at ease', signalling a beau of merry character (Fig. 99); a beau who looks intently at an open book, called 'A fit man for Closet', alerting attention to the fact that this beau desires his own company and is lost in his imagination (Fig. 100); and, finally, a beau with his face resting on his arm, possibly falling asleep, and described as an 'An unfit Man to be alone', suggestive of a melancholic state of mind (Fig. 101).

Consequently, it can be contended that *The Quiz Club* helped an owner to identify different types of beau, from the arrogant to the merry. The physicality of the fan allows

for the physiognomy, deportment and the character of each fan leaf beau to be closely scrutinised, from their facial features to their dress, and their character confirmed by reading each figure's accompanying text. Wilson reinforces the interior character of each of his beaus on this fan by way of the textual additions placed underneath each one, thereby conveying the notion of the exterior and interior character. Repeated examination of *The Quiz Club*'s assortment of beau characters could thus help the fan holder determine a man's personality in an educational and entertaining manner.⁴⁴³ The user, after all, is encouraged by Wilson to recognise individual characters of the beaus on the fan surface and then to aid men to 'sp[y]' out their 'own dear Phiz'. They could move their line of vision from each of the large beau roundels laid out across the fan's surface to and from its central roundel, which sits advantageously placed in the middle of the design unimpeded by any surrounding decorative elements so as to concentrate focus upon its message. Thus, it can be suggested this fan acts both as a warning guide for women and as a means for men to improve.

Wilson's depictions of beaus were not unique to him, but follow the representation of male types in print. It is advantageous therefore to analyse briefly relevant characters featured on widely distributed prints. The beaus depicted on *The Quiz Club* find their pictorial precedents in older printed illustrations of masculinity. One such example is Wenceslaus Hollar's *A Pake of Knaves* (Fig. 102), an etching dated to between 1636 and 1644, containing twenty etchings of male figures, originally printed on a single sheet in four horizontal rows of five designs, each with a title. These male figures are given titles such as 'Surley', relating to a figure fisting his hand in anger, 'A Prater'

⁴⁴³ Timothy Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, New Haven and London, 1997, 253.

(talker), who stands with his arms crossed, 'Swillbottle' (drunkard) who is flinging a flagon of alcohol. The composition of *A Pake of Knaves* features the knaves placed in a series of parallel lines to encourage the observer to compare the merits of each man. This exhibits pictorial similarities with the way in which *The Quiz Club* facilitates evaluation of the beaus by placing them side-by-side. Thus, Wilson appears to have taken compositional and figurative ideas from well-established popular prints in the creation of *The Quiz Club* design, in addition to drawing from topical imagery featuring types of masculinity.

It is significant to note that Clubbe's clarification that 'PHYSIOGOMY [...] was founded on careful observations upon the complexities, lines, and shape of the body', finds specific visual meaning in hundreds of satirical engravings of male characters produced in the 1770s.⁴⁴⁴ Matthew Darly's etching, *A Nambie-Pambie in the Tip of the Mode* (Fig. 103), serves as a good case in point, featuring an officer wearing a large bicorne, like that of *The Quiz Club*'s beau number six (Fig. 95), gesturing for the viewer to admire his *a-la-mode* uniform. Darly depicts men from all professions in *The Quiz Club*'s design, including auctioneers and men from the army and navy. Darly utilises the principles of physiognomy in which character could be perceived from facial expression, bodily deportment, movement and dress. The men featured on *The Quiz Club* display individual facial characteristics which correlate to their personalities, some virtuous and some immoral. Thus, *The Quiz Club* is able to educate a female owner – who could hold it close to their face, its imagery revealed to them but closed to all

⁴⁴⁴ Clubbe, *Physiognomy; Being a Sketch Only of a Larger Work Upon the Same Plan*, 2.

others, and then look outward at men around them – as to which suitors in real life should be avoided and which should be encouraged.

It is important to mention that other fan makers, such as Robert Cooper, also represented these social types on their fans. Cooper, for example, produced the stipple-engraved fan print *School for Scandal* (Fig. 104) in 1795, after Thomas Rowlandson's panoramic print *School for Scandal*, produced in 1788 (Fig. 105), which in turn represents the gossiping women taken from Richard Sheridan's 1777 play of the same title. Rowlandson's print needs to be unfolded in order to reveal all the women depicted across it, allowing the viewer to imagine the next figurative image before seeing it. However, Cooper's translation of *School for Scandal*'s subject matter from a linear panoramic print to a fan leaf facilitates all the female participants in this 'School' to be observed at once. Thus, the *School for Scandal*'s theme becomes immediately apparent on the fan leaf surface, graphically conveying the gossipy nature of the women as a collective. Additionally, it lets the eye easily draw connections between each group of women featured on the fan, as well as their gestures, deportment and interactions with one another, and to judge them accordingly. On this fan leaf the women are portrayed as part of a group, not as individuals, all equally as culpable in the vice of gossiping. Fans such as *School for Scandal* signal the fact that fan makers like Wilson and Cooper pursued the commercial processes first used by print makers. In a final point, it is significant that Wilson produced a male version of social types as this fan's use centres on close scrutiny by a female clientele of men's conduct.

Wilson compiles a physiognomic ‘lexicon’ through his visualisation of each beau on *The Quiz Club* in an unusually sophisticated manner, using a high degree of physical detail. For example, the coupling of a wig with an upturned nose and unpleasant facial features signifies the bad-tempered nature of the ‘learned Ass’ (Fig. 93). Wilson aids the understanding of internal sentiment through external countenance by the attributes included in each roundel, including gambling cards. Hence, it can be appreciated that, whilst Wilson’s delineation of male facial outlines and corresponding character may not exactly match Lavater’s codification of characteristics, he uses objects to help signal the character of each beau. Wilson’s translation of the pictorial motif of the single-sheet beau and associated ideas of physiognomy onto the fan leaf surface, enabled him to achieve several things. Principally, Wilson’s production of *The Quiz Club* could help him appeal to the same female customer base who would have likely bought satirical prints of the beau, as well as reading literature relating the concept of physiognomy. Furthermore, *The Quiz Club*’s engagement with this theme reveals that focus over external conduct was still of concern at the time of its production, and for which notions of physiognomy were thought to aid an understanding of someone’s personality.

However, a comparison between figurative prints and Wilson’s beau fans highlights a few important differences in their intended functions. Whereas Darly’s satirical characters present the viewer with figures of ridicule, Wilson utilises the textual additions and outlines of facial forms depicted on *The Quiz Club* to offer more nuanced illustrations of the beau, conveying the false charms of some and the benign character of others. Wilson’s composition too – placing the beaus in a linear arrangement – confirms the fan’s foremost function as a mobile tool of conduct identification and rectification.

Wilson not only innovatively utilises the central roundel but contrasts the individual beaus with one another. So, for example, if the narrative roundels are read from left to right, visual contrasts, in terms of dress, gesture and activity, can be identified, designed to define each beau's character, but also to delight the eye. Wilson's pictorial strategy of presenting visual contrasts on *The Quiz Club* carries on as the eye is drawn across the series of beaus. *Quiz* number nine, for instance (Fig. 98), a thin, tight-lipped peevish man, 'so very peevish cross & tyrannical, that his wife and friends should be stones and statues to put up with his extravagant humours', is contrasted with 'A Heart at Ease'.

The final members of *The Quiz Club* provide an amusing, and artful, contrast, both in terms of character and visual outline. Beau number eleven features a scruffy young man and his head (literally) absorbed in a book described as 'A fit Man for a chat' (Fig. 100), as he only 'requires to bear conversation with none but invisibles – Gods, Goddesses, fairies, fawns, Sylphs, Naiads, [...] & ye like'. This satirical portrait roundel is set against the farthest right image, illustrating 'An unfit Man to be alone – one that his family have nicknamed Bob Drowsy' (Fig. 101), who can 'find no amusement but in his tongue, & if he is left half an hour alone finds a sleep'. This final coupling of opposing beau characters provides a fitting ending to *The Quiz Club's* visual and textual narrative. So, the owner would have been able to set about identifying each beau's behavioural faults and then pointing out to men they knew their own corresponding flaws in conduct, enabling multiple consequences to be achieved. Thus, this fan provides an interesting reversal in relation to the transmission of male to female instruction provided by most conduct literature circulated in the period.

Certainly, Wilson's beau figures relate to ideas around conduct and manners through his use of opposites of deportment and conduct. An owner of *The Quiz Club*, in helping their 'loving Quiz', is meant to compare each of the beaus placed on its surface and by visual and textual comparison, pick out those beaus sporting character flaws that they may recognise in themselves and then try to improve behaviours. Indeed, Wilson seems to have purposefully composed all his beau fans as narrative series of figures to best communicate each beau's character for comic, as well as instructional, ends. Wilson's hand-coloured version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* (Fig. 1) serves as a good case in point. This presents a 'line-up' of beaus for an owner to consider and turn to as a mobile object of easy reference. It is useful, here, to summarise the salient points of each beau depicted on this fan print design. These can be described as follows, from far left: 'The Merry Lover' (Fig. 14), a round-bellied man with arms outstretched; 'The Melancholy' (Fig. 15), a thin young man with his face in his hands; 'The Impetuous' (Fig. 106), pictured as a man standing on a pair of wings; 'The Considerate' (Fig. 16), pictured as a man standing on a symbolically slow tortoise; and 'The Platonic' (Fig. 107), shown as a man reading from a script. Following on, 'A Lover of the Flesh' (Fig. 108), pictures a man standing with his arms and legs outstretched, clasping a glass of wine in each hand. To the right of this image depicts the 'The Constant Lover' (Fig. 109), featuring a young man who looks devotedly at a miniature of a lady in a rural landscape.

Carrying on to the right-hand side of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* are placed; 'The Capricious' (Fig. 110), illustrating a man carelessly throwing a miniature of one lady away with one hand whilst at the same time holding up a miniature of a different lady with the other hand as a weather cock swings in the background; 'The Coquette' (Fig.

111) placed in the foreground of the image, pointing to the images of three ladies standing in the background; ‘Lover of the Cash’ (Fig. 112), depicting a rotund man, dressed in a feathered hat and a waistcoat, while the last two images illustrate the ‘Lover of Himself’ (Fig. 113), shown as a man looking at himself in a mirror, and ‘The Lover of Nobody’ (Fig. 114), a man with an annoyed face who kicks a dog in the far left of the picture. Thus, this fan leaf design invites the viewer to analyse pairs of contrasting beau characteristics and states of mind on the part of the fan’s subjects.

While Wilson translates ideas around a beau’s conduct and manners through his use of opposites and binaries in terms of deportment and behaviour, the beaus’ dress details of the hand-coloured dress on *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* relate to thoughts regarding a beau’s conduct. Their costumes effectively unite decorative aspects of fan leaf design with the amusing and pedagogic. A number of late eighteenth-century conduct tracts and magazine columns specifically warn of the perceived degenerate nature of the beau, most perceptibly manifested by his dress and effeminate behaviour, considered to be a key indicator of this masculine social type’s self-serving nature. Among those ladies’ magazines which alerted female readers to this subject is the anonymously written poetic verse contained in the *Poetry* section of the first volume of the 1770 edition of *The Lady’s Magazine*.

This poem epitomises the tone of much conduct-related text warning women about the nature of some men, discussing the figure of the fop, the rake, coxcomb (a vain form of the dandyish figure) and beau in general. It begins:

I write, my dear Nancy, to bid you beware
Of some of the subtle sly sex [...]
He will vow, he will swear, his soul he will stake
But be sure that he wants to deceive.
The fluttering coxcomb, the fop, nor the beau
Do not want a companion for life,
They're too fond of these persons, of tinsel, and shew.
To love or be kind to a wife.⁴⁴⁵

The anonymous author of this poem advocates the avoidance of the fop, who, like the beau, as Michelle Cohen remarks, were considered as 'copying manners divested of meaning [...] all show [...] an empty shell, lacking the inner virtue that constitutes a gentleman'.⁴⁴⁶ The writer also advises against encountering the 'dissolute rake', alluding to the debauched reputation that this male character had acquired by the mid-eighteenth century. By the 1770s, as Mark Hallett has argued, the rake had become the butt of a number of satirical tales.⁴⁴⁷ The extended poem, *The Rake's Progress: or, the Templar's Exit*, published in 1732, containing 'Ten Hubristic verses' and accompanying satirical images, records the story of a rake whose typical fate was either abandonment, dying from a venereal disease or descending into insanity.⁴⁴⁸ Printed material which conveyed both the rake and unmanly fop figures in text and image was widely disseminated in London by the 1770s, hence the potent currency of Wilson's satirical masculine tropes.

To further this point, Wilson's use of coloured inks to complete the hand-coloured version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare*, which turns the beaus featured on its surface into

⁴⁴⁵ Various, *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to Their Use and Amusement*, (August 1770), 135.

⁴⁴⁶ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*, 39.

⁴⁴⁷ Mark Hallett, 'Manly Satire: William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*', Angela Rosenthal and Bernadette Fort (eds), *The Other Hogarth: The Aesthetics of Difference*, Princeton and Oxford, 2001, 142.

⁴⁴⁸ Hallett, 'Manly Satire: William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*', 142.

almost jewel-like points of colour, relate to contemporaneous opinions regarding a beau's perceived conduct. Wilson's deliberate inclusion of garish items of clothing on the surface of all versions of *The Ladies Bill of Fare* offers an instant sartorial signification of behaviour and helps highlight the perceived vain nature of the beau. As John Styles states, many eighteenth-century writers and cultural commentators believed 'that dress constitute[ed] a language, capable of being manipulated by its wearers and read by those who observ[ed] them'.⁴⁴⁹ Fancy clothing, in particular, was believed to 'jeopardise social hierarchy, public morality, military might and economic efficiency'.⁴⁵⁰

The attention Wilson pays to his beaus' clothing can be confirmed in the dress that covers the unsettling, grinning figure of 'Mother's Darling Lump' (Fig. 115), featured on *A Selection of Beau's* (Fig. 4), displaying twelve beaus with different kinds of behavioural flaws, eccentricities or whimsicalities. This detail includes the feathered hat he holds in his hands and the buckled shoes he wears. Moreover, the imagined first-person speech included under this roundel names a very specific fashion item, as 'Mother's Darling Lump' declares he may have a 'Brunswick as well as Gregory'.⁴⁵¹ The brunswick was an informal traveling gown, characterised by a high neck and unstiffened bodice, known to have been chiefly worn as a feminine accoutrement.⁴⁵² Wilson's depiction of this item of clothing both serves to amuse and visually underscore the effeminate nature of this beau for an owner. *The Modern Beau*, a song included in an

⁴⁴⁹ John Styles, *The Dress of the People, Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, New Haven and London, 2007, 181.

⁴⁵⁰ Styles, *The Dress of the People, Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, 181.

⁴⁵¹ Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1820*, New Haven and London, 1995, 146.

⁴⁵² Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1820*, 146.

anonymously written work *Monsieur Kaniferstane* in 1790, stresses this cultural understanding of the beau. This fictional ‘modern beau’ exclaims:

My daddy is dead and left me some money,
I’ll dress very fine and look very funny [...],
As I strut round the room,
I’ll stare in their faces,
Then pull down my ruffles all cov’ed in lace [...].⁴⁵³

As the ruffled *Modern Beau* signifies by his outward dress and speech, the practise of dandyism, closely aligned with the beau, was thought to involve a devotion to the ‘Cult of the Self’.⁴⁵⁴ Texts like *Modern Beau* reveal some measure of the pervasiveness with which the figure of the beau penetrated late eighteenth-century collective cultural consciousness. So, *A Selection of Beau’s* sends up late eighteenth-century modes of masculinity as self-centred and untrustworthy, while at the same time reinforcing these ideas.

Besides this, Wilson’s minute fan leaf beaus relate to a multitude of contemporaneous literary opinion regarding a beau’s perceived conduct during courtship. Many articles, such as that included in the first volume of an edition of *The Lady’s Magazine*, published in 1770, encapsulates the sense of pervasiveness of cultural concern regarding this issue. *Epistole from Lady G- to the D- of C* recounts a lady’s fall from grace due to the words of an untrustworthy suitor. Equally, dramatised stories like *Epistole from Lady G- to the D- of C* reflect the sentiments voiced by more traditional forms of conduct literature earlier in the eighteenth century. Shirley’s *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities*, for example, extends his discussion of love to its influence in

⁴⁵³ Anonymous, *Monsieur Kaniferstane*, London, 1790, 6.

⁴⁵⁴ C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge, 1979, 375.

the decision making that marriage entails, explaining in his conduct text that, ‘Whining and Sneaking pretenders are to be avoided’.⁴⁵⁵ *A Selection of Beau’s* responds to such descriptions of satiric tropes of male conduct by way of ‘speaking’ from the viewpoint of the fan itself. As its central roundel proclaims ‘Mark well-our Motley Group above,/ The Liars Shun- the Honest love’. By so doing, *A Selection of Beau’s* successfully combines the amusing and pedagogic, its message complimented by the motifs of the easel and palette, the winged cherub pointing the viewer to cast their eye across the collective of beaus above it.

Similarly, *A Selection of Beau’s* establishes close textual and visual links with advice given in late eighteenth-century magazines warning against the dishonest flattering of the beau. The anonymous poet of verse in *The Lady’s Magazine* published in 1770 for instance, exclaims ‘He [the beau] will vow, he will swear, his soul he will stake/ But be sure that he wants to deceive’.⁴⁵⁶ Wilson successfully translates this literary message into one of his most expressive characterisations depicted on *A Selection of Beau’s*, its third beau, titled ‘A Sighing, Lying, Dying Rogue’ (Fig. 116), who, by way of the first-person text placed underneath its roundel, declares dramatically ‘Believe I am yours- Only Yours’ till death’. Wilson appropriately visualises his ‘Sighing, Lying, Dying Rogue’ dropping to his knees, stripping back all extraneous detail so as to convey immediately the insincerity of his untrustworthy protagonist and shortcomings as a potential suitor to an owner. Significantly, *A Selection of Beau’s* develops the plotlines penned in satirical conduct related-tales in order to invite women to judge the conduct

⁴⁵⁵ Shirley, *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities: or, The Ingenious Gentlewoman and Servant-Maids Delightful Companion*, 217-218.

⁴⁵⁶ Anonymous, ‘Poetic Verse’, *The Lady’s Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely to their Use and Amusement*, 1, London, 1770, 135.

of different types of beau, as well as to allow them to ridicule the behaviours and modes of dress adopted by some men in the 1790s. Thus, it can be determined that Wilson overlays satire and humour onto his fan leaf narratives discussing the figure of the beau, alongside introducing symbolic detail that would have been easily decodable, thereby transforming his beau fans into innovative and participatory conduct instructors.

Together Wilson's combinations of social types, and of text and image, encourage the viewer to contemplate their contrasting conduct, identified by their clear titles and accompanying bodily stance and actions. Thus, this compositional strategy, in stark difference to the form of conduct literature, identifies a good or benign beau for every bad one, as well as guiding the eye's movements over the fan leaf, inviting the gaze to rest at regular intervals upon these contrasting images. Wilson's beaus are not so much individual personalities but stock masculine types. These images use and recycle popular satirical figures derived, in part, from traditional literary and visual puns involving symbolic animals and objects. The roundel figures embody, and envision, key aspects of good and bad conduct – these being moderation, good taste, civility and decorum against that of excessive corporeal and luxurious indulgence, ill-educated taste and impropriety respectively – allowing them to be committed to memory quickly.⁴⁵⁷ They are an indication of good and bad beaus that women at public places like the theatre could check against the men they met, as well as gossip over and discuss each type of beau. It could even be suggested that his fan leaf beaus might be used to 'train' the female eye to perceive certain behaviours in real life, encouraging their owners to identify, and thereby counteract, new modes of male conduct and use them alongside

⁴⁵⁷ Craske, *William Hogarth*, 41.

the other forms of conduct literature and prints identified in this chapter to change her male beau's behaviour. Significantly, Wilson's introduction of a series of pictorial puns, including the tortoise that conveys the cautious nature of one beau and the weather cock that shows the changeable nature of another, point out Wilson's overlaying of satire and humour, which the format of the fan could enable. In a final note, *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* design was published on 14 February, St. Valentine's Day, an entirely appropriate date on which to lampoon the romantic affections of the modern beau and help women navigate their potential suitors.

Conduct in the Wider Sphere: The World Turned Upside Down

Wilson's corpus of fans shows he was interested in several male social types, besides the beau. In this section I argue that, in some cases, Wilson's fans are also political, and reflect broader, more national and political approaches to conduct than the personal and the amorous. It can be contended that the trope of the virtuous young woman was defined successfully, in part, against the long-established trope of what could perhaps be marked the 'anti-hero' of conduct literature, the figure of the fool, alongside that of the beau. The fool was a key trope in literature, part of the conditioning that conduct texts, satirical illustrations and more general poetic verse increasingly employed towards the turn of the eighteenth century. The trope of the fool was frequently associated with the vices of excess, lust, greed, cowardice and cruelty.⁴⁵⁸ Wilson most clearly engages with the figure of the fool in the production of an aquatint, etched and engraved fan print *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd & Crazy* (Fig. 7),

⁴⁵⁸ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 195.

produced in 1797.⁴⁵⁹ Accordingly, this final section will analyse how Wilson translates ideas around conduct in relation to the figure of the fool and his associated tributes, with specific reference to *The Folly of Man*.

The twenty-five miniature medley fan scenes that populate *The Folly of Man* describe an unfolding narrative of folly and inversions in nature and society. These narratives include scenes of human cruelty, disloyalty, adultery and vanity. Wilson's penultimate scene, 'Vice grown quite out of date and Virtue become quite the Ton' (Fig. 117), is a somewhat ironic statement of society in the 1790s, focuses the viewer's mind upon perceived modes of conduct occurring at the time at which this fan leaf was produced. Each image is visually linked through an aesthetically pleasing overlap of its rectangular frame.

I assert Wilson used the satirical trope of the foolish man, national difference and conduct in the wider political sphere for the design of *The Folly of Man* to promote edification through the incitement of mirth at the sight of these examples of peculiar happenings. As *The Folly of Man*'s semi-circular script quips, 'Mirth's the solace of our day/Let us love her waggish way/ With her laugh till life shall end/ And by jesting learn to mend'. Wilson utilises the medley format to reenvision a world upturned, suggesting a universe in disorder so as to facilitate visual engagement with cultural anxieties about issues such as the perceived upturns in class, all of which had implications for modes of conduct. By so doing, *The Folly of Man* can be understood as encouraging owners to

⁴⁵⁹ *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

disseminate mirth as a solution to the instances of misconduct they may see around them, inviting them to have a positive impact upon a society in transformation in the 1790s. For example, 'Flattery turned out of court and turned out of town shutting their doors against him' (Fig. 118), is numbered as *The Folly of Man's* twenty-second image and illustrates a personification of flattery being kicked onto the pavement. This narrative invites the viewer and others around them to reflect comically upon their own use of flattery so as to encourage more honest speech. Thus, as with *The Quiz Club*, *The Folly of Man's* decorative and sophisticated form aids its pedagogic instruction, helping to make them both commercially attractive and potent conveyors of moral meaning.

Moreover, it can be suggested that Wilson pictorially transposes the satirical trope of the fool *onto* the trope of the beau, so as to emphasise the beau's standing as a figure of fun but also one of potential destabilisation, combining all the figures in texts onto the fan leaf. This can be seen in the design of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*, wherein characters identified as beaus are clothed in motley outfits similar to that of the fool and his bright colours. For example, 'Lover of Himself' (Fig. 113), placed sideways to the viewer, wears a Pulcinella mask, blue pantaloons and pink cape as he looks vainly at himself in a hand-held mirror. In a similar vein, several of the beaus featured on *A Selection of Beau's*, like 'A Man of High Price' (Fig. 119), who is pictured standing defiantly, foolishly declaring 'I am adamant not to Marry any Woman under a Duchess', may be considered foolish in word, appearance and conduct.

More than this, *The Folly of Man* utilises idea of binaries in terms of conduct and composition. Minute narratives such as ‘Flattery turned out of court and turned out of town shutting their doors against him’ offers a pleasing contrast in terms of postures, facial expressions and conduct. This narrative shows the personification of flattery hunched up on the pavement, while the kingly figure stands tall behind him, his kicking leg forming a pleasing continuation of line diagonally across the image. The priest John Trusler (1735–1820) was characteristic in his warnings within his conduct manual *The Principles of Politeness*, published in 1775, of what the excesses of folly could bring to conduct. For example, he cautions that the vice of lying ‘with malicious intention’ will only ‘recoil’ upon the culprit.⁴⁶⁰ These were innovatively translated by Wilson onto his fan print designs by way of depicting often seemingly absurd scenarios, wherein he illustrates the consequences which the excess of indulging in certain follies can bring. Trusler insisted that ‘Every virtue has its kindred vice and every pleasure its neighbouring disgrace. Temperance and moderation make the gentleman: but excess the blackguard’.⁴⁶¹ Trusler was among a number of conduct writers interested in framing discussion on a number of subjects in a moral context. Certainly, it is as if Wilson has picked a selection of follies from a number of stock characteristics described in conduct texts, and then playfully turned them into minute narratives across *The Folly of Man*.

Wilson’s critique extends beyond England, there are wider nationalist debates occurring in these fans, in relation to conduct. Occurrences of foppish folly seem to be embodied by the second illustration on this fan leaf ‘A Frenchman kicking the world before him

⁴⁶⁰ Dr Trusler, *The Principles of Politeness*, London, 1775, 14.

⁴⁶¹ Dr Trusler, *The Principles of Politeness*, 20.

for a football' (Fig. 120). This scene, which, significantly, transposes the pictorial convention of depicting an inverted globe, held by two medieval fools, is modernised through the inclusion of the figure of a Frenchman carelessly kicking the globe. Re-reading one image against the other, the Frenchman thus 'becomes aligned, physically and metaphorically, with the figure of foolishness'.⁴⁶² The political significance of the image of a Frenchman, audaciously upturning the world, would have been understood by a late eighteenth-century fan buying public as a serious comment upon England's unpredictable environment, perceived to be instigated by the French Revolution (1789-1799). Moreover, the figure of the Frenchman represented a challenge to 'English self-mastery' and self-control, a point of differentiation from their continental rivals on which Britons prided themselves.⁴⁶³ Therefore, women carrying *The Folly of Man* in public would have been able to cast themselves as resilient Englishwomen and as central agencies in the battle against the influence of foreign modes of behaviour.

Equally, *The Folly of Man*'s third narrative, 'An Englishman learning to dance and turning his back on roast beef and the deeds of his ancestors' (Fig. 121), makes manifest the corruptive nature of the fop. That Wilson chooses to capture the moment this member of the English gentry is foolishly rejecting the native tradition of eating 'red meat [...] the foundation of redbloodedness' in favour of learning foreign dancing steps indicates Wilson is clearly launching a xenophobic attack on the French, albeit in a satirical manner. He is suggesting to an owner of *The Folly of Man* that French ways are changing an Englishman's relationship to Britain and that they are a danger to British

⁴⁶² Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, 110.

⁴⁶³ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, 70.

values.⁴⁶⁴ The belief that French values, customs and modes of conduct were infiltrating Britain chiefly by affecting the conduct of men was one voiced earlier in the eighteenth-century. Samuel Foote expressed such sentiments in anti-French plays he wrote in the 1750s, alongside penning play scripts on manners, such as *What We Must All Come To* in 1764. John Brewer explains that many in late eighteenth-century society saw this as a struggle between traditional English values and ‘continental foreign ideas of refinement, invading the nation by unmilitary means’.⁴⁶⁵ For this reason, the Englishman ‘faced internal and external threats’.⁴⁶⁶ The ‘aristocratic penchant for all things French, and fashionable society’s enthusiasm for affected manners’, was seen as one of the main ways in which foreign modes of conduct could alter an Englishman’s behaviour.⁴⁶⁷ Learning continental dances was viewed as one of the chief means by which alien influences could change a man’s demeanour and deportment, and was particularly critiqued as something they learned to do, as conveyed on *The Folly of Man*.

I will now consider these ‘national’ forms of conduct through a specific study of gambling. Interestingly, the introductory scene on *The Folly of Man* (Fig. 122) exhibits specific visual and textual associations with topical sources that discuss a foolish man’s indulgence in the vice of gambling, which was thought to embody French values, customs and modes of conduct. This was a pastime that had grown endemic in the

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁶⁵ Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, 80.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁶⁷ Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, 83.

capital by the turn of the nineteenth century.⁴⁶⁸ Wilson's creation of an image illustrating pigs gambling in 'Pigs playing at cards', as *The Folly of Man*'s opening narrative, repositions the customary opening narrative of the inverted globe held by two men to a secondary position in the narrative series of imagery. This gives some indication of the perceived folly that the vice of gambling was thought to represent. The fact, too, that Wilson chooses to place 'Pigs playing at cards' at the start of *The Folly of Man*'s series, signifies that he regarded the vice of gambling as one of the worst follies with which a man could involve himself. This vice could be interpreted as commencing the cascade of misbehaviours that unfold across *The Folly of Man*. Thus, if an owner took this fan to a social gathering that included card playing it could not only be used to provide a talking point but alert male gamblers as to the potential consequences of their actions.

The depiction of men gambling was a common target for artists satirising the bad manners of the era and is reproduced on several fan leaves and single-sheet prints preceding *The Folly of Man*. Wilson himself engages with this theme the same year on *The Quiz Club*, as its fifth roundel depicts a beau engrossed in a game of cards (Fig. 94). On *The Folly of Man*, Wilson places a narrative image of two fat pigs gambling with cards, coupled with the title text 'Pigs playing at cards', to underscore the folly of gambling but also incite laughter. His incorporation of the pictorial motifs of a gaming table and cards in this tiny image can all be identified in the anonymously produced *The Spendthrift* (Fig. 123), published between 1760 and 1767 as a hand-coloured mezzotint. The main characters of 'Pigs playing at cards', namely the two pigs playing cards,

⁴⁶⁸ Gillian Russell, "'Faro's Daughters': Female Gamesters, Politics, and the Discourse of Finance in 1790s Britain', *American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS)*, 33:4, Summer 2000, Maryland, 481.

suggests that it is not just prints like *The Spendthrift* that could have influenced Wilson. Wilson's fan narrative also bears similarities with James Gillray's *A Pig in a Poke*. *Whist, whist* (Fig. 124), a hand-coloured etching produced in 1788. The fact that whist, an English trick-taking card game, was a 'popular gentleman's game', implicating members of the elite classes as chief perpetrators of gambling vices, is also suggested in Gillray's image.

Gillray's image, too, plays upon the traditional linkage between greed – symbolically aligned with the appetite of a pig – and gambling for money amongst men. In the image, this point is emphasised by the deliberate placing of a picture of a pig eating from a trough above the head of the seated man to the left-hand side of the print, enabling the viewers to focus on the pig's image, as well as on the men at the table. Within 'Pigs playing at cards', the symbolic greed of men playing cards has been taken a step further by Wilson; 'the figures of men within are replaced by the forms of two fat pigs'.⁴⁶⁹ Besides this, the image of the pig appear particularly in prints dealing with the theme of what Clayton has termed 'abuses in the social hierarchy'.⁴⁷⁰ In narrative images like this, animals are included 'as vehicles of satire'.⁴⁷¹ This indicates that the use of different types of animals in single-sheet prints as examples of misconduct was still an enduring theme at the end of the 1700s and, therefore, would have proved popular with, and been easily understood by, both print and fan customers.

⁴⁶⁹ Harrison, *A Scholarly Catalogue Raisonné: George Wilson and the Engraved Fan Leaf Design, 1795-1801*, 112.

⁴⁷⁰ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 286.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 286.

The meaning of Wilson's employment of pigs in 'Pigs playing at cards', can be better appreciated if the magnitude of gambling activities occurring in London in the 1790s is further analysed. Gillian Russell remarks that 'one of the most enduring themes of eighteenth-century commentary on contemporary Britain was the nation's passion for gambling.'⁴⁷² For example, the character of Timothy Twig in Joseph Moser's *The Adventures of Timothy Twig, Esq.*, written in 1794, exclaimed that "'o'er [sic] the whole city doth gambling range, from Hyde Park to the Bank, from Blackwall to the 'Change'".⁴⁷³ Playing particular types of games in gentlemen's clubs were also a means for the aristocracy to set itself apart from the lower classes. As pictured in 'Pigs playing at cards', cards were usually used by the aristocracy as they were more expensive than dice and normally involved more erudite games. She relates that the late eighteenth-century 'gambling male' had become 'threatening to the values of the Enlightenment', becoming a perfect figure of folly to engage pictorially with on *The Folly of Man* in relation to issues such as social hierarchy, national wealth and progress as a country.⁴⁷⁴

One of the main condemnations of gambling was that it represented an extravagance that was geared not to displaying how wealthy one was, but to the display of one's indifference in losing money to gambling at cards.⁴⁷⁵ The text 'On Gambling', included in a volume of *The European Magazine, and London Review*, published in the late eighteenth century, voices such concerns over the practice of gambling. 'On Gambling'

⁴⁷² Russell, "'Faro's Daughters': Female Gamesters, Politics, and the Discourse of Finance in 1790s Britain", 481.

⁴⁷³ Joseph Moser, *The Adventures of Timothy Twig, Esq. in a Series of Poetical Epistles. In Two Volumes*, Vol. 1 of 2, London, 1794, 33.

⁴⁷⁴ Russell, "'Faro's Daughters': Female Gamesters, Politics, and the Discourse of Finance in 1790s Britain", 484.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 481.

recites the line ‘Happy are those who learn prudence from the dangers of others’, then declaring ‘GAMBLING is the *art* of creating cases for anxiety and misery, or a studious application how to attain verity and disgrace’.⁴⁷⁶ Such concerns rose to a crescendo in the 1790s, when an influx of émigrés in the aftermath of the French Revolution led to an increase in the number of gambling clubs in London and a rise in national anxiety and xenophobia.⁴⁷⁷

It might be suggested therefore that an owner of *The Folly of Man* may have made a connection between the folly of gambling illustrated in ‘Pigs playing at cards’, and repercussions of events triggered by the French Revolution, linking the French with the societal upheaval occurring at the time of this fan’s production. This could have added to the fan’s topicality and would have made the message of *The Folly of Man* most pertinent for a fan owner, given the fact that ‘the gaming table, was not a model of improving civility [...], but an agglomeration of individuals [collective conduct] [...] prepared to deny social ties [...] in pursuit of chance’.⁴⁷⁸ A man’s gambling habit may lead him to neglect a family, as Wilson’s accompanying text makes explicit in relation to the fifth beau pictured on *The Quiz Club*, who has ‘played away his Estate [...] now venturing on his last stake, while his distress’d family sit in wait at home!’. Hence, a woman’s own happiness and familial stability could be adversely affected by a husband or lover’s gambling habit and the repercussions of revolution abroad. As Russell

⁴⁷⁶ Anonymous, ‘On Gambling’, *The European Magazine, and London Review; Containing the Literature, History, Politics, Arts, Manners and Amusements of the Age*, Vol. 59 of 86, London, 1782-1826, 238.

⁴⁷⁷ Russell, “‘Faro’s Daughters’: Female Gamesters, Politics, and the Discourse of Finance in 1790s Britain”, 481.

⁴⁷⁸ Russell, “‘Faro’s Daughters’: Female Gamesters, Politics, and the Discourse of Finance in 1790s Britain”, 482.

contends, the political crises of the 1790s led to an increasing emphasis on a woman's role as guardian of both domestic integrities and, consequently, the moral state of the nation.⁴⁷⁹ Elisabeth Eger supports this viewpoint, explaining that 'both the real and symbolic figures of women occupied a visible and active role in the development of a national culture'.⁴⁸⁰ So, an owner holding *The Folly of Man* could have understood the fan's imagery as encouraging women to emerge as the protectors of virtuous values in public areas, and thus 'play a formative role in establishing the codes of sociability practised within these spaces'.⁴⁸¹

Wilson, then, visualises widespread concerns that adopting alien modes of conduct could have the same disastrous consequences as the French Revolution effected in its own society, but through surreptitious means such as gambling. *The Folly of Man's* engagement with such pertinent issues would have made it a saleable commodity and its conduct message highly opportune. Viewing *The Folly of Man's* series of imagery as a collective would have allowed a fan owner to experience a number of things simultaneously. Firstly, a female fan owner could have laughed at the figure of the Frenchman, who is vilified in 'A Frenchman kicking the world before him for a football'. Indeed, this figurative motif may have facilitated a kind of comic revenge on the part of the fan owner, who could at least mock the image of the Frenchman in an act of catharsis. Furthermore, *The Folly of Man's* compositional and thematic format helps signify a female carrier as a potential protector of national identity and its associated

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 483.

⁴⁸⁰ Elisabeth Eger, 'Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed', Maxine Berg and E Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century, Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, London, 2003, 191.

⁴⁸¹ Eger, 'Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed', 191.

modes of conduct against the collective folly of English men, therefore visually re-determining the relationship between the sexes. A woman holding and transporting this fan could mock modern masculine customs, exposing to a wider audience men's weakness to succumb to external influences by an inflection of the hand, or keep this information to herself if she held the fan close to her face. Hence, Wilson's sophisticated transposition of the satirical literary trope of the fool onto the trope of the beau on the surface of *The Folly of Man* allowed him to create a uniquely complex mobile conduct instructor that combines edification and satire with an innovative visual strategy.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how Wilson translated the ideas of manners and conduct discussed in a range of conduct-related texts onto the surface of his fan leaf designs. In relation to conduct during the eighteenth century it appears that Wilson was conveying a message that virtuous modes of English conduct for both sexes was essential to combating the potentially destabilising influence of foreign modes of behaviour and ritual, as well as revolutionary ideas from France, in the 1790s. My research demonstrates that three of Wilson's fan leaves, *The Lady's Adviser*, *Physician & Moralist*, *Seven Ages (1)* and *The Good Swain*, appear to relate closely to sources of conduct literature that discuss virtuous tropes of feminine conduct. *The Lady's Adviser*, *Physician & Moralist* presents a model of how a woman could partake virtuously in entertainments, and, in addition, offers preventative advice against things like looking 'at the unpleasant side of every object'.

Unlike Hogarth, who does not give the viewer's perspective in his *Marriage A-la-Mode* series, Wilson captures the attention of his female customers by composing his fan print narratives from what he assumes to be a female viewpoint. The form of the fan allows him to do this differently to prints because of the nature of fans, which are held close to the face and look outwards at the world. *Seven Ages (1)* offers an idyllic mode of female living throughout life and encourages spiritual contemplation, and *The Good Swain* depicts a model set of behaviours between man *and* wife throughout life. *Good-for-Nothing* bears close visual and textual parallels with satirical conduct writing's strategy of utilising a type of disagreeable behaviour so that it can be improved. In a similar fashion, *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)* and *The Folly of Man* are closely aligned with sources of conduct literature that discuss the satirical tropes of the beau and the fool, and alert an owner to the conduct of men they might meet, as well as highlighting societal follies relevant to a female clientele.

Beyond this, it becomes apparent that Wilson designed his fan prints with distinctive compositions to facilitate visual and textual engagement with the tropes of conduct depicted on them. So too, an analysis of the relationship between Wilson's fan designs and ideas around conduct demonstrates that the incorporation of subject matter onto his fans confirmed, and made a visual spectacle of, eighteenth-century attitudes towards perceived gender roles, which were both played upon, and reinforced by his reuse of figurative print material. Wilson's fans of beaus all feature a series of male characters wearing a variety of clothing and posed in different stances. Accordingly, Wilson's fan print designs create interest in men's conduct, as well as allowing an owner to scrutinise and remember a diverse range of beaus, facilitating an interactive method by which they

could learn to identify these modes of behaviours in daily life. In this way, Wilson's fans codify and confirm a woman's behaviour in order to produce a reassuring image in a period of political, religious and social change, which was undermining the relationships between men and women.

Wilson's engagement with innately comic satirical tropes, like that of the beau and the fool, allow him to develop shrewd narratives that interweave educational, threatening and popular subject matter. Thus, it can be concluded that the decorative and thematic aspects of Wilson's fan print designs together facilitated the engraved fan leaf's transformation into a new form of effective mobile conduct instructor. Importantly, Wilson's fan print designs do not replicate contemporaneous literary conduct instructors but, rather, take tropes of social types and overlay them with visual and textual satire in ingenious ways. These include: the simultaneous depiction of characters and events on the same page; compositional devices; implanting pictures on the walls of some interior images that comment upon the narratives below them; incorporation of puns; and personifications. As such, the content of his fans can be seen to humour, educate, as well as forearm a female carrier in an immediate and interactive way. How Wilson's fans relate to novelty, spectatorship and readership, taking the fan and conduct into the public sphere is explored in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FAN AS A NOVEL FORM OF SPECTATORSHIP AND READERSHIP IN THE CAPITAL

A great variety of eighteenth-century commercial establishments in London marketed their goods as ‘novel’.⁴⁸² Merchants understood that an object or artwork featuring an innovative characteristic held power to attract customers.⁴⁸³ The ability of shrewd fan sellers and makers to manufacture and market the use of their goods as in some way unique becomes evident when adverts taken out in newspapers, announcing the arrival of new products, are examined.⁴⁸⁴ These adverts emphasise the original aspect of a fan’s function, design or subject matter. A key aspect of this uniqueness was the printed fan, which Timothy Clayton identifies as having emerged in the 1730s, stating ‘the English printed fan was a novelty’, although printed themes had been the focus of attention for fan-painters before this period.⁴⁸⁵ As Clayton asserts, printed fans clearly ‘had the draw of greater novelty [than single-sheet prints], and they accordingly found a readier

⁴⁸² Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1991, 223.

⁴⁸³ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 222.

⁴⁸⁴ From studying these advertisements, it seems that mid to late eighteenth-century fan makers and sellers based in London included the word ‘new’ in their magazine advertising, for example, Sarah Ashton, Classified Adverts, ‘Casino Fan’, *St. James’s Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 2-5 February 1793, London, n.p.

⁴⁸⁵ Timothy Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, New Haven and London, 1997, 84.

market among a public whose taste was increasingly for new and varied sources of knowledge and amusement'.⁴⁸⁶

Production and advertising of certain types of fans demonstrate that they sometimes functioned in startlingly unusual ways. The novel uses such fans could be put to included acting as a facial disguise and offering a concealed spy-hole through which an owner could clandestinely observe others. However, this development did not stand as an isolated instance. Rather, they occurred within a wider social and cultural context, which also gave rise to emerging types of visual spectacle that affected the emotions and sensory perceptions of consumers. These circumstances fostered an environment in which artists and craftsmen experimented with producing work in unusual materials and sizes, as well as the serialisation of narrative imagery. Alongside these advances, several literature-inspired art exhibitions in the 1780s and 1790s facilitated an important form of novel entertainment that turned, as Luisa Calè puts it, 'readers into spectators'.⁴⁸⁷

This chapter examines the importance of the pervasive impact on women of this desire to encounter a sense of material and sensory novelty in fan leaf design and usage, with a focus on George Wilson's fans in relation to this context. Developing on from the focus on conduct literature in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the ways in which fan makers, such as Wilson, responded to the growing want on the part of the public to view and experience new visual formats. The scholarship on fanology, or the language of fans, suggests fans were used as a type of sign language, as well as for focusing the

⁴⁸⁶ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 84.

⁴⁸⁷ Luisa Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, Oxford, 2006, 6.

gaze and enhancing communication.⁴⁸⁸ My study extends this line of enquiry by showing that Wilson, as well as his fan making colleagues, provided a novel form of dissemination on which textual and visual sources were presented and sensorially experienced. I suggest that this development in fan design combined the idea of spectacle with a woman's watchfulness of the conduct of others, as well as allowing them to alter their own behaviour. This analysis therefore develops ideas around conduct developed in Chapter Two, with specific focus given to public spaces of spectatorship. It draws attention to the fact that the late eighteenth-century engraved fan can be understood as offering a variety of ways to learn about conduct, in a similar way to Vivien Jones's argument that conduct books can be seen as 'something more interesting and more varied than is sometimes implied'.⁴⁸⁹

The chapter begins by establishing the concept of novelty and its importance in the wider context of the idea of spectatorship in the eighteenth century. New technologies that were developed during the course of the eighteenth century will then be analysed, linked to ideas around machines and new experiences. To build upon this line of enquiry, investigation which discusses specific types of fan whose explicit function was to facilitate unusual and sometimes curious types of activity is incorporated. The innovative way Wilson combined text and image and the language of fans are examined as part of this analysis. It is proposed that such unusually designed fans responded to a desire on the part of a female clientele for mounted fans to enable unique forms of observation and sociable interaction, such as casino fans. These were consumers and

⁴⁸⁸ Valerie Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, London, 2002, 14.

⁴⁸⁹ Vivian Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', Roy Porter and Marie Roberts (eds), *Pleasure in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1996, 109.

users of fans who lived in a society where paramount importance was given to scrutiny of bodily gestures and deportment, as outlined in Chapter Two. Alongside this, assessment of how adverts for fans vividly attest to the desire on the part of fan makers and sellers to attract female customers by emphasizing novel elements in their fan designs will be undertaken. This section then finishes by exploring how one of Wilson's fan print designs, *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* (Fig. 7), produced in 1797 as an aquatint, etched and engraved fan leaf, can be understood as functioning as an innovative form of mobile pictorial spectacle.⁴⁹⁰

The next section in this chapter focuses on spaces of spectatorship in the capital and associated themes of Englishness and behaviour in public. So too, analysis will take in forms of public space in the capital as examples of a broader impulse towards novelty, pleasure and entertainment. A study of Wilson's stipple-engraved fan print (Fig. 19), *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, produced in 1796, will help highlight how Wilson responded to contemporary interest in novelty, entertainment, spectatorship and themes of Englishness.⁴⁹¹ In the final section of this chapter, focus turns back towards the body of the spectator and how the fan facilitated forms of communication within these public spaces.

The Importance of Novelty and Entertainment in the Eighteenth Century

Amanda Vickery has stated that curiosity constituted a keystone of Georgian interest in

⁴⁹⁰ *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

⁴⁹¹ British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.1010.32.

the novel.⁴⁹² The concept of eighteenth-century novelty has been noted by Paul Langford to have been intrinsically linked to notions of English character and individuality, which was thought by foreign visitors to encompass an ‘enchanted oddity’.⁴⁹³ Porter states that novelty in the eighteenth century ‘could even be hallowed as an expression of the English birthright of Liberty’.⁴⁹⁴ Hence it can be understood that the concept of something original is linked to the emotional and physical experience of encountering something new, and to the behaviour such an encounter may induce.

Porter asserts that during this period ‘economic change and rising national wealth’ was also being ‘translated into personal goods’.⁴⁹⁵ As a result, these ‘developments opened up new vistas of material enjoyment’.⁴⁹⁶ Men and women from all classes could, to varying degrees (if the financial means allowed), acquire ornaments and fashions ‘which were lighter, more comfortable, more elegant’, or ‘simply newer’.⁴⁹⁷ Magazines such as *The Rambler Magazine* attest to ‘the power of interest’ in the growing desire to own new clothes, art and accessories.⁴⁹⁸ In the words of Porter, ‘objects certainly fascinated the Georgians’, and the desire to touch, see, hear and smell all things new extended to collective experiences such as visits to ‘stately homes and factories,

⁴⁹² Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England*, New Haven and London, 2009, 243.

⁴⁹³ Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, Oxford, 2000, 285.

⁴⁹⁴ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 248.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 221. On consumption in the period, see Maxine Berg and E. Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century, Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, London, 2003. On female experiences of shopping in London, see Kate Smith, ‘Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of Design History*, 2:1, 2012 and Claire Walsh’s articles, ‘Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of Design History*, 8:3, 1995 and ‘Stalls, Bulks, Shops and Long Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century’, in Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger (eds), *The Landscape of Consumption: Shopping Streets and Cultures in Western Europe, 1600-1900*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2014.

inspecting machinery, peering down microscopes, going to museums and galleries’.⁴⁹⁹

John Brewer explains that English society in this period ‘all shared a sense that they had embarked on a voyage of discovery’.⁵⁰⁰ No longer did one have to be a member of the aristocratic classes to enjoy taking in some of these experiences, due, in part, to the increased affluence and leisure time across the population as a whole.

Easier travels opened up a means by which the populace could view material novelties, such as the latest fashions in paper hang, or take in new sensory stimuli, for example visiting stately houses, and offered a change in the manner in which they experienced things ‘in a desire for pleasure’.⁵⁰¹ As shall be examined later in the chapter, these developments opened up new types of conduct, as well as threats to normative conduct, many of which were facilitated by the hand-held fan. These shifting experiences aided people in the ‘well-tempered pursuit of happiness in the here-and-now – indeed, the *right* to happiness’.⁵⁰² Furthermore, the means of accessing and acquiring pleasure could be obtained from touching and hearing, as well as observing, innovative forms of artwork and entertainment in urban centres. Customer aspirations propelled the creation of luxuries, the buying public not content anymore with old or inherited objects. Running in tandem with this cultural development, advancements towards increased industrialisation influenced many areas of life, providing added impetus for artists to become inventors and capture demand for all things novel.⁵⁰³

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 225.

⁵⁰⁰ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1997, 68-69.

⁵⁰¹ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 27.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 256-257.

⁵⁰³ Maxine Berg, ‘From Imitation to Invention: Creating Commodities in Eighteenth-Century Britain’, *The Economic History Review*, 55:1, February 2002, 2.

For women notions of spectatorship and observing one another in public spaces reflected a growing arena of entertainment and visual culture in London.⁵⁰⁴ As Jerry White sums up, eighteenth-century London was a place to see and be seen, and Londoners liked nothing more than to look.⁵⁰⁵ This included London's public areas, streets and entertainment spaces.⁵⁰⁶ Women played an active role in creating this spectatorship base as they increasingly accessed, and enjoyed, civic and commercial spaces in the capital, in addition to establishing visually the codes of sociability practised within them.⁵⁰⁷ As shall be shown, novelty in fan design and use opened up new types of conduct, as well as threats to normative conduct, within such public arenas.

New Technologies and Novelty Fans

Alongside developing modes of looking in gallery spaces and selling establishments in the late eighteenth century, intriguing forms of image making were occurring at the same time. This section explores technical developments in this period and novel fans, linked to ideas around new technologies and visual and haptic experiences, as well as the originality of the language of fans. Wilson's *The Folly of Man* is examined as part of this analysis as it is a specifically novel form of fan, as is his innovative use of text and image.

⁵⁰⁴ Elizabeth Eger, 'Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed', Maxine Berg and E. Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century, Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, London, 2003, 191.

⁵⁰⁵ Jerry White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, London, 2013, 319.

⁵⁰⁶ White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 319.

⁵⁰⁷ Eger, 'Luxury, Industry and Charity: Bluestocking Culture Displayed', 191.

Technological inventions included some of the abundance of newly created visual spectacles, such as the eidophusikon, discussed in Chapter One, an early form of moving pictures, which incorporated a variety of illusionary and unusual stage effects, were calculated to cause maximum sensory impact. Interestingly, both fan leaf and eidophusikon offered different scales of visual novelty that the public could savour, such as the eidophusikon's reduction of architectural detail and the fan's shrinkage of figures and faces. Thus, it could be argued that there were visual parallels between the eidophusikon's simulation of passages 'of time and displacement in representation' and the progress of a succession of images across the surface of a fan leaf.⁵⁰⁸ Although the pictorial climax of the eidophusikon remained 'a kind of [...] fixation without narrative development' in contrast to the passing of the eye across a fan leaf's narrative images that advances cumulative plot lines.⁵⁰⁹

So too, automated changes in movement of some theatrical shows, such as the phantasmagoria, referenced in Chapter One, may have helped to heighten a spectator's emotional responses, encouraging novel ways of experiencing, and viewing, entertainment partly through developments in 'visual technologies'.⁵¹⁰ Not only did the phantasmagoria take advantage of mechanical developments to further the spectator's experience, but included use of darkness, employed to heighten their sense of dread and anticipation. This had the potential to upset normative behaviours of conduct as an audience's reaction to any unusual use of projected light would have been instinctive in

⁵⁰⁸ Bernard Comment, *The Painted Panorama*, New York, 1999, 61.

⁵⁰⁹ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 119.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 105.

reaction and at least momentarily unguarded, breaking any carefully constructed modes of conduct and behaviour. The frontispiece engraving taken from volume one of *Mémoires Récréatifs, Scientifiques et Anecdotiques du Physicien-Aéronaute* (Fig. 125), authored by E.G. Robertson in 1831, illustrating Robertson's *Fantasmagorie* in the Cour des Capucines in 1797, evidences the effect of its emergence and disappearance. In this engraving, unexpected modes of conduct can be seen, such as the man in the central foreground collapsing to the floor or the man sitting near him at the end of a pew who appears to be in the middle of drawing his sword to fend off the ghostly apparitions.

Alongside inventions like the eidophusikon and phantasmagoria, audiences' attention was also captured by novel forms of scale, perspective and narrative sequencing of imagery within exhibition spaces. Some formats of narrative series of artwork had accustomed spectators to 'fill in', using their own imagination, parts of a story unseen and out of frame in-between those images depicted along a timescale. For instance, William Hogarth's counterpart paintings, *Before* and *After* (Fig. 126 and Fig. 127), completed between 1730 and 1731, portraying the coyness of a woman and the advances of her suitor before love-making and the resulting exhaustion after the act, pictorially encourages a viewer to imagine the deed itself and to judge it along moral grounds. Artists like Hogarth accustomed viewers to this process of novel image making, alongside turning their attention to the invention of original ways of understanding imagery set across different scales. More than this, as explored in Chapter Two, pictorial counterparts like *Before* and *After* highlight the pervasiveness and significance of ideas of opposites – right and wrong, before and after – in terms of

conduct that are crucial to the period and the creation of novel types of visual imagery. Therefore, the importance of the series and sequential narratives lay partly in the fact they enabled one or more contrasting scenes to be juxtaposed against each other. The fan offers a mobile format that can respond to and contain all those sequences on a minute scale together, enabling the eye to make connections both between narratives placed next to one another but also link the meanings of images placed further apart or either side of the fan.

Novelty fans, and the adverts that marketed them, graphically attest to the fact that fan makers were responding to fast changing tastes in the public's desire for novel modes of reading and viewing. Fan adverts highlight their position at the forefront of technological advances, which introduced an owner to a host of novel sensory and spectatorship experiences. For example, the fan maker Edward Vaughn proclaimed the novel merits of his 'Necromantick FAN' – a fan that had a type of magnifying glass inserted into the centre of its brisé sticks, doubling as a rivet – in the *Grub Street Journal* in July 1734, more on which will be discussed later in this chapter.⁵¹¹ New fan designs illustrated such subject matter as the accurate layout of opera boxes in theatres or featuring the rules to newly invented games such as Casino, on which I shall expand below. These examples demonstrate how fans could act not only as conduct guides, but also as instruction aids, enabling their owners to keep up to date with, and engage in, the new pursuits eighteenth-century London offered, as well as navigate its emergent communal spaces and innovative forms of entertainment.

⁵¹¹ See Edward Vaughn, Classified Adverts, 'The Necromantick FAN', *Grub Street Journal*, 25 July 1734; Issue 239, London, n.p.

There was commercial appeal for designing and publishing ‘Casino fans’, for instance, such as those designed and sold by the fan maker and seller Sarah Ashton. Ashton’s engraved *Casino Fan* (Fig. 128), produced in 1793, is illustrated with directions for playing the game Casino. It was specifically aimed for a clientele who enjoyed participating in this sociable pastime, helping its female owners to play Casino correctly and display a knowledgeable grasp of the game.⁵¹² Ashton announced the arrival of her *Casino Fan* at ‘Sudlow’s Fan Warehouse’ in *St. James’s Chronicle or the British Evening Post* in February 1793. In this advert, Ashton addressed the reader thus:

This day is published The Ladies’ New Casino Fan, consisting of the Laws, Rules of the fashionable Game of Casino, and is now played in Polite Circles. Publish’d at Sudlow’s Fan Warehouse, No. 191, Strand, opposite St. Clements’s Church, where may be had, all different sorts of the newest fashionable Fans, Fansticks, Mounts & c. wholesale and for exportation.⁵¹³

There are several interesting issues raised in this announcement. Ashton’s marketing of the *Casino Fan*’s creation makes evident that it was created for the consideration of ‘ladies’, so is directed at those who regularly immersed themselves in polite society and were of a good social position. The advert complies that Casino is morally acceptable to play too, in terms of conduct, so it can enhance one’s outward show of civility. However, it should be noted that most men’s perception was that women lower down the social scale should not play any type of game that involved an element of gambling ‘because they had no legitimate way of paying their debts’.⁵¹⁴

Additionally, Ashton’s declaration attests to the perceptive nature of many fan makers and sellers with regards to the potential use, and need for, a mobile print surface

⁵¹² Ashton, ‘Casino Fan’, n.p.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, n.p.

⁵¹⁴ Arthur Pitt, *A Study of Gamblers and Gaming Culture in London, c.1780-1844: Emerging Strategic Reasoning in a Culture of Conspicuous Consumption*, unpublished M.A by Research, University of York, 2012, 53.

carrying printed instruction to facilitate and encourage sociable interaction. Men may have even offered advice to a woman playing casino aided by viewing her *Casino Fan*. The fan itself could have been held up fully unfurled to shield an owner's facial expressions as she played, thereby enabling the effectively portrayal of a 'poker face'. At the same time, a movement of hand to turn a *Casino Fan* sideways by a slight measure would have likely given the handler a covert view of the other casino player's facial expressions and maybe even a glimpse of cards yet to be dealt.⁵¹⁵

So too, the emphasis that Ashton placed on making original fan designs becomes clear when her advert is read; she cites the word 'new' twice in its text.⁵¹⁶ One final point to make is that Ashton is at lengths to clarify that her fans are available to buy fully assembled or to send to other parts of the world, or, if so desired, just the fan mounts or fan sticks, presumably for repairs or to fashionably update a fan print support. This augments my argument made in the first chapter of this thesis that fan shops were at the centre of a nexus of diversity of trades, as well as at the forefront of the spread of modish manners.

Another area of novelty in fan production was the creation of riddle fans. An example is the etched *Riddle Fan* (Fig. 129), printed anonymously after Ashton in 1784, and which could be undertaken as either a solo or social activity.⁵¹⁷ *Riddle Fan* depicts a series of riddles and puzzles dotted about its surface, whilst at its centre is a figure of a man

⁵¹⁵ Pitt, *A Study of Gamblers and Gaming Culture in London, c.1780-1844: Emerging Strategic Reasoning in a Culture of Conspicuous Consumption*, 55.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, n.p.

⁵¹⁷ The fact that this *Casino fan* design is produced 'after' Ashton's original *Casino fan* indicates the popularity and success of her fan design.

reading an inscription on a pedestal. On this pedestal, a personification of Time sits on a broken column, over which floats a personification of Fame bearing a medallion portrait of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) with a riddle that, if its clues are solved correctly, spell out the Bard's name. *Riddle Fan* evidences the similar type of innovative composition employed by late eighteenth-century fan makers to engage an owner's visual sense and demonstrate their intellectual facilities. Here, then, it is helpful to note briefly the interest in such mentally stimulating and diverting activities, manifested in both literary and visual forms during the latter half of the eighteenth century. As an anonymous author of a news report included in the *Evening Mail*, published in June 1791 declared, this was indeed 'an age of conundrum and pun'.⁵¹⁸ The inclusion of puns, riddles and conundrums in poems, children's storybooks and magazines, displayed alongside fan leaves sporting visual and textual manifestations of a quizzical theme, in establishments like that of fan and print shops, was widespread by the 1790s.⁵¹⁹

A number of satirical articles taken out in newspapers highlight the market for riddles during this period. An anonymous author makes reference to the commonness of punners to take advantage of bizarre social situations in an article titled 'Proclamation', written by 'By His Majesty of Fashion', which appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle or*

⁵¹⁸ Anonymous, News, 'Shakespeare', *Evening Mail*, 6-8 June 1791; Issue 356, London, n.p.

⁵¹⁹ Advertises marketing fans in the mid to late eighteenth century reflects a wide societal fascination with the use of puns and riddles to entertain and educate both adults and children (e.g. see Anonymous, 'Proclamation. By His Majesty of Fashion', *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 1-3 February 1798; Issue 6260, London, n.p). Children's chap books, nursery rhymes, folk stories and spelling books, such as Mary Cooper's two-volume *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book*, published in 1744, and *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly*, published in 1744, attest to the growth in literature incorporating puns and riddles to impart knowledge.

the British Evening Post in 1798.⁵²⁰ As the author relates in relation to one such circumstance, ‘it has been represented to us that [...] Lady ____, and the Hons. Miss ____, did appear at the Opera House lately, with bosoms made of wax’.⁵²¹ However, the author warns ‘all Punters, Makers of Puns [...] Dealers in Double Entendres, from meddling with, or molesting, the said bosoms of wax, either by pun, rebus, conundrum, epigram [...]’, reflecting the fashion for all kinds of literature to include articles of a punning nature in the 1790s.⁵²²

Riddle and conundrum fans often included lines of text and accompanying symbols presenting confusing problems or questions for an owner to solve, either by themselves or in communal company. A conundrum is a question or problem that requires solving, often including a pun or riddle in its own answer.⁵²³ *Riddle Fan* includes in its imagery curious, seemingly unrelated and incidental detail dotted about, including a fish, designed to engage a viewer’s quizzical nature and delight the eye. Likewise, the stipple-engraved *Conundrum Fan* (Fig. 130), published on 1 January 1791 by the Master Fan Maker John Cock, appears stylised in nature, with an emphasis on the formal interplay of different shapes and colours, set against the dark background.⁵²⁴

⁵²⁰ Anonymous, ‘Proclamation. By His Majesty of Fashion’, *St. James’s Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 1-3 February 1798; Issue 6260, London, n.p. Similarly, historians have referenced the popularity of the jigsaw puzzle, considering it ‘reasonable to suppose that John Spilsbury, a cartographer and engraver, was the inventor of dissected maps and therefore of jigsaw puzzles’ in the 1760s. Such inventions reflected the increased desire by society to experience things which heightened mental and physical stimulation primarily through the senses of touch and sight (Kate Smith, ‘Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Journal of Design History*, 2:1, 2012, 4).

⁵²¹ Anonymous, ‘Proclamation. By His Majesty of Fashion’, n.p.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, n.p.

⁵²³ Anonymous, ‘Shakespeare’, n.p.

⁵²⁴ John Cock was appointed ‘Master Fan Maker’ between 1780 and 1781 according to the Worshipful Company of Fan Maker’s ‘C. Master List 1726-1939’, now held at the Guildhall Library and Archives. Manuscript MS21156-8.

Cock's *Conundrum Fan*, mounted on red-japanned wooden sticks, subjects the viewer's line of sight to a pleasurable array of illustrated riddles, which number amongst them a coloured flag, as well as red coloured heart-shaped forms. The conundrums on this fan are artfully juxtaposed against one another, some contained in picture frames while others are written as lines in letters. Therefore, an owner could either view individually each pictorial and textual element, momentarily resting upon each detail, or take in at a single glance the shapes, musical notes and hand-written text.

Cock employed an abstract visual methodology, characterised by what Addison terms an aesthetic 'uncommonness' or unfamiliarity, ideal for an owner to take enjoyment from viewing such an eclectic mix of visual forms.⁵²⁵ Interestingly, not only do several versions of this fan design survive, but one uncoloured version includes the hand-written production line 'Engraved and Published by the permission of Lady Townsend'. This denotes that, unusually, Lady Townsend commissioned this version of the *Conundrum Fan* design and was a strategy by which Cock sought to promote his connections with the aristocracy.⁵²⁶ As Cock was a celebrated fan designer, it seems likely Lady Townsend may have sought him out to produce this original version of this type of fan design for her, evidencing female involvement in the commissioning of a particular fan design.

⁵²⁵ Robin Dix, 'Addison and the Concept of 'Novelty' as a Basic Aesthetic Category', *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 26:4, 1986, 385.

⁵²⁶ There are at least two versions of the *Conundrum Fan* design in the Prints and Drawings Department of the British Museum. One fan print is hand-coloured and in a near finished stage of design and another, uncoloured, bearing the line of production 'Engraved and Published by permission of Lady Townsend'. Thus, it appears John Cock played with, and changed, the compositional format and illustrative and textual detail to some extent on multiple print versions of this medley design, as well producing some versions specifically for wealthy clientele.

Less commonly, fan adverts reveal that entertaining mechanics were added to the fan leaf, such as the insertion of a peep-hole into the fan's structure. One example is the *Necromantick Fan* (Fig. 131), noted earlier in this chapter, for which the fan maker Vaughn placed an advert in *Grub Street Journal* in 1734.⁵²⁷ In this advert, Vaughn invites the public to purchase his newly invented 'Necromantick FAN, or Magick Glass' at The Golden Fan. Vaughn boasts of creating:

a new invented Machine Fan, that by a slight Touch unseen, a Lens in the fan changes her dreary Glass according to the following invitation: If anyone his fate wou'd see,/ Pray send the Gentlemen to me,/ For in Magick glass I show,/ The Pendant, Poet, Cit, or Beau;/ Likewise a Statesman, wisely dull [...].⁵²⁸

This 'Machine Fan' therefore included a movable lens in the structure of the fan. The advertisement addresses a female readership, suggesting that this device could allow an owner scrutiny of men they met and hence permit them playfully to imagine what category of man they may fall into – a companion, poet, town dweller, beau or statesman – or that the glass could judge these men itself.⁵²⁹ Therefore, Vaughan's insertion of a glass lens transformed the fan into a mechanised object which, when an owner followed the fan's instruction, apparently facilitated a clarity of hidden conduct, both literally and metaphorically, that could also entertain them.

A holder could practice covertly peering through the spy hole placed in the centre of their *Necromantick Fan* to see if they could make out the hallmark of a beau's brightly coloured and extravagant dress, observe his dramatic gestures or, equally, look upon the measured movements of a gentleman. The intended use of the *Necromantick Fan* also

⁵²⁷ The word 'necromantick' derives its name from the Ancient Greek word 'mantis', translating to 'prophet' in English, and relating to divinity and prophecy (Susan Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to Fans*, London, 1995, 87).

⁵²⁸ Vaughn, 'The Necromantick FAN', n.p.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, n.p.

helps us to reconsider ideas regarding women roles as active agents of the gaze. After all, any female owner of this fan could have overtly or clandestinely watched men, thus upturning the traditional direction of ‘looking’ from men to women, and, in so doing, cast the fan in this context as an empowering material object. Consequently, such adverts underscore the fact that fan instruction extended towards all aspects of life, including activities like sociable gaming.

Another innovation in fan leaf design that took place in the mid eighteenth century was the production of printed mask fans. While, unfortunately, no existing British eighteenth-century mask fan adverts have yet come to this author’s attention, there are a few surviving English mask fans.⁵³⁰ Mask fans merit mention as they provide one of the most astonishing examples of invention in eighteenth-century fan leaf function. While most mounted fans could gracefully elongate the arms of a woman by extending her arm, fan makers who produced mask fans introduced an innovative format by which women could physically enable transgressions in normative modes of conduct. The anonymously made mid-eighteenth-century hand-coloured and engraved *Mask Fan* (Fig. 132) stands as a type of mask fan design likely sold in fan shops specialising in mask fan production. This mask fan comprises a central depiction of a face shape, with eye holes cut out and depicting, in four scenes, a woman’s journey after first encountering a masked figure on the street, extending a written invitation to a

⁵³⁰ It is not yet clear why adverts for eighteenth-century mask fans, in contrast to most other fan designs, appear entirely absent from newspapers of the day. The subversive nature of mask fans, enabling various modes of misconduct and transgressive behaviours, may have hampered their advertising in mainstream newspapers. Issues surrounding the mask fan imagery stands as a fertile area of future art historical research.

masquerade and subsequently travelling to a mask fan shop to purchase one for the occasion.

The accoutrement of a mask fan, held to the face, eyes set in line with the peep holes created in the corresponding printed face, could hide the individual identity of the holder. The anonymous author of an essay included in a 1792 edition of *The Bon Ton Magazine; or, Microscope of Fashion and Folly*, titled ‘CONVENIENCES OF A MASQUERADE’, elaborates upon some of the types of transgressions in behaviour with regards to the effects that a facial disguise used during a masquerade could facilitate. As this author declares:

if affecting a disguise completely opposite to nature, be completely in the spirit of Masquerade [...]. In such a convention, a grave and cautious man may play the Scaramouche without apprehension of being discovered, and an amorous, and profligate libertine [may] address with the sanctity of a fanatic teacher.⁵³¹

To which description the author adds sarcastically, ‘It would of [sic] perhaps puzzled Ovid [...] to recount the metamorphous made by this scene of mummery [...]. How many fanciful beaus of six-foot-high have condescended, on this occasion, to set aside any dignity and return to bib and apron’.⁵³² In this way the wearing of a mask at a masquerade ball could aid its wearer to become a ‘particle of some other world’ and contribute to what Terry Castle describes as the ‘remarkable vision of the masquerade crowd’.⁵³³ A woman wearing a mask fan at a masque could observe such digressions in behaviour unnoticed. As well, the novelty of a *Mask Fan* also lay in its ability to present physically a barrier to one’s true identity and facilitate its wearer to verbally and imitate

⁵³¹ Anonymous, ‘CONVENIENCES OF A MASQUERADE’, *The Bon Ton Magazine; or, Microscope of Fashion and Folly*, Vol. 1, London, 1792, 147.

⁵³² Anonymous, ‘CONVENIENCES OF A MASQUERADE’, 147.

⁵³³ Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization, The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture*, Stanford, 1986, 55+57.

physically a different state of being to their own. Thus, it appears the format of the late eighteenth-century fan leaf, with its combination of text and image across a mobile surface, that could be pulled close to the face, unfurled and closed quickly or slowly, noisily or quietly, contributed greatly to visual forms of novelty circulating in the capital.

The Novel Composition of Wilson's *The Folly of Man*

Wilson's *The Folly of Man* (Fig. 7), produced in aquatint, etching and engraving represents another very specific form of novelty fan with its medley composition. The sophisticated technicality of this fan print's engraving combined with its radical updating of the age-old 'Folly of Man' theme chimes closely with contemporary developments linked to ideas around technology and new experiences. It could reasonably be suggested that Wilson used the engraving technique of aquatint, together with etching and engraving to 'explore a range of effects that the medium afforded', and which created a sense of originality in the finished product that was desirable to a potential female buyer.⁵³⁴ Not only could an owner garner conduct instruction from the fan as they carried it close to their body, but when carrying the fan in transit, they could show the fan's images to men they met to view humorous visualisations of follies they may themselves foster, as well as having their own prejudices reinforced by the imagery presented on the fan. In this way, *The Folly of Man* can be regarded as a powerful manipulator of the senses, emotions and one's own and other's conduct.

⁵³⁴ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 225. Due to the aquatint's complicated and time-consuming process of completion, it is highly unusual for printed eighteenth-century fans to feature this printing technique, and if so employed, reflects the skill of the engraver.

Furthermore, *The Folly of Man*'s medley format evokes a montage of sorts, delighting the eye. The use of this compositional format guides the eye to focus to move around the surface of the fan leaf, across each of the narrative images and central roundel in an exhilarating variety of possible movements. The viewer can read the instances of folly as singular narratives, or as part of a series which can suggest causal links between each picture (or type of folly), particularly if they physically overlap into one another. The penultimate scene, 'Vice grown quite out of date and Virtue become quite the Ton' (Fig. 117), features a personification of Vice being taken away by the personification of Virtue. This proves a good case in point, as it juts into the edge of the final image 'Lucifer seeing mankind bent on reformation determines to hang himself!' (Fig. 133), showing the devil about to hang himself. The narrative of this fan shows twenty-five scenes, each depicting a topical human folly or in rank, class or the natural order. Not only do these visual effects encourage the viewer to make causal thematic links between the different types of folly shown, but the technique of producing a composite whole from fragments of pictures and texts creates a measure of dynamism across the entirety of the fan.

The array of amalgamated shapes, lines and forms that characterise *The Folly of Man* reveal entertaining meanings when decoded, suggestive of the more usual application of the medley format in oil painting depicting still life elements, as typified by Edward Collier's oil painting *Letter Rack* (Fig. 134), completed in 1698. Wilson's creative updating of the medley composition to the fan leaf format and conduct-related subject matter bears testament to his strategic modernisation of a distinct compositional format to present a novel mode of viewing. This also raises the question of scale. Interest in

such unusually sized visual imagery proved a point of fascination for a late eighteenth-century public. As Hanneke Grootenboer has recently analysed, it is no coincidence that fascination with minute eye portraits, such as *Crying Eye Miniature[s]* (Fig. 135), developed in the 1790s, ‘in a kind of shrunken space that falls outside of the normal proportions of the world’.⁵³⁵ The fan leaf’s own condensed surface mirrors this reduction of the image. Therefore, *The Folly of Man* offers one of the most ingenious pictorial modernisations of the theme of an upturned world in the 1790s.

Novel Combinations of Text and Image

While *The Folly of Man* demonstrates technical novelties in terms of its form and composition, it also points to the novel way Wilson combined text and image, which the following section now explores. Wilson lifted passages of text from single-sheet ballad prints and a diverse array of literary texts, in addition to conduct literature discussed in Chapter Two, to tap into a popular culture of sorts. His inclusion of tiny letter-text or micrographica on engraved fans would have created an immediate visual impact.⁵³⁶ Susan Stewart argues that micrographica were especially suitable “containers” of aphoristic and didactic thought’.⁵³⁷ She confirms that the novelty of the small size of some visual formats made them well-matched to carry learned text, and I argue this was especially true of the fan leaf format. The scale of the fan necessitates the fan owner to pull it close to them in order to view the details of text and image properly, thus facilitating a clearer understanding of their meaning. Coupled to this fact, the late

⁵³⁵ Hanneke Grootenboer, *Treasuring the Gaze: Intimate Vision in Late Eighteenth-Century Eye Miniatures*, Chicago, 2013, 34.

⁵³⁶ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, Duke University Press, North Carolina, 1992, 38.

⁵³⁷ Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, 38-39.

eighteenth-century fan purchaser, similar to the single-sheet print buyer, may have sometimes brought fans in a series united partly by text, and could thus read across from one fan to the next, indicating that fans sometimes functioned like sets of single-sheet prints. Hogarth's set of twelve plot-linked engravings *Industry and Idleness* (Fig. 43), published in 1747, can be related to Wilson's oeuvre of fan print designs. They can be associated with his stipple-engraved fan print *The Good Swain* (Fig. 2), produced in 1795 – depicting the life, and happy old-age, of a virtuous swain and his wife – and its fan leaf counterpart, *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* (Fig. 3), produced a year later – picturing the demise of a couple's relationship due to the actions of a ne'er-do-well swain.⁵³⁸

Additionally, Wilson's originality lies partly in bringing serialisation to fans. Hogarth's set of twelve engravings *Industry and Idleness*, which carry the story of Frances Goodchild and Thomas Idle through to their triumphant and despairing ends, offers a useful series of single-sheet imagery with which Wilson's process of serialisation can be compared. Both series portray visual tales of moral virtue and corruption with textual additions. In the case of *Industry and Idleness*, a diligent young apprentice and an indolent apprentice are presented as the two contrasting models of masculine conduct. So too, Hogarth and Wilson display parallel lives leading from the same start, although to opposite ends through the results of their differing behaviours. Nevertheless, several differences also emerge when *Industry and Idleness* and *The Good Swain* are compared. *Industry and Idleness* includes twelve prints in serialisation, and whilst each one could be purchased separately, the overarching moral of the story can only be fully understood

⁵³⁸ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

if each engraving in the series is read in turn. But Wilson's two interlinking fan leaf narratives, constituting two alternating storylines, can be contemplated as standalone images. The protagonist featured on both *The Good Swain* and *Good-for-Nothing* concentrates on narrating, in its two parts, unusually, how man's conduct can affect a woman's path in life, both positively and negatively. Wilson allows for an owner of both *Good-for-Nothing* and *The Good Swain* to take pleasure in viewing the tale of the bad swain as against that of the good swain, and, in so doing, enables more disruptive modes of conduct through this novel mode of viewership.

In addition, the type and placement of accompanying text used on these two visual formats elucidates an understanding of their individual function. For instance, on Hogarth's first plate, 'Idle's verse' reads 'Proverbs Chap: 23 Verse: 21 The Drunkard shall come to Poverty, & drowsiness shall cloath a Man with rags.'⁵³⁹ Meanwhile, 'Goodchild's verse' reads: 'Proverbs Ch:10 Ver:4 The hand of the diligent maketh rich.'⁵⁴⁰ In this case, and as is repeated on every consecutive plate in this series, Hogarth lifts a relevant section of biblical text to place underneath the main image, reinforcing the resolutely moral tone of the series. Wilson, by contrast, takes text from a variety of contemporary literature to place underneath each scene in his series. The extract of speech Wilson places under the first roundel on *The Good Swain*, 'The Morning of Youth', proves a good case in point; 'Unless with my Amanda blest, In Vain the Woodbine Blower, Unless to death her sweeter breast, In Vain I rear the breathing flower' is taken from the verse spoken by a character called Loveless declaring an

⁵³⁹ The text is taken from William Hogarth's 'Plate 1. The Fellow 'Prentices at their Looms', *Industry and Idleness*, produced in 1747.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

honest love for his wife. This character is included in John Vanbrugh's stage play *The Relapse*, first acted on the stage in 1698, updated by Richard Sheridan in 1772 and retitled *A Trip to Scarborough. A Comedy*. The character of Loveless in this play is married to Amanda, who, despite her virtuous conduct wavering, remains faithful to her husband and the tale ends happily. *A Trip to Scarborough* would have likely been seen by some fan owners and they may have drawn connections between the character Amanda featured in this play and the couple featured in *The Good Swain*'s first roundel scene.

Likewise, *The Good Swain*'s second narrative 'Mid-day of Life' (Fig. 54), featuring the textual addition 'What is the world to them, It's Pomp and Pleasure- it's nonsense all!, Which in each other's arms we'll face whatever fear forms, and lavish our hearts last wish', is lifted from the poem *Spring*. This verse was penned by Thomas Gray in 1751 as part of the poem *The Seasons*, contained in his *Eulogy Written in a County Churchyard*. The eulogy proved very popular after its original publication and was reprinted twelve times, as well as being reproduced in a number of periodicals up the late 1760s, with a revised version printed and published in 1768.⁵⁴¹ Hence, the subject of the poem *Spring* would have likely been familiar to fan buyers. Wilson's use of text from Gray's poem, combined with invented text, serves to reinforce the message of the middle roundel, as well as helping to strengthen the message that this course of action can help lead to a contented old age. So, Wilson's innovative use of text and image helps lend *The Good Swain* distinction from other print formats.

⁵⁴¹ Dustin Griffin, *Patriotism and Poetry in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge, 2002, 167.

Moreover, it can be contended that Wilson develops the educational and amusing nature of his fan leaves through the use of text in the same characteristic way as he did with the creation of the stipple-engraved print illustration *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* (Fig. 46) in 1796.⁵⁴² Wilson intentionally uses a specific name, ‘Timmy’, for his character in this print illustration, to help a viewer identify with the boy’s youthful escapades. Wilson includes first-person speech alongside more descriptive text to enliven the tale. He splits one of the stanzas in two, in the first stanza reiterating what the mother of the child said to him as words of wisdom, while the other part addresses the child, so the ‘pointed speeches’ included on the print illustration would have augmented its moralising message.⁵⁴³ Wilson also presents this fictional tale as a ‘progress’, that enables the viewer to enjoy undertaking the journey with the character pictured through to its end so he draws out empathy, not just satire. Thereby, this compositional strategy causes a viewer to care more about the character’s fate and by extension, their own.

One final point in relation to Wilson’s innovative use of text and image is that his fan print designs contain curious and original characteristic inter-referential pictorial motifs, such as that detailed below, that could be understood as working to interweave narratives across a number of his fan leaves. This is of significance partly because Wilson seems to be garnering marketing strategies first employed by single-sheet engravers and then developing them into characteristic visual motifs that help to associate himself with his mobile creations. *Good-for-Nothing*, for instance, features a

⁵⁴² *The Progress of Infantine Knowledge* print illustration, hereafter referred to as ‘Progress’. V&A Museum Number: RENIER.421.

⁵⁴³ Thomas Fuller, *GNOMOLOGOIA: ADAGES AND PROVERBS; Wise SENTENCES AND Witty SAYINGS, ANICENT and MODERN, FOREIGN and BRITISH*, London, 1732, 8.

cupid flying out the window in the last roundel image as love exits the story. Exactly the same pictorial motif appears on *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor's* central image (Fig. 4), and on all versions of *A Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux* (Fig. 1, Fig. 136 and Fig. 137), drawing associations between the fugitive state of love featured on these fan print narratives.⁵⁴⁴ The novelty of the small size of his inter-referential pictorial motifs, like his use of small text, aids the didactic message of his fans. Wilson's textual additions to a repeated use of certain motifs also indicates a strong regard for the fan format as a carrier of novel types of conduct instruction.

The Language of Fans

From the 1730s up until the 1790s there emerged a distinct category of fan adverts placed in newspapers that confirms fan makers' emphasis for the fans they made to fulfil unusual functions. These variant designs, known as 'speaking' or 'conversation' fans, could signify an owner as being in the 'height of the Mode', as well as conveniently express 'gentility', opening up the possibility of new types of conduct and threats to normative conduct.⁵⁴⁵ In this section I focus upon the eighteenth-century engraved narrative fan beyond an object of simple flirtation and visual focus to consider it as part of a broader narrative of conduct. 'Speaking Fans' were an early form of conversation fan, conveying messages by way of a complicated system that

⁵⁴⁴ *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* fan leaf (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511) and *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* (British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512), hereafter referred to as *A Selection of Beau's* and *The Ladies Bill of Fare* respectively.

⁵⁴⁵ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 84.

corresponded to different motions of the fan with different letters of the alphabet.⁵⁴⁶

Speaking fans began to affect an owner's movement due to their extensive use, and thus a coded fan 'sign language' of sorts, in which thoughts are expressed by placing the mounted fan in different positions across the body, developed between 1711 and 1740.⁵⁴⁷ Although, broad scholarship on fanology concurs that this was a 'cumbersome system' of communication and its primary novelty likely lay in the fact that it focused the gaze on the fan and its holder.⁵⁴⁸

Early eighteenth-century adverts first proclaimed the arrival of the 'speaking fan'. George Bickham's 'Speaking Fans geentel and cheap' went on sale in London in April 1732, while, a month later, the fan maker Ricard Hylton advertised not one but a 'Variety' of 'Speaking Fans'.⁵⁴⁹ Hylton emphasises variety in design as a key selling point, as he declares his speaking fans to be 'Entirely new and Modish'.⁵⁵⁰ A plethora of poems and magazines commented upon this development in the function of the hand-held fan. The poet Sarah Dixon includes an epigram, *On THE New Fashion'd FANS with Motto's*, in her collection of *Poems on Several Occasions*, published in 1732.⁵⁵¹ She muses upon the novel functional nature of these fans and their specific function:

A speaking FAN! A very pretty Thought;
The Toy is sure to fill Perfection bright:
May the Projector's Genius ever shine!
The Fair One now, need never be alone:/ [...].
New schemes of Dress, Intrigue, and Play,

⁵⁴⁶ Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 12.

⁵⁴⁷ Anna G Bennett and Ruth Berson, *Fans in Fashion*, exhibition catalogue, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, 1981, 10.

⁵⁴⁸ Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 13.

⁵⁴⁹ Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802*, 84.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁵⁵¹ Sarah Dixon, *Poems on Several Occasions*, Canterbury, 1740, 91.

Want new Expressions every Day:/ [...].⁵⁵²
Sentiments voiced in this, albeit whimsical, verse, points out the association which was established between the hand-held fan and a toy by this period. That Dixon proclaims the fan to be a 'Projector's Genius' points towards its attraction for women as a novel form of spectacle.⁵⁵³ Furthermore, the poem highlights how movements of the fan could, almost lyrically, make manifest expressions of intrigue and theatre.

From the 1740s, fan movements became a more codified way to convey messages and these different fluttering actions ultimately formed a fan language. As stated on the surface of the one version of the *Fanology or Speaking Fan*, produced in 1797 after Charles Bandini (Fig. 138), the letters of the alphabet were divided into five hand positions (apart from the letter J being omitted). The motions (of this fan) were translated into letters of the alphabet. Each of the positions has roundel illustrations indicating how to achieve it.⁵⁵⁴ So for example, as Valerie Steele explains, in this guide 'Signal 1' entailed 'hold[ing] fan in left hand and touch[ing] the right arm referred to letters A-E of the alphabet'.⁵⁵⁵ 'Signal 2' required the owner to take the fan in their right hand and to touch their left arm if they wanted to communicate any of the letters F-K.⁵⁵⁶ 'Signal 3', by contrast, needed the owner to place the fan against the heart to express the letters L-P, while 'Signal 4' asked the owner to raise the fan to their mouth to signal letters Q-U.⁵⁵⁷ Finally, 'Signal 5' required the owner to raise the fan to their forehead to

⁵⁵² Dixon, *Poems on Several Occasions*, 91.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵⁵⁴ Angela Rosenthal, 'Unfolding Gender: Women and the "Secret" Sign Language of Fans in Hogarth's Work', Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (eds), *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, London, 2001, 131.

⁵⁵⁵ Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 13.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

visually express letters V-Z.⁵⁵⁸ The owner then to signal any letter by using a two-letter combination of gestures, the first indicating the group of letters and second the position of the letter in the group.⁵⁵⁹

Details on the surface of *Fanology or Speaking Fan* provides five accompanying roundel images for each 'Signal'. For example, Signal 5's roundel image illustrates a woman tapping her forehead with her closed fan to communicate one of the letters V-Z (Fig. 139). On its reverse are some 'Familiar Questions with their respective answers' for an owner to practise at home, such as 'do you love me?'. So, some men may also have practised movements corresponding to signals, and as Steele comments, there were a few types of conversation fan which were designed to be used by a courting couple, with thirty questions on the left-hand side of the fan and thirty possible answers in the right.⁵⁶⁰ Therefore, it can reasonably be suggested a small proportion of men learnt this too, although it was a language of which women were likely the controllers. Though, as Bandini developed the questions on the version of the fanology fan published alternately by the Master Fan Maker John Cock and Robert Clarke in 1797, this raises the issue of the extent to which female agency was enabled by Bandini's printed conversation fan design.⁵⁶¹ Women had a measure of freedom over when they could deploy fan language, as well as the overt or covert nature of their gestures in so doing, but both the questions and answers they asked and gave were largely restricted to that first created by Bandini. The percentage of women who used this type of novelty fan as

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁵⁹ Susan Stabile, *Memory's Daughter's: The Material Culture of Collecting in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 2004, 157.

⁵⁶⁰ Stabile, *Memory's Daughter's: The Material Culture of Collecting in the Eighteenth Century*, 157.

⁵⁶¹ Stabile, *Memory's Daughter's: The Material Culture of Collecting in the Eighteenth Century*, 157.

intended remains unclear and it can be suggested that the clever marketing ploys for these types of fans in themselves created much of the fascination that surrounded speaking fans. Nevertheless, the responsiveness of the mounted fan leaf to the hand's inflection, no matter how slight, could allow for a lady's intentions to at least be noticed, and as Susan Stabile notes, fan language could be 'quickly memorised' if desired.⁵⁶² In this way, a user could manipulate the 'Speaking Fan' in places such as London's pleasure gardens or theatres to draw attention from an onlooker using the gestural movements instructed on the fan's surface.

By 1797, the speaking fan, as a type, was mainly published alternately just by Cock and Clarke, who specialised in producing variations of the Speaking or Conversation Fan. Within an advert taken out in April 1797 in the *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, sporting the introductory address 'TO THE LADIES, CLARK'S FANOLOGY, or CONVERSATION FAN', Clarke advertises such fans are available to buy from his fan shop on the Strand. In this advert, Clarke explains 'with these fans, ladies may converse at a considerable distance, without speaking', noting that they 'will be found particularly useful at the Opera, Raleigh, Play Houses, and at all public and private Assemblies. Likewise very entertaining in small parties'.⁵⁶³ So, it can be argued that this category of fan could also be utilised with other female friends and acquaintances at the theatre, opera, as well as in domestic quarters. Additionally, it could make visible correct gestural movements in line with those instructions directed on the surface of the fan to practice correct and politely sociable modes of conduct and possibly less correct

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 157.

⁵⁶³ Anonymous, Classified Adverts, 'THE TELEGRAPH; or, NEW CONVERSATION FAN', *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, Monday, June 1798; Issue 19949, London, n.p.

ones too. Indeed, bold questions such as ‘do you love me?’, included on *Fanology or Speaking Fan*’s surface, appear to challenge directly the advice advocated in conduct literature like John Gregory’s *A Father’s Legacy to His Daughter*, published in 1761, which recommends caution, reserve and modesty during courtship.⁵⁶⁴ As Stabile comments, ‘approximating the intimacy of handwritten letters, fans spoke to the heart’s desire’.⁵⁶⁵ Thus, *Fanology or Speaking Fan* could enable disruptive forms of sociable interaction and misconduct which intentionally offer a different kind of printed female instruction. This line of reasoning is key to thinking about the multivalent ways that fans could be interpreted and operate depending on the gender of the viewer or handler.

An anonymous advert placed in the *Oracle and Public Advertiser* in June 1798 emphasises the uniqueness and originality of this form of fans. It proclaims the ‘superiority’ of another variant of the ‘Speaking Fan’, *The Ladies Telegraph* (Fig. 140) – a later design based on the principles of the ‘Conversation Fan’, aimed specifically at women. This was achieved by the addition of moving tabs denoting letters, words and sentences on the fan.⁵⁶⁶ This advert, placed to attract customers to Stunts’ ‘Old Established Fan Warehouse’ on the Strand, claims that the *Telegraph Fan*’s ‘superior’ design ‘induces the proprietor to recommend it to the Nobility, & c. for its Novelty and Amusement’.⁵⁶⁷ This sophisticated form of ‘Conversation Fan’ displayed twenty-six coloured flaps or tabs, each of which corresponded to the letters of the alphabet. That its ‘superior’ design was directed at a wealthy clientele can be evidenced by its production

⁵⁶⁴ John Gregory, *A Father’s Legacy to His Daughters*, London, 1778, 14.

⁵⁶⁵ Stabile, *Memory’s Daughter’s: The Material Culture of Collecting in the Eighteenth Century*, 157.

⁵⁶⁶ Robert Clarke, Classified Adverts, ‘TO THE LADIES. CLARKE’S FANOLOGY, or CONVERSATION FAN’, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, Saturday, 15 April 1797; Issue 7829, London, n.p.

⁵⁶⁷ Clarke, ‘TO THE LADIES. CLARKE’S FANOLOGY, or CONVERSATION FAN’, n.p.

on bone sticks and elegantly painted decorative floral guard sticks. There was also a twenty-seventh flap to signify a full stop.⁵⁶⁸ The owner would simply point to each letter to make a word, making it a simpler method of communication than the ‘Speaking Fan’ that relied on the fan holder and receiver understanding a related bodily language of fans. This design facilitated a form of communication that was possibly less flirtatious in nature as it did not need emphasised gestural movements of the hand in relation to the body (although it did require a recipient to be physically closer to the fan holder), yet one no less novel in nature. Thus, it becomes clear that this original form of fan communication could visually aid novel subtle and overt gestural and visual actions, causing a greater sensory impact upon both the fan user and spectator, who becomes an active participant in this bodily form of language.⁵⁶⁹

Spaces of Spectatorship

The widespread nature with which the concept of novelty took hold in the visual arts transferred into a number of different spheres, including that of readership and material and social pleasures, consumerism and spectacle. This section analyses spaces of novel spectatorship and entertainment, with a focus on Englishness, and behaving in public spaces, through a study of Wilson’s response to contemporaneous interest in these issues in his fan *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages* (Fig. 19). Public spaces like Vauxhall Gardens, created as a pleasure garden on the south bank of the River Thames, along with fashionable gardens opened at sites such as Chelsea and Ranelagh, were part of a

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, n.p.

⁵⁶⁹ Dixon, *Poems on Several Occasions*, 91.

broader impulse towards public novelty and pleasure.⁵⁷⁰ Thomas Rowlandson's satirical *Vauxhall Gardens* (Fig. 141), produced in 1784 in watercolour, pen and ink, perfectly illustrates the way in which such spaces offered an opportunity for satire as they created a kind of stage and became part of, as Brewer explains, 'an established itinerary of cultural pleasures'.⁵⁷¹ These arenas allowed men and women to promenade up and down their walk ways and attend events within their grounds, watching everyone around them, while, at the same time, allowing others to scrutinise their own deportment, speech and dress. Vauxhall Gardens also offered free music. Its orchestra had an organ built in the middle of the Garden's open space, with the players moving to the Garden's Great Room or rotunda when the weather was bad.⁵⁷² *Vauxhall Gardens* illustrates both the way in which novel spectacle of public entertainment opened up possibilities for new types of conduct to be enacted within them, as well as giving people a heightened self-awareness of themselves and others.⁵⁷³ People watch one another from all vantage points within this image, while a lady to the lower bottom left-hand side holds an open fan in front of her, perhaps to help shield her and negotiate her way through this crowded promenade or draw attention to herself.

Alongside spaces of spectacle like *Vauxhall Gardens*, some gallery spaces began to familiarise spectators with the visual translation of literary stories.⁵⁷⁴ This allowed well-versed readers of books to become visually literate by way of public engagement with

⁵⁷⁰ Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, 66. On the history of Vauxhall Gardens in the period, see David E. Coke, *Vauxhall Gardens: A History* (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art), New Haven, 2011.

⁵⁷¹ Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, 67.

⁵⁷² White, *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*, 322.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵⁷⁴ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 5.

different types of innovative forms of viewing painted and print imagery. As Calè puts it, the conflation of the ‘intersections of literature and art in what was a new development in the eighteenth-century public sphere’ came together most visibly in this ‘culture of exhibitions’, effectively ‘turning readers into spectators’, a ‘joint task of both language and pictures’.⁵⁷⁵ In many ways, the innovative culture of picture galleries facilitated the ‘redefinition of visual and verbal interactions, and ways of reading and viewing’, particularly in relation to the opening of the Milton Gallery in 1799, the impetus behind which was to display publicly a cycle of paintings devoted to Milton.⁵⁷⁶ Calè argues that for many eighteenth-century artists, such as Henry Fuseli, ‘reading and viewing were locked in a dialogue [...] [which] diagnosed the spectators’ need for an aesthetic education and indicated that such a transfer of skill could come from the literary domain’.⁵⁷⁷ This is an important remark to note as it makes clear the fact that there was a desire for imagery in the eighteenth century to carry didactic messages, and that there was a transmission of literary ideas into visual imagery. In this thesis, I argue that this also existed between eighteenth-century conduct-related sources and engraved fans.

Literary Art Galleries and the Literary Fan

I will now focus specifically on the relationship between the literary gallery and the narrative fan with specific reference to the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery and Wilson’s *Shakespeare’s Seven Ages*. The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery was a literary picture gallery that exhibited thirty-four paintings Boydell had commissioned from

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

contemporary English painters. This section examines Boydell's conception of the Shakespeare Gallery as a pictorial and spatial institution in which to revive the flagging fortune of British history painting.⁵⁷⁸ As Dias explains, there was a 'kind of patriotic self-definition' at work in the Shakespeare Gallery', itself utilising the name and pictorial image of Shakespeare, as it attempted to promote English history painting.⁵⁷⁹ Literary galleries not only marketed themselves as 'a new, narrative form of high art', but disseminated examples of the 'national literature in the commercial form of visual attraction'.⁵⁸⁰ Boydell himself, as a successful print shop owner and maker, was 'in a unique position to understand the mechanisms of patriotism'.⁵⁸¹ Moreover, Boydell's business, and indeed the Shakespeare Gallery, as commercial ventures, depended upon Boydell's ability to rally an audience and body of consumers 'who were attuned to patriotic behaviour, both as it was evidenced in the subjects of the prints he sold and through the acts of viewing, purchasing and ultimately patronizing British art'.⁵⁸² Therefore, Boydell's Gallery offered the lure of novel visual spectacle, an opportunity to display one's Englishness in public, as well as absorb information about, and take pride in, native artistic genius.

A study of Francis Wheatley's *View of the Interior of the Shakespeare Gallery* (Fig. 142), a watercolour completed in 1790 and illustrating a visit by the Prince of Wales to the gallery, demonstrates the realisation of Boydell's ambitions for his project.

⁵⁷⁸ Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, New Haven, 2013, 7.

⁵⁷⁹ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 104.

⁵⁸⁰ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 6.

⁵⁸¹ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 15.

⁵⁸² Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 14.

Wheatley's image shows that paintings of scenes from Shakespeare's plays were hung close together to allow for easy transfer of vision and transit from one painting to another. This picture additionally reveals the grand size of the paintings commissioned for the gallery's interior space and the desire on behalf of Boydell to inspire a resulting admiration in the spectator upon viewing such images. Engravings produced after these large paintings, bound in atlas-portfolios, and quarto-sized prints after the smaller paintings for sale, assured the dissemination of the literary paintings in print form.⁵⁸³ As Dias confirms, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery 'sought to make the viewing of history painting not a hermetically-sealed, temporally-limited experience [...] but as high art as an everyday aspect of the life of a metropolitan public'.⁵⁸⁴ These galleries were commercial outlets for the sale of such printed formats as illustrated books and prints 'offering readers a visual entertainment for advertising and marketing purposes'.⁵⁸⁵ Thus, the material conditions of galleries like these 'suggest the mutual influence of reading practices and ways of seeing', besides allowing the spectator to help 'others feel when [they] place themselves in their situation', facilitating the regulation of one's own conduct.⁵⁸⁶

Likewise, as Calè argues, the architectural structure of these literary galleries guided the spectator to experience the novelty of walking 'along the linear sequence of catalogue entries, thus alternating viewing and reading'.⁵⁸⁷ This thesis argues that fans could operate in a similar way – their user could read numbered images and their

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁸⁴ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 7.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁸⁶ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 6.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

corresponding text as part of a narrative series displayed on a fan leaf. Although there was no label text accompanying each displayed picture, each year, Boydell printed and sold a guide to his exhibition of paintings. This offered viewers information about the scenes depicted, the title, act and scene of Shakespeare's related play, characters, and an excerpt from the scene.⁵⁸⁸ Spectators could thus, with the aid of the guide, view pictures in these literary galleries in a way which linked each picture to another as part of a meaningful sequence, giving coherence to the action within each picture and aiding the overall plot analogy. By extension, it can be contended that developments in fan design likewise responded to the public's desire to both own and view original forms of image making.

The addition of literary galleries and artistic societies to the consumer spaces of print and fan shops that populated Pall Mall, as my study extends scholarly analysis of, all helped to increase civic access to a variety of novel forms of image viewing.⁵⁸⁹ These modes of looking accustomed a spectator to link the narrative of a single picture to that of a larger series of prints carrying an extended storyline with a beginning, middle and end. As will be expanded upon later in this chapter, viewing such imagery within this environment enabled a spectator to make connections between the pictures displayed as they walked to look at one image, having just observed a separate one and then combining these different accounts in their mind. Thus, literary galleries helped spectators to 'read' a tale as imagined in pictorial form, set across multiple images, a few of which could be viewed simultaneously when standing in the gallery. Female visitors to these spaces could then, if they owned one of Wilson's narrative fans carrying

⁵⁸⁸ Humphry Repton, *The Bee; or, a Companion to the Shakespeare Gallery: Containing a Catalogue Raisonné of All the Pictures; with Comments, Illustrations, and Remarks*, London, [1789?].

⁵⁸⁹ Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 6.

a literary theme, both respond to the literary narrative and possibly more effectively engage with its own instructional message of conduct, as set across the fan leaf surface. Hallett's argument that the annual Royal Academy of Arts exhibition can be read, together, as displaying 'a fantasy of Britishness' could equally be applied to the displays staged at Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery.⁵⁹⁰

Within such spaces as the Shakespeare Gallery a 'dynamism of form' could animate a subject's movements beyond the limit of the picture frame and into the next painting in the mind of the spectator.⁵⁹¹ This activity could help envelop the visitor in terms of his or her reaction to seeing the series of paintings on display, in addition to heightening awareness and consciousness of others in the gallery.⁵⁹² As an examination of *View of the Interior of the Shakespeare Gallery* reveals, most of the people occupying this space are either conversing or looking across at one another. This could allow them to cultivate an outward identity as an informed player in literary debates surrounding Shakespeare's plays, and to engage in polite conversation with one another.⁵⁹³ Equally, a spectator's sense of perception could aid their transformation of words into illustrations or ideas, as visual images become part of the text 'whether resulting from the reader's mental processing or materialised into illustration'.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹⁰ Mark Hallett, 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the British Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37:4, Summer 2004, 597.

⁵⁹¹ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 10.

⁵⁹² Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 10.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 108.

This process is similar to that by which a fan owner's sense of observation and direction of vision could aid a mental translation of word into imagery. So too, I propose that the mental involvement required to reprocess literary narratives into a series of pictorial images which are physically separated from each other, provided a parallel to those experiences offered to a fan owner. Developing Calè's analysis of how spectators read literary pictures in an exhibition space, applied to fans I suggest that viewers of Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* (Fig. 19) would also be expected to assemble a montage of 'disjoined fragments into a whole' and draw comparisons between the space outside the confines of the fan leaf and that of the narrative on its surface.⁵⁹⁵ Similarly, a woman carrying *A Selection of Beau's* (Fig. 4) could try to identify what category of beau displayed on her fan – some sporting behavioural flaws and others admirable character traits – men around her fitted into, and subsequently decide to either avoid or encourage interaction with them.

Shakespeare's, Seven Ages responded to developments in public spectacles in the 1790s. Firstly, its subject matter imagines the soliloquy given in Act Two, Scene Seven in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, in which the melancholy character of Jacques describes the cyclical life of man in seven ages; infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier, justice, Pantalone and advanced old age.⁵⁹⁶ From the far-left roundel 'The infant' (Fig. 143), depicts a young woman cuddling her son and sitting on a chair in side profile. Next to this is placed 'The whining schoolboy' (Fig. 144), imagining a young boy making his way to school, while the third image 'The lover' (Fig. 145) illustrates a young man

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁹⁶ Edward Tomarken (ed.), *As You Like It: Critical Essays*, London, 2014, 16.

holding a fashionable hat as he approaches the prime of life. The subsequent narrative to this, 'A soldier' (Fig. 146), shows a man at the zenith of his life, both mentally and physically, clad in armour and holding a sword in his left hand. In contrast, the fifth scene 'the justice' (Fig. 147), records a man with a round belly who sits in a chair, dressed in costume, indicating his wise nature and professional status. 'The sixth age' (Fig. 148), depicts a wizened man, bent over and carrying a sack over his shoulder, aptly reflecting the sixth stage of a man's life perceived to be as foolish and old. The 'last scene of all' (Fig. 149), features a haggard old man sitting in a chair while a child spoon feeds him from a bowl, signifying man's return to a second childishness before death. Thus, the overall narrative carries a meditation on the way life evolves, with each roundel scene able to be studied individually or as a whole.

It must be noted that *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* was produced at the height of the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery's fame and taps into the desire on behalf of the public to purchase an unusual Shakespearian memento.⁵⁹⁷ At this time Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* became a favourite at Drury Lane's Theatre Royal (only a ten minute-walk from Wilson's fan shop), appearing there more often from 1776 to 1817 than any other Shakespearean drama, and understood, in this period, as a drama about the civic significance of marriage.⁵⁹⁸ Thus, the moral narrative of *As You Like It* provides a suitable tale for Wilson to engage with on the fan leaf format. Importantly, a late eighteenth-century audience went to the theatre to learn how to behave too, as well as be entertained, and were influenced by what they saw on stage in terms of dress, gestures

⁵⁹⁷ Malcolm Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, London, 2010, 237.

⁵⁹⁸ Tomarken (ed.), *As You Like It: Critical Essays*, 16.

and comportment, as reflected in the function of Wilson's fans.⁵⁹⁹ An owner who purchased a copy of Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* was offered an innovative way to learn about this type of ideal English masculine conduct after watching a production of *As You Like It* on the stage. Moreover, *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* makes Shakespeare's plays relevant to daily life in the late eighteenth century.

Shakespeare's, Seven Ages finds explicit narrative cross-over with several contemporaneous engravings and painted narrative illustrations of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, such as *Shakespeare's Beautiful Idea on the Seven Ages of Man* (Fig. 150), a stipple-engraving designed and published by Joseph Gear in 1792. It also finds close parallels with other engraved fans, such as the anonymously hand-coloured and etched *Shakespeare's Seven Ages* (Fig. 151) and the stipple and hand-coloured *Shakespeare's Seven Ages (untitled)* (Fig. 152), both dating to between 1770 and 1800. While Wilson's work shares the same compositional design as both these engraved fan designs, it duplicates most closely the features and pictorial motifs included in *Shakespeare's Beautiful Idea*. This point suggests that Wilson followed the publication of new editions of single-sheet prints which visually transposed topics that he knew would sell well and thus tried to garner the interest of the same audiences with the production of designs like *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, drawing on a variety of printed formats.

Secondly, Wilson's creation of *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* would have added to the pictorial canonisation of the Bard in the late eighteenth century, demonstrating the value

⁵⁹⁹ On conduct and behaviour in the eighteenth-century theatre, as well as printed imagery relating to actors, see Shearer West, *The Image of the Actor: Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble*, London, 2011.

of Shakespeare as a profitable visual source of inspiration for artists and fan makers.⁶⁰⁰ The painter Robert Smirke painted the ‘Seven Ages of Man’ series for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery two years after Wilson’s *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages* was published (between 1798 and 1801) and includes such stages in life as *The Soldier* (Fig. 153). After which, prints based on these paintings were completed by engravers including John Ogborne and encompassed in the Gallery’s folio edition of Shakespeare’s work.⁶⁰¹ Accordingly, the carrying of *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages* would have disseminated high literature into an accessible format, literally into the streets of London. So Wilson’s visual translation of one of the Bard’s most famous soliloquies indicates that he too was ‘be[coming] a sharer in all the advantages of his [the Bard’s] established notoriety’.⁶⁰² An owner may have been able to interweave the illustrated narrative text of a fan with text and imagery they already owned relating to this Shakespearian play, tailoring it to their individual tastes or placing the fan print in a book in an anthology of sorts if so wanted.

In the case of viewing each roundel image on *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages*, a handler could imagine the activities and progression in age occurring between successive scenarios. Imagery displaced across the fan leaf surface could not only be read by the eye, but by moving the fan’s surface with one’s hand the imagery could be read at a slow or fast pace, involving the handler in the mechanics of the viewing process itself and giving them control over the experience and unfolding narrative. Additionally, they could be encouraged to create imagined images of the progress of a man’s life between

⁶⁰⁰ Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England, An Historical Oversight*, 237.

⁶⁰¹ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 199.

⁶⁰² Calè, *Fuseli’s Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, 30.

those engraved roundel scenes by looking at its narratives in sequence. As has already been examined, this relates to other fans by Wilson. An owner of both *The Good Swain* (Fig. 2) and its counterpart *Good-for-Nothing* (Fig. 3), could take novel enjoyment in moving their glances between the two separate sets of narrative series, keeping an image in mind of one set of imageries while they saw the second set. Together they utilise the visual strategy of ‘after-image’ and the ‘persistence of vision’, evoked in exhibition spaces like Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery.⁶⁰³ The novel process of the mind’s eye creating ‘an illusion when an object is seen in successive points at small intervals that it gives the impression of uninterrupted movement’ is something that visitors to literary art galleries would have experienced.⁶⁰⁴ These fan print designs do not encourage a model of a detached spectator, rather they encourage novel mental and visual engagement. Hence, it could be argued that Wilson’s fans constituted another important aesthetic means by which imagery translating popular literary themes could be viewed and experienced in public or private, when in transit or at rest. Consequently, fans such as *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages* possibly provided an owner with a way of familiarising themselves with modern developments in modes of looking and reading imagery.

It can be concluded that Wilson’s fans effectively engaged with contemporary eighteenth-century interest in novel exhibition spaces, such as the Boydell’s Gallery. *Shakespeare’s, Seven Ages*, for example, would have allowed an opportunity to display an owner’s Englishness for those around them to see. Therefore, Wilson successfully

⁶⁰³ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 121. As Dias explains, ‘after-image’ is an image’s persistence on the retina beyond in its time of impression to be superimposed on the following visual impression and blended with it.

⁶⁰⁴ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 121.

takes the fan and conduct into the public sphere and provides a novel form of dissemination on which textual and visual sources relating to behaviours were experienced.

The Reader-Spectator

The final section of this chapter extends examination of the association between literary fans and Shakespeare to include contemporary eighteenth-century literature and focuses attention on the body of the fan holder and receptive spectators. It brings together different strands so far examined, including interest in all things visual, public areas of entertainment and means of negotiating these spaces, as well as how fans facilitated different forms of communication within them. It firstly considers how the movement and mode of transit of a fan in the hands of an owner, as opposed to static prints, would have affected the reading of the subject matter and textual additions on a fan leaf. It then examines how three specific narrative fan leaf examples may have been interpreted by spectators when carried in public and how these fans may have helped an owner negotiate different areas of entertainment and novel visual spectacle.

The physicality of the mounted fan print marks a main point of differentiation between the fan and single-sheet print formats. By looking at both fan prints and fans, I argue the fan leaf format would have afforded engravers different opportunity for the development of artistic expression. I contend it would have allowed for the design of alternative forms of conduct instruction on the fan print format. New sites in which reading could take place arose as the mobility of mounted fans allowed them to take on

new meanings and functions dependent upon the environment in which they were viewed. By studying Wilson's fan print designs in detail, it can be proposed that fan leaves had separate uses to static prints, and, as such, this could account for some differences in design between these two print formats. As well, the fact that fans centred around a narrower consumer base may be responsible for their compositional variances in contrast to those customers buying single-sheet prints.

As Robert Darnton argues, "the where" of reading is more important than one thinks, explaining 'by placing a reader in his setting, you can provide hints about the nature of his experience'.⁶⁰⁵ Darnton's discussions of book readers and their changing experiences of reading in the eighteenth century is a useful way of considering the mutability of contexts in which a fan can be read. His enquiry focuses on books read in a domestic setting, arguing that the environment in which they read can provide valuable information about the nature of reading in the late eighteenth century. Darnton's line of reasoning can be extended to consider mounted fans carrying a storyline. Fan makers would have been aware of the opportunities that the carrying of a fan print into different social situations afforded the owners, thus giving the fan leaf narrative immediate relevance and turning the fan into a powerful object of instruction and amusement. Consequently, they could thus create fan print designs, which invited, and sometimes relied upon, interplay between the fan owner's experience of their surroundings and the plot unfolding on the fan's surface, such as Wilson's *The Quiz Club*.

⁶⁰⁵ Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*, New York and London, 1990, 167.

Reading matter in the latter half of the eighteenth century contained narrative content and pictorial images printed and hand-written on a variety of material, including that of ‘books, letters papers, notebooks [...] inventories [and] broadsides’.⁶⁰⁶ Darnton draws attention to the fact that, by the 1790s, patterns of reading changed as people were ‘swamped with new kinds of books – novels, newspapers, fresh and sunny varieties of children’s literature – and they read through them ravenously, discarding one thing as soon as they could find another’.⁶⁰⁷ It appears that fan makers recognised this shift and adapted composition, narrative choice and textual addition in their own fan print designs accordingly. As evidenced by Wilson’s production of *The Good Swain* and *Good-for-Nothing*, fan makers also picked up on serialisation strategies originally used by creators of single-sheet prints to cater for the public’s desire to view and read stories. In this way, the mounted narrative fan leaf can be understood as participating in far wider-reaching literary, spectatorship and sensory experiences, that characterised late eighteenth-century London.

While late eighteenth-century engraved fans functioned differently to single-sheet prints, the act of ‘reading’ a fan and print was not dissimilar. A fan leaf displaying such topical narrative subject matter would have likely involved a group of female viewers discussing the work together.⁶⁰⁸ Like drawings and prints, fans required ‘less spectacular display than oils’, and so may also have been displayed in portfolios and

⁶⁰⁶ Heidi Brayman Heckel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England, Print, Gender, and Literacy*, Oregon, 2009, 19.

⁶⁰⁷ Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*, 167.

⁶⁰⁸ Porter explains the widening of female domestic sphere to incorporate a number of different types of sociable communal activities in *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 29.

albums and mounted on album pages.⁶⁰⁹ This method of exhibition would have allowed an assemblage of people to study each print design individually. Fan prints might have been kept in cabinets or in shallow drawers, if they were of higher value. Just as the observation of picturesque landscape drawings was associated with a convex mirror called a ‘Claude glass’, used by viewers to compress the reflected landscape view, it is possible that fan prints may have sometimes been looked at with the aid of a magnifying glass or reading glass.⁶¹⁰

However, as opposed to static forms of print design, it can be suggested that fan print designs encouraged forms of physical interaction and spectacle in London’s public arena of social spaces. A case in point can be made through the *Pamela Fan*, based upon Samuel Richardson’s epistolary novel *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, published in 1740.⁶¹¹ *Pamela* tells the story of a maid servant called Pamela Andrews, whose master ‘Mr. B’, makes unwanted advances towards her. After Mr. B attempts unsuccessfully to seduce Pamela, he eventually proposes an equitable marriage. As Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor have made the argument in relation to the *Pamela Fan*, ‘in the fans, *Pamela* becomes a means to make a statement’ to a wider audience.⁶¹² Therefore, fan print designs depicting narratives of behaviours could become compelling visual bearers of conduct instruction. So too, the mobility of fan leaves would have necessitated multiple points of attention on their surface. The interpretation of a mounted fan leaf narrative

⁶⁰⁹ Linda Walsh, *A Guide to Eighteenth-Century Art*, London, 2016, 158. Antony Griffiths gives a rare overview of the various kinds of storage single-sheet prints were kept in during this period in *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, London, 2016, 422–426.

⁶¹⁰ Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art*, Connecticut, 2000, 101.

⁶¹¹ Unfortunately, no examples of the *Pamela Fan* are known to have survived to the present day.

⁶¹² Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor, ‘*Pamela*’ in *the Marketplace Literary Controversy and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge, 2006, 145.

would have also been affected by its proximity to an owner's face, as the hand-held fan collapses the distance between the viewing subject and object, aiding a personal intimacy to be created. The reading of a fan leaf might thus be best understood, as proposed by Darnton in relation to reading material in the eighteenth century, as a complex dialectic between an object and bodily postures, as the fan could be pulled close or held away from the face, in addition to either being held or placed on a surface when viewed.⁶¹³

As all mounted fans were portable objects, the visibility of ownership is an important issue for consideration here too.⁶¹⁴ Many eighteenth-century narrative fans provided a visible source of information about their owners, their 'primary direction [...] outward, reflecting on the owner for the benefit of observers'.⁶¹⁵ As Stephanie Fysh contends, 'the holder of a fan is implicit in its subject [...] [the fan is] a signifying object that carries meaning partly enabled and created by material form as well as by its content'.⁶¹⁶ The issue of the mounted fan as a visual spectacle pertains to all examples of fans compared with associated static prints. After all, the fan was made to be seen by others, unlike a book.⁶¹⁷ The mounted fan therefore reflects to varying degrees, 'the goals and values of those who carried them'.⁶¹⁸ Fysh terms the carrying of the *Pamela Fan* as signifying 'a [virtuous] temperament in motion'.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹³ Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*, 167.

⁶¹⁴ Stephanie Fysh, *Works of Samuel Richardson*, Delaware, 1998, 76.

⁶¹⁵ Fysh, *Works of Samuel Richardson*, 77.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

The anonymous author of the advert marketing the *Pamela Fan* on 28 April 1740, in the *Daily Advertiser*, reinforces the fan's potential to signal the owner's morality as it addresses the reader thus:

For the Entertainment of the Ladies, more especially those who have the book,
Pamela, a new Fan, representing the principles adventures of her Life, in
Servitude; Love, and Marriage.
Virtues Reward you in this fan may view,
To Honours Tie,
Pamela [...]
In ev'ry amiable scene of Life
Beneficent, fond Parent, Loving Wife.⁶²⁰

This fan's verse alerts an owner to the fact that its narrative tells the story of Pamela's honourable conduct as a servant, which results in her becoming a wife in happy union with her husband. For this reason, any lady carrying a *Pamela Fan* would be making according to Fysh 'a visual display of their own virtue'.⁶²¹ Moreover, the spectacle of carrying a *Pamela Fan* would have associated an owner with 'the trappings of [the genteel] class'.⁶²² As demonstrated by both the women featured in the centre of the anonymous painted fan, *A London Fan Shop* (Fig. 38), produced in 1745 (referenced in Chapter One), a mounted fan could be tilted sideways to expose some of its design to those people that surrounded the handler. Thus, ownership of a *Pamela Fan* might have referenced a woman's level of literary and learning in the same way as possession of Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* might have done. In this way, Fysh's analysis underscores Darnton's argument that during the progression of the eighteenth century, people could enjoy reading on a range of formats, including that of fans.

⁶²⁰ Anonymous, Classified Adverts, *Daily Advertiser*, 28 April 1740, London, n.p.

⁶²¹ Fysh, *Works of Samuel Richardson*, 77.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 79.

Equally, there is scope to consider Wilson's fans in such ways. Fysh analyses the *Pamela Fan* in relation to the original book and Keymer and Sabor explore it as part of the printed merchandise that accompanied the book's publication. I build on this scholarship by examining how an owner of one of Wilson's narrative fans could potentially convey something about their own conduct, as well as that of the behaviours of men they may meet. *The Good Swain* – depicting 'The Morning of Youth' (Fig. 53), illustrating a man declaring his love for a woman, 'Mid-day of Life' (Fig. 54), portraying a family sat outside a dwelling and 'Cheerful Evening of Old Age' (Fig. 55), showing an elderly couple smoking pipes outside their house – would likewise have functioned like a *Pamela Fan* in that it promoted an image of an honourable woman. Fysh's line of reasoning that 'one could "out" one's private self [...], while at the same time making that self-conform to [a] public model' of virtuosity, could well be applied to a lady holding *The Good Swain* who wished to identify herself with the course of life enacted therein.⁶²³

Similarly, *The Good Swain* might have signalled that a female owner was seeking a 'good swain' herself. As John Berger argues in relation to genre oil paintings, 'the purpose of the "genre" picture was to prove – either positively or negatively – that virtue in this world was rewarded by social and financial success [...] [and] those who could afford to buy these pictures [...] had their own virtue confirmed'.⁶²⁴ Carriers of *The Good Swain* or its counterpart therefore have been physically connected to its moral message that it was only worthy men who succeeded in their lives, while insincere men, deservedly, would end up with nothing. As Steele explains, 'another element in the

⁶²³ Fysh, *Works of Samuel Richardson*, 79.

⁶²⁴ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, London, 1972, 103.

language of the fan involved the pictures that were painted and printed on its surface'.⁶²⁵ When a fan was fully unfurled and held away from the face an infinite number of designs could 'display themselves to view'.⁶²⁶ Alternately, even when the fan was held near to the head or chest, observers nearby could sometimes view an owner's subject matter. For instance, a complainant wrote in to the *Lady's Magazine* in 1776 that she was 'ashamed to see naked cupids [...] dancing shepherds and piping fawns' in a church setting after spotting a fellow churchgoer's church fan design which she judged unacceptable in such religious surroundings.⁶²⁷

Also, as the owner who purchased a copy of Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* was offered several novel ways of communicating within, and negotiating, these public spaces, it may likely have been carried to a pleasure garden, the theatre or exhibition space. Not only did a mounted version of *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* facilitate an innovative way to learn about this type of ideal English masculine conduct, if they had acquired it before seeing a production of *As You Like It* they could have taken it to the theatre as a talking point. Publicly carrying *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* to literary exhibitions like Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery would allow an owner to view large-scale paintings like *The Soldier* (Fig. 153) – depicting the fourth age of man as narrated by Jacques in *As You Like It* – and then compare it to its corresponding fan leaf image (Fig. 146) and locate it within the sequence of the play. Thus, *Shakespeare's Seven Ages* fan could help place the displayed image very much in the context of a visualised life-cycle of an Englishman, rather than simply as a standalone image of a heroic English

⁶²⁵ Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 17.

⁶²⁶ Quoted in Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 17.

⁶²⁷ Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, 17.

soldier. Moreover, Dias remarks that a spectators' entrance into this exhibition space clutching their ticket helped to define them as 'informed and reflective' members of the public.⁶²⁸ I would argue this line of enquiry could possibly be extended to a spectator carrying *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* in such a public environ, enabling an owner to feel like a confident 'participant in the realms of art and nationhood'.⁶²⁹

Ultimately, the creation of the novel types of fan discussed in this section, and the new types of conduct and misconduct they enabled, highlights the fact that the fan was at the forefront of developments in novelty of material design in the eighteenth century. More generally, the conversation fan allowed for a type of language that uses the alphabet and links it to a bodily form of language to create a unique form of public spectacle. The particular way in which Wilson combined text and image on fan designs such as *The Folly of Man*, uniting the medley format and extremes of scale, provided another way by which visual and textual novelty was achieved on the fan leaf form. So too, analysis of Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages* reveals that the form of late eighteenth-century engraved fans sporting literary themes added to the diversity of innovative forms of visual spectacle circulating at the same period in London. Furthermore, narrative fans like Wilson's *The Good Swain* could sometimes offer a visible source of information about their owners to a wider public.

Conclusion

⁶²⁸ Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, 57.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

An analysis of advances in late eighteenth-century fan design stand as testament to the pervasive influence of the concept of novelty in many areas of late eighteenth-century life. The expansion of overseas trade, coupled with increasing industrialisation, allowed new kinds of behaviours, spectacle and material forms that fuelled the growing interest people had about the world around them and each other. Examination of these, albeit small, number of fan leaf designs demonstrate that the dissemination of such fan imagery proved pivotal in familiarising readers of well-known theatrical literary texts with their pictorial translation and provided an original form of spectatorship and readership in London. Engraved fan narratives, like *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, therefore offered an important novel route of dissemination.

Not only this, but innovations in fan design reflected public interest in new technologies. However, novel fans could also facilitate threats to normative conduct, mask one's true identity (literally in the case of mask fans) and allow new experiences of covert spectatorship of others through glass additions for well-intentioned, or indeed, ill-intentioned ends. Wilson's innovative use of text and image on some of his fans, *Good for Nothing* being a good case in point, indicate that they could possibly incite more disruptive moral codes, such as inciting an interest in experiencing courting a ne'er-do-well. Similarly, fans were central to the facilitation of unusual forms of communication within such spaces of spectatorship, as well as their negotiation. So, it can be argued that the language of fans and novelty fans in general responded to and enabled different forms of conduct commented upon in conduct literature, as outlined in Chapter Two. I contend this was done through the form of the fan itself and by way of its compositional design, thus providing a means by which a female fan owner could

gain knowledge of the conduct of others, but so too allowing an owner to create a physical disguise that could facilitate acts of misconduct.

Fan designs such as *The Folly of Man* would have delighted the eye and evoked mental stimulation, reflecting wider concerns fan makers had with creating novelty in fan design and function. The fan leaf format appears to have encouraged innovative design and expression of ideas that seem far less convincing on static print production dating to the same period. The fan leaf form had the advantage of having the ability to unite unique sensory, visual and functional elements in a single mobile instrument. In this way, the fan leaf was an important complement to the conduct instructor's traditional literary format. Having focused on the eighteenth-century context of fans in chapters one to three, with an emphasis on the work of Wilson, the final chapter in this thesis explores the significance of Wilson's late eighteenth-century fans for an audience living in the nineteenth century. It examines the role of fan collectors, notably Lady Schreiber, who was an avid collector of Wilson's fans.

CHAPTER FOUR

LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER AND FAN LEAF COLLECTING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The development of the historiography of fans is a complex and incomplete one, spanning a multiplicity of disciplines, encompassing fashion history, collecting histories and art history. In the late nineteenth century, the historiography of the fan was in its infancy. By this period the use of fans by women as functional objects had dissipated and the fan industry in London had been rendered nearly obsolete. In particular, the desire for printed fans depicting topical narratives and offering guidance on such things as the rules for card games weakened as the opportunity for women to partake in such a variety of communal sociable activities declined. Instead, attention previously given to the outward display of conduct and behaviour in public gave way an increasing want on behalf of society to establish women's sphere as one centred around domesticity.⁶³⁰ Furthermore, advancements in mass production techniques not only enabled illustrated newspapers to effectively take over the role of the printed fan as a mobile bearer and

⁶³⁰ Susan Mayor, *The Collector's Guide to Fans*, London, 1995, 62.

marker of news, but facilitated the manufacture of fans which were purely decorative in nature. As the anonymous reviewer of the Company of Fan Makers' exhibition held in 1890 at Draper's Hall, London, explains in an article written for *The Spectator* magazine, 'the dainty devices of to-day, the graceful feather-fans [...] are not "of actuality" as were those of the last two centuries'.⁶³¹ An anonymous review of the same exhibition in the *St. James' Gazette* laments that 'it has become a sad pity that the making of fans has become a very rare art in England'.⁶³² This was a state of fan making that the French bibliophile and fashion writer Octave Uzanne asserted in his book *L'Eventail (The Fan)*, published in 1884 and translated into English the same year, hoped would be corrected.⁶³³

Sentiments voiced by writers such as these also point to the fact that during the nineteenth century it was the eighteenth century which was perceived to be the greatest period of fan making. This demise of contemporary fan making, and interest in historical examples, led to increased interest in the collecting of early fans. As Uzanne wrote in the late nineteenth century, the 'passion for ancient fans meant that "they were sought everywhere, and carried off at any price"'.⁶³⁴ These remarks help highlight the renewed importance that eighteenth-century English fans held for fan makers, collectors and society at large by the 1890s and held particular significance for Lady Charlotte

⁶³¹ Anonymous, 'English Fans and English History', *The Spectator*, 31 July 1890, 11-13, 11-12.

⁶³² Anonymous, 'Exhibition of Fanmaker's Company at Draper's Hall', *St. James' Gazette*, 17 May 1890, n.p.

⁶³³ Octave Uzanne, *The Fan*, London, 1884, 126.

⁶³⁴ Uzanne, quoted in Valerie Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, London, 2002, 19-20.

Schreiber (1812-1895), who took a great interest in collecting engraved fan leaves.⁶³⁵

This final chapter examines defining aspects of Lady Schreiber's fan collection – its large percentage of unmounted English eighteenth-century printed fans that depict social subject matter – within the light of wider nineteenth-century developments in fan collecting and display. In 1891 her collection was acquired by the British Museum, by which time she was in her eighties and looking to secure a permanent institutional home for her fan collection. She published two illustrated catalogues of her collections, and the collection was also catalogued and published by Lionel Cust, Assistant in the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings, to coincide with its acquisition. Cust grouped together twenty-nine English eighteenth-century unmounted fans within it, the majority of which are etched or stipple-engraved fan prints, including eight fan designs by George Wilson.⁶³⁶

This chapter thus adopts a transtemporal approach by exploring the significance of Wilson's fan print designs for an audience living in the nineteenth century, notably the primary collector of his works, Lady Schreiber, who acquired every known fan print designed and produced by him. It initially surveys the development of nineteenth-century museums and public displays specialising in collecting fans so as to show that Lady Schreiber's collecting practices took place in an era of renewed interest in the fan leaf format. Fan exhibitions and fan making competitions staged from the 1870s to the

⁶³⁵ Lionel Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, catalogue, London, 1893.

⁶³⁶ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 81.

1890s in the capital are examined to highlight the impact that the expansion in museums had upon fan exhibition. This section focuses on the growth of fan displays to evidence how involved governmental and institutional bodies were in popularising the fan with the aim of educating fan owners and more general audiences. Such an approach helps establish the importance that these political and cultural bodies placed upon women taking an interest in collecting fans as part of the process of reigniting awareness of fan making. Alongside this analysis, a survey of the Aesthetic and Orientalist movements shows their impact upon fan collecting practices in the 1880s and 190s. Lady Schreiber's close involvement with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers is examined, in order to demonstrate her influence with this corporation, as well as on contemporaneous fan makers, that makes clear her standing as a fan collector.

I then compare Lady Schreiber's collecting practices to those of other prominent contemporaneous fan collectors, to examine what this can reveal about women as fan collectors in the late nineteenth century. This chapter next focuses on Lady Schreiber's collection of unfinished examples of Wilson's fan designs, printed onto novel media and sporting caricature, as well as fans brought, or commissioned by, eighteenth-century women and consequently purchased by nineteenth-century female patrons. These aspects of her collection are looked at in order to help reveal the particular way in which she appraised and approached the collecting of fans, and to establish the consequence of her fan collection, during her own time and now.⁶³⁷ Lastly, this chapter looks at *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* (published in 1888) as this folio evidences an

⁶³⁷ Vivian Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', Roy Porter and Marie Roberts (eds), *Pleasure in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1996, 108.

intention on the part of Lady Schreiber for a readership to gain greater understanding of printed English fans and fan leaves.⁶³⁸ I argue that Lady Schreiber's regard for these fans appears to be associated with its links to the print culture in its original period of production and the ways in which fans highlight usage of visual material during this time, thus contributing to nineteenth-century knowledge of eighteenth-century social conduct. Ultimately, it is anticipated that this study can shed light upon the reasons why a woman living in the 1880s and 1890s may have taken an interest in eighteenth-century engraved fans, as well as the level of relevance such fans may have still held for them.⁶³⁹

Public Exhibitions and the Categorisation of Fans in the Nineteenth Century

This section explores the development of public displays of art and industry from the 1850s to the 1890s to show that Lady Schreiber's collecting practices can be positioned within wider collecting trends in the nineteenth century. Her gathering of fans ran parallel to the staging of grand public exhibitions of art and design that attempted to educate the public's taste by presenting the finest of British manufactured goods. The most notable of these was the 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations', organized in 1851 the inventor Henry Cole (1808-1882) and patronised by Prince Albert (1819-1861).⁶⁴⁰ This exhibition was presented as a celebration of industrial art and design and staged in Crystal Palace in London, attended by 6,000,000

⁶³⁸ Lady Charlotte Schreiber's *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH*, published in 1888, was followed by a second volume on *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, FOREIGN*, published in 1890.

⁶³⁹ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 8.

⁶⁴⁰ Robert Ellis (ed.), *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*, exhibition catalogue, Crystal Palace, London, May-October 1851, Introductory Page.

visitors over the course of six months.⁶⁴¹ The types of fans shown as part of this exhibition included examples made from ermine and vellum.⁶⁴² Following on from this, the ‘Art Treasures of Great Britain’ was held in Manchester from May to October 1857, and remains the largest art exhibition ever held in Britain, with over 16,000 works on display, including a small number of fans.⁶⁴³ John Peck, the editor of the catalogue to accompany the Manchester exhibition makes specific mention of a Chinese ivory fan belonging to Queen Victoria (1819-1901) in its display.⁶⁴⁴ ‘Art Treasures of Great Britain’ attracted over 1,000,000 visitors and a number of noted art collectors’ loaned fine and decorative works to be shown as part of it.⁶⁴⁵

Lady Schreiber herself lent two ‘modern masters’ paintings to Manchester, depicting scenes from Italian life, painted by the Welsh painter Penry Williams (1800-1885), whom she may have met while living in Wales during her first marriage to Sir Josiah Guest (1785-1852), Sir Guest being one of Williams’s first patrons.⁶⁴⁶ Lady Schreiber also visited the exhibition with her second husband, Charles Schreiber (1826-1884), on no less than five days.⁶⁴⁷ Such an attendance indicates that the Schreibers were

⁶⁴¹ Ellis (ed.), *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*, Introductory Page.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, 97+278.

⁶⁴³ John Peck (ed.), *Catalogue of the Art Treasures of the United Kingdom: Collected at Manchester in 1857*, exhibition catalogue, Manchester, May-October 1857, Introduction. On the Manchester ‘Art Treasures of Great Britain’ Exhibition, also see Elizabeth A. Pergam, *The Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857: Entrepreneurs, Connoisseurs and the Public*, London, 2011.

⁶⁴⁴ Peck (ed.), *Catalogue of the Art Treasures of the United Kingdom: Collected at Manchester in 1857*, 174.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 334+256.

⁶⁴⁷ Ann Eatwell, ‘The Collector’s or Fine Arts Club 1857-1874. The First Society for Collectors of the Decorative Arts’, *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 - the Present*, 18, 1994, 25.

developing the opinion that collecting objects could be a worthwhile pursuit.⁶⁴⁸ The selection and display of artworks both at the Crystal Palace and Manchester exhibitions had a formative influence on the public art collections that were being established at the time. These included the National Gallery, established in 1824, the National Portrait Gallery, opened in 1858, and the 1852 founding of the Museum of Ornamental Art at Marlborough House, later known as the South Kensington Museum in 1857, and renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1899.⁶⁴⁹

Victorian conceptions of public art display ran in contrast to the eighteenth-century concept of exhibiting, during which time Royalty, gentry and merchants, all collected art, alongside cultural artefacts, chiefly for personal pleasure and education. Following on from these early forms of collecting and display, by the turn of the nineteenth century, this type of display became an increasingly public and civic activity, evolving in parallel with the emergence of national collections.⁶⁵⁰ The opening of the National Gallery in 1824, for example, was a physical manifestation of the fact that the British government now believed that fine art should be available to everyone to generate knowledge production for a broad audience base.⁶⁵¹ Another mission of these museums was to look after art ‘in perpetuity’.⁶⁵² Alongside this development in museological display, a growing interest in the Orient and its associated art forms, as well as material

⁶⁴⁸ Eatwell, ‘The Collector’s or Fine Arts Club 1857-1874. The First Society for Collectors of the Decorative Arts’, 25.

⁶⁴⁹ Giles Waterfield, *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain 1790-1990*, New Haven and London, 1991, 108. Also see Julius Bryant, *Art and Design for All: The Victoria & Albert Museum*, London, 2012.

⁶⁵⁰ Waterfield, *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain 1790-1990*, 108-109.

⁶⁵¹ Jonathan Conlin, *The Nation’s Mantelpiece: A History of the National Gallery*, London, 2007, 205-209.

⁶⁵² Anonymous, *Collecting Art in the Nineteenth Century*, 2007, https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/leightonarabhall/pdfs/19th_century_collecting.pdf, accessed 15 March 2017.

culture and aesthetic artefacts from the Middle and Far East, was taking place.⁶⁵³ The most notable impact of this cultural movement can be seen in the appropriation of Asian visual styles to genres of Western art, markedly in Impressionism, and this extended to the production of fans sporting pastiches of idealised Oriental life.⁶⁵⁴ For example, Edgar Degas's fan mount *Ballet Girls* (Fig. 154), produced in 1879 with watercolour on a black ground, illustrates ballet dancers sitting on a stage outlined in gold. As Marc Gerstein has contended, this fan leaf presents an evocation of 'the metallic luster of Japanese lacquers', and highlights the assimilation of characteristic Oriental aesthetics onto the European fan leaf format.⁶⁵⁵ Valerie Steele argues that avant-garde artists such as Degas, were inspired by the form of the fan, by whose 'composition in the shape of a demicircle, artists were challenged to violate the rules of academic art'.⁶⁵⁶ Such opinion echoes the ways in which I have made the case that fan makers like Wilson possibly saw the fan format as providing a space for experimenting with print in the previous chapters.

Museums became a primary means of ordering cultures, presenting them so as to visually narrate the development of civilisation in two distinct visual schemas. While the National Gallery concerned itself with presenting a chronology of the development of Western European art, the British Museum, established in 1753, focused on showing artefacts from civilisations across the world.⁶⁵⁷ In order to accommodate or bridge those diverse forms of Western and global, fine and decorative art, the South Kensington

⁶⁵³ Anonymous, *Collecting Art in the Nineteenth Century*, 1.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁶⁵⁵ Marc Gerstein, 'Degas's Fans', *The Art Bulletin*, 64:1, March 1982, 110.

⁶⁵⁶ Valerie Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded*, London, 20.

⁶⁵⁷ Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece: A History of the National Gallery*, 9.

Museum was tasked with the purpose of showcasing examples of work so as to facilitate improving standards of art and design education in Britain.⁶⁵⁸ It became immediately popular with the public, offering free admission on certain days, as well as providing students with free admission on selected dates.⁶⁵⁹ The complex format of the fan leaf, offering a measure of both ethnographic and artistic interest, was a suitable object to be exhibited at the South Kensington Museum, and became categorised as an artwork of a decorative nature within public collections. Organisations like ‘The Collector’s Club’, set up in 1857 to spread awareness of decorative art, further enabled such forms of artwork to be viewed as a separate grouping for consideration.⁶⁶⁰ The Schreibers were involved with ‘The Collector’s Club’ from the 1860s onwards, even hosting meetings in ‘authenticating and directing collector’s tastes and in affirming that such objects could be the subject of legitimate study and [...] academic research’, although Lady Schreiber never became a member.⁶⁶¹ For these reasons, arts termed as decorative began to be grouped together in exhibitions, and in related catalogues and museum categories. The catalogue produced to accompany the ‘Art Treasures of Great Britain’ exhibition familiarises its reader with the fact that objects like ivory carvings and fans, shown as part of the Museum of Ornamental Art’s display in the exhibition’s central hall, are physically separated from other art forms.⁶⁶² Bearing in mind that fans always seem to be catalogued as decorative art in this period, this makes it even more interesting that Lady Schreiber donated the majority of her fans to the Prints and

⁶⁵⁸ Anonymous, *The First Years of the South Kensington Museum*.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁰ The Collector’s Club became known from the May of 1857 as ‘The Fine Arts Club’ (Ann Eatwell, ‘The Collector’s or Fine Arts Club 1857-1874. The First Society for Collectors of the Decorative Arts’, *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 - the Present*, 18, 1994, 25).

⁶⁶¹ Eastwell, ‘The Collector’s or Fine Arts Club 1857-1874. The First Society for Collectors of the Decorative Arts’, 25+27.

⁶⁶² Peck (ed.), *Catalogue of the Art Treasures of the United Kingdom: Collected at Manchester in 1857*, 6.

Drawings Department of the British Museum. This fact possibly suggests she was going against the grain and wanted to elevate her fans as fine art, and associated them with the history of British print making, therefore helping greatly to shape the academic historiography of fans.⁶⁶³

Having traced a brief history of museum collecting and the separation of different types of art into distinct categories within these institutions by the 1860s, it is important to examine the staging of fan exhibitions that occurred within this broader cultural context. An analysis of the most prominent fan displays helps highlight the importance which museums and governmental bodies came to place on the fan by the latter half of the nineteenth century, and how quickly Lady Schreiber became a central figure in fan curation and fan judging by the 1880s. The emergence of fan displays arose in parallel with, and aided, a renewed interest in displaying, viewing and discussing fans. As Charlotte Gere and Maria Vaizey confirm, the subject of historic fan collecting and exhibition by this time ‘was ripe for revival’.⁶⁶⁴ A number of significant exhibitions of fans were staged in London from the 1870s up until the end of the nineteenth century. The ‘Loan Exhibition of Fans’, shown at the South Kensington Museum in 1870, helped to raise universal appreciation for fans. This exhibition brought together 503 fans loaned from the collections of the most prominent female patrons in Britain, including the

⁶⁶³ Unfortunately, there is no surviving correspondence between Lady Charlotte Schreiber and the British Museum that pertains directly to the acquisition of her printed fan leaves.

⁶⁶⁴ Charlotte Gere and Marina Vaizey, *Great Women Collectors*, London, 1999, 96.

Duchess of Marlborough, Lady Digby Wyatt, Baroness Meyer de Rothschild and Queen Victoria.⁶⁶⁵

The accompanying illustrated catalogue, *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans 1870*, edited by the curator Samuel Redgrave, states the purpose of this display:

With the view of assisting in the Art Teaching of the Department for the Institute of Women, and especially to direct their attention to the attempts which the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education have made for the improvement of Fans, a Loan Exhibition of Fans will be opened at the South Kensington Museum, in 1870. Her MAJESTY THE QUEEN has graciously conceded to lend some fans, and my Lords have solicited the following ladies to assist them by their contributions, influence, and knowledge of the possessions of Fans [...].⁶⁶⁶

This statement alerts the reader to a number of key factors. Firstly, this proposal makes clear that female agency as patrons and collectors was considered crucial in facilitating the revival of the fan industry, which was soon so depleted that not a single fan maker was left in London by the late 1870s.⁶⁶⁷ Redgrave's text also indicates that it was widely perceived that it was women who had innate knowledge of a fan's usage, as well as possessing a superior knowledge of fans' histories, functions and materiality. So too, this invitation confirms the fact that governmental, institutional and Royal support were involved in a combined strategy of endeavouring to raise awareness of fans and fan making in 1870.⁶⁶⁸ Redgrave's suitability for this project can be confirmed if it is taken into account that he devoted himself to the advancement of art.⁶⁶⁹ He had been secretary

⁶⁶⁵ S. Redgrave (ed.), *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans, 1870. With Illustrations*, exhibition catalogue, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1870, Inside Cover.

⁶⁶⁶ Redgrave (ed.), *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans, 1870. With Illustrations*, Inside Cover.

⁶⁶⁷ Uzanne, *The Fan*, 126.

⁶⁶⁸ Redgrave (ed.), *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans, 1870. With Illustrations*, Inside Cover.

⁶⁶⁹ Robert Edmund Graves, *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900*, Vol. 47, London, 1885-1900, 380.

to the Etching Club since 1842, and because of this role had met many leading artists.⁶⁷⁰ As well, Redgrave arranged the watercolour gallery at the ‘International Exhibition of 1862’, held at the Royal Horticultural Society (South Kensington), and the loan collection of miniatures exhibited at the South Kensington Museum in 1865 was initiated and managed by him.⁶⁷¹

Not only does the *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans 1870* reveal the importance placed on female collectors to help restore the fortunes of the British fan making industry, but it also discloses how the exhibition organisers hoped the female fan collectors it invited to loan fans would share their expertise in selecting loans.⁶⁷² As the ‘Proposed Conditions of the Exhibition’ declares, ‘1. Fans most durable to be selected are those presenting examples of the best art applied to their ornamentation, 2. The Selected Fans should also include those distinguished by the beauty and novelty of their materials [...]’.⁶⁷³ These instructions stress the selection of only the best fan examples, with a focus on beauty and novelty, two key factors which could engage, interest and educate visitors. Additionally, this catalogue carries Redgrave’s opinion that fan exhibitions could encourage ‘the uprising of people of taste and capital, who, as producers and sellers, should occupy the place of the Parisian *Évantailliste* [fan maker]’.⁶⁷⁴ As Redgrave explains, the layout of the exhibition had been designed so as to allow for ‘seeing all the best fans which can be brought together, and of studying [...] what is in every respect most appropriate, tasteful, and novel, as well as what should be

⁶⁷⁰ Graves, *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900*, 380.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁶⁷² Redgrave (ed.), *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans, 1870. With Illustrations*, Inside Cover.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid.*, Inside Cover.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, vii-viii.

avoided', thereby honing the discerning judgement of female fan collectors and patrons.⁶⁷⁵

The 'Loan Exhibition of Fans 1870' consisted of painted and printed fans dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries produced in European countries, as well as a number made in China and Japan. The anonymous author of the review of the exhibition, published in *The Illustrated London News* on 9 July 1870, comments upon the assortment of fans shown in its display. As the reviewer describes, fans including '[a] Tobacco Bag and Case, Fan of the Princess of Wales, Indian Palm Leaf Edged with Lace, French eighteenth century fans, Countess of Warwick's fan, Indian Cloth of Gold and Silver [and] Silk Handle' were all shown in an eclectic spectacle.⁶⁷⁶ These named fans are engraved in an illustration accompanying *The Illustrated London News* review (Fig. 155), giving a sense of the variety of sizes, shapes and materials this display featured, including a mounted and unmounted European fan.⁶⁷⁷ The assortment shown here would have possibly helped encourage a reader to conceive of the fan as a highly composite material object. The illustrative sketch reveals the way they were presented in collected groups on flat, horizontal display surfaces.

Listed at No. 83 in *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans 1870* is a fan loaned from a 'Miss Auther of Worcester', labelled as 'ENGLISH FAN. London, 1801, Mount, paper with coloured engraving of "The United Sisters", allegorical of the Union with

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Inside Cover.

⁶⁷⁶ Anonymous, 'Fans in the Loan Exhibition in the South Kensington Museum', *The Illustrated London News*, 9 July 1870, n.p.

⁶⁷⁷ Redgrave (ed.), *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Fans, 1870. With Illustrations*, 12.

Ireland. *Stick, ivory pierced*'.⁶⁷⁸ This fan is almost certainly a mounted print of Wilson's *The United Sisters* (Fig. 18), produced in 1801 to commemorate the Act of Union between Britain and Northern Ireland, and examined in Chapter One.⁶⁷⁹ That *The United Sisters* was likely chosen for this exhibition suggests several things. Primarily, it is evident that Wilson's fans were being exhibited and potentially traded at the time when Lady Schreiber was collecting fans. Secondly, the fact that Wilson's fan print was accepted into this fan exhibition illustrates that its quality was enduring since it was a supreme example of late eighteenth-century fan making and a nationalistic image.

Following on from the formative 'Loan Exhibition of Fans', as Dilys Blum has explained, a number of well-attended competitive exhibitions and awards were organised during the 1880s and 1890s by the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in an effort to recover fan making as both an art form and an industry.⁶⁸⁰ They advanced the goal of promoting the art of fan making, first set in motion by the South Kensington Museum exhibition in 1870. A Worshipful Company of Fan Makers' committee report makes clear in its discussion of a competitive fan exhibition in 1878 that such displays were intended to allow access to the widest possible number of people. As the report states, they were organised 'in order to give an opportunity for as many as possible from all classes to attend, and that technical education might be evirated [drawn out]'.⁶⁸¹ The fan collector Robert Walker remarks in the introduction to the catalogue to the sale of

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁷⁹ British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.

⁶⁸⁰ Dilys Blum, 'Fans from the Collection', *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin*, 84:358/359, Spring 1988, 5.

⁶⁸¹ Anonymous, Worshipful Company of Fan Makers, Report of Committee, etc. Competitive Exhibition of Fans, held at Drapers' Hall, London, July 1878, unpublished manuscript, Guildhall Library and Archives, City of London. Manuscript MS23797-8.

his own collection at Sotheby's auction house in 1882, that 'in the week during which the Fanmakers' Exhibition was held at Drapers' Hall in 1878, 6,000 visitors attended – at once a sign of its attractiveness and popularity'.⁶⁸²

These exhibitions and sales at auction not only alerted an audience to the heyday of British fan-making but enabled them to admire their material make-up. The *St. James' Gazette*, for instance, in its review of the 'Exhibition of Fanmaker's Company' at Draper's Hall in 1890 exclaims that '[even] the mere man, who never uses fans and has never succeeded in understanding the mystery of their utility, need not be ashamed to confess an interest in these [...] beautiful images'.⁶⁸³ This demonstrates, as with Walker's collection above, that men were also keen collectors of fans, and were indeed being encouraged to consider them as artworks. A sketch of the interior of Draper's Hall (Fig. 156), included to accompany the review of this exhibition in *The Citizen*, shows that the layout of the display facilitated close physical proximity between the visitor and fan leaf. This illustration shows several fans presented open and lying flat and upright in cabinets, all seemingly framed, placed behind glass, ready to be hung in the interior of one of the fashionable Victorian visitors' houses. In addition, all but one of the people depicted in this image are female, indicating that it was primarily a key draw for women.

Lady Schreiber's relationship with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers can be visibly demonstrated by the presence of several fans contained in her own collection.

⁶⁸² Robert Walker, *Catalogue of the Cabinet of Old Fans*, catalogue, London, 1882, iv.

⁶⁸³ Anonymous, 'Exhibition of Fanmaker's Company at Draper's Hall', n.p.

The fan *The Jubilee of Queen Victoria* (Fig. 157 and Fig. 158), anonymously painted on gauze and stamped with the Arms of the Fan Makers' Company, executed for the dinner given by the Master of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers on Friday, 28 June 1889, provides a perfect case in point as it signals her personal links with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers.⁶⁸⁴ Its tag (Fig. 159), still attached to its sticks, further conveys, and commemorates, this relationship between Lady Schreiber and the Company. The closeness of this connection is literally spelt out on another fan from Schreiber's collection, *The Royal Carriage at the Jubilee of Queen Victoria on June '21, 1887*.⁶⁸⁵ *The Royal Carriage* was painted by a Miss Churton, who was awarded first prize for fan making by Lady Schreiber at the fan making competition held by the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in 1889, a year before they awarded her the Freedom of their Company.⁶⁸⁶ So, it is becoming apparent that Lady Schreiber was responding to events pertaining to the exhibition of fans and collecting as a result of this. Acquisitions like that made from Miss Churton demonstrate that she collected instances of exemplary practice from other female fan makers, alongside amassing fans commemorating important events involving women. That Lady Schreiber acquired her study for *The Royal Carriage* (Fig. 160), completed in pen and ink on card, serves to indicate that she appreciated the aesthetic value of the draftsmanship exhibited by fan makers created both in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

⁶⁸⁴ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 53. This term refers to thin transparent fabric, normally comprised of silk, linen, or cotton, and, commonly in the nineteenth century, made from a very thin wire mesh. Gauze was used extensively as a fan leaf surface in the mid to late nineteenth-century, especially as it could show the scene from the recto side of a double-sided fan on its verso side.

⁶⁸⁵ *The Royal Carriage at the Jubilee of Queen Victoria on June '21, 1887* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Royal Carriage*. Unfortunately, this fan is now considered too fragile to be taken out of storage for photographing or close inspection in the British Museum's Prints and Drawing Department's Study Room and has not previously been digitally scanned for the British Museum's Collections Database (the study for *The Royal Carriage* is therefore the only image able to be included in this thesis's illustrations).

⁶⁸⁶ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, Preface.

Lady Schreiber and her Contemporaries' Collecting Practices

This section analyses the fans amassed by two of Lady Schreiber's leading fan collecting contemporaries to help highlight the singular nature of her own collecting strategies. James Mackey makes reference to the Schreiber fan leaf collection as 'surpassing [...] Walker, whose cabinet of antique fans was sold at Sotheby's in 1882 [and] Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt [who] formed an impressive collection which he bequeathed to the Victoria and Albert Museum'.⁶⁸⁷ Thus, an analysis of their own fan collections provides apt comparison.

Sir Wyatt's profession as an artist and art historian may have aided his collecting strategy. Wyatt and his wife Anne amassed some 400 specimens from Europe and East Asia, which they donated to the South Kensington Museum in 1876. This collection is predominately made up of mounted European and Oriental brisé fans; fans made by Sir Wyatt as gifts; eighteenth-century souvenir fans; and nineteenth-century fans sporting historical subject matter.⁶⁸⁸ Sir Wyatt's collection is also comprised mostly of painted fans in gouache on vellum and chicken skin.⁶⁸⁹ Sir Wyatt's allegory on the *Triumph of Love* (Fig. 161), painted as a gift to his wife in 1869, can be seen to typify his collecting strategies. *Triumph of Love* features three medallions showing cupids and landscapes

⁶⁸⁷ James Mackay, *Fans. Ornaments of Language and Fashion*, London, 2000, 138.

⁶⁸⁸ 'Brisé' fans are made up entirely of fan sticks, predominately used since the early 1900s. The sticks of brisé fans, translating as 'broken' in French, are typically carved or pierced bone or ivory, and held together by a ribbon that is either glued to each stick or threaded through pierced openings at the top of the sticks.

⁶⁸⁹ While fans made of vellum proved perhaps one of the most durable and expensive fan leaf surfaces, chicken skin, sometimes mixed with unborn calf skin to give a smoother appearance, was also extensively used, particularly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Chicken skin was also used to make ladies gloves in the eighteenth century.

scenes, painted as a kind of eighteenth-century imitation in gouache on vellum.⁶⁹⁰ It can also be argued Sir Wyatt's creation of the pen and ink and watercolour drawing *The Elizabethan Vestibule* (Fig. 162) between 1840 and 1877, depicting a design for the Elizabethan Vestibule on the nave of Crystal Palace, echoes a wider focus upon producing all types of art that would fit in with a nationalistic viewpoint of Britain's earlier history.⁶⁹¹

It can therefore be argued Sir Wyatt's collection followed traditional collecting practices established by the 1850s, that reveal an interest in fans exhibiting 'eighteenth-century pastiche[s]', which Lady Schreiber's collection did not.⁶⁹² Many late nineteenth-century fan makers, such as the painter and lithographer Charles Conder, specialised in creating sentimental fan leaf narratives deliberately reminiscent of an era a century past. For example, Conder's *The Romantic Excursion* (Fig. 163), produced in 1899 in watercolour on silk, shows people clothed in eighteenth-century dress conversing and reclining in a village setting, demonstrates the influence of French eighteenth-century, as well as Chinese and Japanese art. This focus was echoed in those fans gathered by nineteenth-century collectors. Sir Matthew and Lady Anne Wyatt's collection of fans can be said to be characterised by historical pastiches of eighteenth-century life, partly shaped by Sir Wyatt's desire to create fans as gifts for his wife.

⁶⁹⁰ Anonymous, *The Triumph of Venus*, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O87109/the-triumph-of-love-fan-wyatt-matthew-digby/>, accessed 15 March 2017.

⁶⁹¹ Anonymous, *Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt (1820-1877)*, <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/architecture/wyattmd/index.html>, accessed 13 March 2016.

⁶⁹² Blum, 'Fans from the Collection', 1+3-36.

So, Walker's interest seems to be in acquiring historical European fans, many being cabriolet fans formed of chicken skin.⁶⁹³ His collection consists of 463 specimens, of which only seventy-nine are printed English fans. Out of this number, under ten sport subject matter of a topical nature. Walker explains the system of his collecting in the introduction to the auction catalogue produced to accompany the sale of his fans in 1882. He begins by declaring 'England possesses no history of or guide to the knowledge of old Fans', continuing 'Mr Samuel gives brief account, in the introduction to the Catalogue of the Exhibition of Fans held at South Kensington in 1870, but leaves untouched any distinguishing traits which characterise the treatment applied by English, French, Dutch and other nations'.⁶⁹⁴ Walker elucidates that the character of his collection 'by degrees [...] assumed a definite shape', showing 'undoubted foreign art in the treatment and subject'.⁶⁹⁵ His statement stresses his preference for collecting eighteenth-century fans that were not exclusively English. So too, his introductory text makes clear his ambitions for its future use, as he divulges that he parts 'with the collection with regret [...] It has now outgrown the accommodation of my Berkshire home', hoping 'it may find a place among the permanent exhibitions of London', although he sold the collection rather than donating it.⁶⁹⁶ Interestingly, Lady Schreiber remarks in *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* that she brought the *Casino Fan* (Fig. 128) from this auction sale.⁶⁹⁷ Such notations elucidate both Lady Schreiber's own collecting practices – focusing on acquiring English printed fans – in addition to evidencing her awareness of the activities of other well-known nineteenth-century fan collectors.

⁶⁹³ 'Cabriolet' fans are folding fans that have two or more concentric leaves set one above another and resembling a section of the wheel of the cabriolet horse-drawn carriage.

⁶⁹⁴ Walker, *Catalogue of the Cabinet of Old Fans*, iii.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, iii.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, iv.

⁶⁹⁷ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, 20.

The Schreiber Fan Collection

In this section, the character of Lady Schreiber's own fan collection is examined in light of what has been established in relation to other contemporaries' fan collections. Her collection includes fans dating from the late seventeenth century up until the 1880s, with a few of the last purchases likely being those portraying the Paris International Exhibition, staged in 1889, pointing to her interest in contemporary events. Cust's edited catalogue of her donation to the British Museum lists 734 fans altogether, made up, for the most part, from seventy-nine mounted and 207 unmounted printed English fans, as well as 168 mounted and 124 unmounted printed foreign fans.⁶⁹⁸ Cust groups Lady Schreiber's fans in to 'mounted' and 'unmounted' categories in the first instance within his catalogue.⁶⁹⁹ The 'mounted fan' section is segmented into 'English', 'foreign', 'hand-painted' and 'miscellaneous', with the 'English' category further split into 'historical', 'biblical and classical', 'fancy', 'social', 'instructive' and 'literature, etc.'. ⁷⁰⁰ Cust's 'unmounted' fan category additionally contains 'pastoral', 'theatrical', 'amusing' and 'portraits' subdivisions.⁷⁰¹ Thus, he appears to place emphasis on depicting historical and classical subject matter. Lady Schreiber's mounted fan prints typically feature royal coronation events and mythological scenes, as well as a few dance fans. The number of English unmounted hand-painted fans contained within her collection number forty-eight, while there are almost an equal number of hand-painted foreign fans, totalling forty-seven.⁷⁰² It can therefore be surmised that Lady Schreiber's

⁶⁹⁸ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 2015.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Table of Contents.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Table of Contents.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Table of Contents.

⁷⁰² *Ibid.*, Table of Contents.

interests lay chiefly in collecting unmounted printed fans featuring topical and commemorative subject matter.

Moreover, Lady Schreiber's gathering of at least one version of all Wilson's known fan print designs as a single fan maker appears unusual. There are over thirty historic subjects included in the unmounted printed fan category, nineteen of these portraits of royalty. This grouping includes Wilson's *Peace Restored by the Genius of Happiness* (Fig. 164), produced in 1800, as Lady Schreiber notes, to commemorate peace at Amiens (in France) in the last few years of the eighteenth century after hostilities between the French Republic and Britain was temporarily ended during the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802).⁷⁰³ Additionally, the Schreiber collection includes a fan leaf cut from Pietro Antonio Martini's original single-sheet engraving of *The Royal Family at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy* (Fig. 165), produced in 1788.

Approximately fifty fans contained in the Schreiber collection, both hand-painted and print examples, either feature commemorative events like the Jubilee (1887) of Queen Victoria or involve some type of female emphasis, such as being commissioned or acquired by eighteenth and nineteenth-century female patrons. The smallest category of fan leaves contained in the Schreiber collection are mounted English hand-painted fans, numbering only twenty-three.

Lady Schreiber's collection is unusual in that she collected prints of fan designs in

⁷⁰³ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, 8. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.41.

various stages of completion, which other contemporary collectors did not appear to do. The inclusion of three unmounted stipple-engraved prints of Wilson's fan print design *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux*, all produced in 1795, which illustrate a collective of beaux but are in marginally different states of finish, provide a case in point.⁷⁰⁴ One version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (II)* (Fig. 136) exhibits a less ornamental rendering when compared to the surfaces of the other two versions of this design she also owned.⁷⁰⁵ In this fan print, Wilson chose to omit the extended text featured below each of the beaux, while a separate version of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (III)* (Fig. 137) features monochrome stipple-engraving.⁷⁰⁶ The hand-coloured edition of *The Ladies Bill of Fare (I)* (Fig. 1) provides the most complete design devised for this theme, incorporating hand-colouration. Similarly, the Schreiber collection contains Wilson's hand-coloured engraved fan print *Men in Various Attitudes (study)* (Fig. 166), produced in 1795, depicting twelve beau figures in different poses but without any textual additions, which is possibly a study for his *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor* fan design.⁷⁰⁷

The fact that Lady Schreiber sometimes acquired more than one unfinished fan print taken from the same copperplate design is important to consider for several reasons. An assemblage of Wilson's fan prints in different stages of finish allows for his creative process to be more fully understood. Indeed, Lady Schreiber's collection contains so

⁷⁰⁴ *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Ladies Bill of Fare (I)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512.

⁷⁰⁵ British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512.

⁷⁰⁶ British Museum Accession Number: 1887,1010.28.

⁷⁰⁷ George Woolliscroft Rhead, *History of the Fan*, California, 1910, 264-267. *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric; or Candidates for the Ladies Favor Nobody* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *A Selection of Beau's*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.511.

many unique examples of late eighteenth-century engraved fan designs that it could almost provide a basis of ‘type specimens’ against which subsequent fan collectors could compare and categorise their own fan leaves.⁷⁰⁸ So too, Lady Schreiber’s accumulation of Wilson’s finished and unfinished fan print designs records the precise stages in their development.⁷⁰⁹ Therefore, Lady Schreiber’s method of acquiring Wilson’s fragmentary fan prints indicates that she not only thought him an important fan engraver, but that she was interested in the process of fan production from conception to completion. Furthermore, these fan prints demonstrate Wilson’s shrewd eye for making commercially available unfinished fan prints in the same way as engravers might make available unfinished single-sheet prints to attract those more serious collectors. As Lady Schreiber’s fan collection contains at least one unmounted print of every known surviving fan design designed by Wilson, this fact points to the likelihood that he was well-known enough in his own time to be able to sell unfinished fan prints in a group as collectors’ items to a ready market.⁷¹⁰

Not only does Lady Schreiber’s process of collecting fans signal her appreciation of Wilson’s artistic skill and creativity, but so too does her inclusion of his fan designs printed on novel types of media. There exists in Lady Schreiber’s fan collection an extraordinary copy of Wilson’s stipple-engraved *The Female Seven Ages (11)* (Fig. 17), produced in 1797, which sits alongside two other prints of this fan design.⁷¹¹ *Seven Ages’* design presents a sustained timeline, illustrating an honourable woman’s youth,

⁷⁰⁸ Susan Pearce, *On Collecting*, London, 1995, 126.

⁷⁰⁹ Pearce, *On Collecting*, 126.

⁷¹⁰ Unfortunately, to date, no surviving records have been found pertaining to Lady Schreiber’s purchase of Wilson’s fans.

⁷¹¹ *The Female Seven Ages (11)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Seven Ages (11)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.723.

middle age, and death, split into seven roundel scenes. However, this copy of *Seven Ages* has been printed directly onto thick board and so was unlikely intended to be used as a functional fan. The stipple print is set over the top half of its surface and a thin gilt line applied to the board, which separates it from the bottom of the fan. So, it is evident Wilson worked in a number of unusual forms and Lady Schreiber took an interest in collecting these differences in fan print productions, which are not an apparent feature in either the Sir Wyatt or Walker fan collections.

As well as featuring fan prints in different stages of finish and printed on a range of novel media, another characteristic aspect of Lady Schreiber's fan collection is its percentage of eighteenth-century printed fans depicting topical subject matter.

Undoubtedly, the characteristic elements of the Schreiber fan collection are the fact that most of the English printed fans featured within it come under the unmounted 'social' category, totalling forty-four.⁷¹² This category includes themes such as love, courtship, fortune-telling, dancing, as well as rules for various pastimes (like casino-playing) and layouts of entertainment venues like opera theatres. I suggest that Lady Schreiber's inclusion of engraved fans depicting caricatures, like Wilson's line-engraved *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart (untitled)* (Fig. 10), produced in 1797, carried wider resonance with a nineteenth-century public.⁷¹³ My argument builds on the observations made by the author of the 1889 review, who remarks that the number of eighteenth-century

⁷¹² Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 81.

⁷¹³ *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Quiz Club*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510.

engraved fans sporting caricature featured in the Schreiber collection afforded an insight into the 'life and manners of the time', making them 'ingenious, interesting, and valuable'.⁷¹⁴

The presence of Cooper's *The School for Scandal* fan print design in Lady Schreiber's collection gives further indication of her interest in accumulating late eighteenth-century engraved fan leaves depicting different types of character.⁷¹⁵ *The School for Scandal* has been acquired alongside a second unmounted and uncoloured version of this fan print design, confirming Lady Schreiber's interest in obtaining both coloured and uncoloured versions of the same fan design where possible. Moreover, fans such as *The School for Scandal* and *The Quiz Club* serve to evidence the fact that Lady Schreiber's fan collection reveal issues more commonly associated with printed ephemera and caricature.⁷¹⁶ As well, the inclusion of both *The School for Scandal* and *The Quiz Club* in her collection signals the fact that fan makers like Wilson and Cooper were successful in taking the pictorial elements they wanted from printed imagery to appeal to a female customer base, both in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Finally, a less marked, though nonetheless important, facet, as previously noted, of Lady Schreiber's fan collection, is the number of fans it includes depicting contemporary subject matter influenced by female agency or created specifically for an individual woman, numbering over fifty. The inclusions in Lady Schreiber's fan

⁷¹⁴ Anonymous, 'English Fans and English History', 13.

⁷¹⁵ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 81.

⁷¹⁶ Gere and Vaizey, *Great Women Collectors*, 96.

collection of hand-painted fans commissioned by, or for, female patrons in the 1780s and 1790s points to her desire to collect fan leaves first brought, or commissioned by, eighteenth-century women, which have consequently been purchased by nineteenth-century female patrons. They include *The Countess of Stamford's Fan* (Fig. 167), a watercolour and ink fan created between 1780 and 1800, depicting a female figure pointing to the initial 'S' – the initial of the name Stamford – inscribed beneath a coronet, mounted on ivory sticks.⁷¹⁷ This fan's title may have been given to Lady Schreiber by the Countess of Stamford herself.⁷¹⁸ *Flowers and Fishermen* (Fig. 168 and Fig. 169), a fan produced between 1755 and 1765 and painted with grey wash and watercolour can also be included in the category of fans in the Schreiber collection which relate in some way to a female agency or patronage. The centre of *Flowers and Fishermen* depicts a coastal scene, with boats and fishermen on a jetty 'almost certainly after prints' in the opinion of a curator.⁷¹⁹ The centre of the fan is covered with botanical depictions and the monogram 'C. E. S' painted on wooden sticks by a 'Miss Tregellis of Kingsbridge, for Lady Charlotte Schreiber' in 1868.⁷²⁰ As the inscription indicates, this fan appears to have been purchased by Miss Tregellis and then gifted to Lady Schreiber in the 1860s.

Similarly, Lady Schreiber explains in *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* that the mounted coloured and etched fan, *Mr Osborne's Duck Hunting* (Fig. 170), commemorating the

⁷¹⁷ Henrietta, Countess of Stamford (1761-1821) was known, in part, for being the daughter of a freed slave.

⁷¹⁸ Pearce, *On Collecting*, 223.

⁷¹⁹ Anonymous, online catalogue entry for *Fan/Drawing*, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1655352&partId=1&searchText=fishermen+and+flowers&page=1, accessed 15 February 2017.

⁷²⁰ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 52.

bookseller and stationer Thomas Osborne moving into his new house on 10 September 1754, for which he organised a duck hunt, was given as a souvenir to mark the occasion. This fan was gifted to Lady Schreiber by a Miss Birch, daughter of the Egyptologist and antiquarian Dr Samuel Birch (1813-1885), who worked at the British Museum.⁷²¹ Lady Schreiber recalls in the description of this fan that she received it wrapped in a fragment of chintz, believing it to be ‘probably a piece of the dress of the lady who was on this duck hunt’.⁷²² Such acquisitions prove important in materially demonstrating Lady Schreiber’s personal network of influence and standing among female companions and fan leaf collectors by the 1880s.⁷²³

Lady Schreiber as Author: The Publication of *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* (1888)

Grand fan displays like that which characterised the South Kensington Museum’s ‘Loan Exhibition of Fans’ in 1870 occurred alongside the publication of related books. These texts included the illustrated folio *Fans of All Countries*, produced by the Arundel Society in 1871, and designed for ‘the Use of Schools of Amateurs and Artists’.⁷²⁴ However, it can be argued that Lady Schreiber’s authorship of the large folio, *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* served as more than a design resource for students. It not only promoted the unusual nature of her own fan collection, but aligned the development of

⁷²¹ Dr Samuel Birch, *History of Ancient Pottery, Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Etruscan, and Roman*, London, 1873, Preface.

⁷²² Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, 20.

⁷²³ Susan Stabile, *Memory’s Daughter’s: The Material Culture of Collecting in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 2004, 156.

⁷²⁴ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 129. The Arundel Society, established in 1849, was named after the Earl of Arundel, the collector of the Arundel Marbles and one of the first great English patrons of the arts in the Victorian era. The purpose of the Arundel Society was to both preserve the record and disseminate a knowledge of important remnants of British art (Arundel Club, *The Arundel Club: For the Publication of Reproductions of Works of Art in Private Collections and Elsewhere*, London, 1904).

the history of manners in the eighteenth century with that of the engraved fan leaf emphasising Lady Schreiber's legacy and her role as a scholar.

This final section therefore considers the timing of Lady Schreiber's publication of *Fans and Fan Leaves, English*. Lady Schreiber built up her fan collection from the 1850s up until the end of the 1880s. It is probable she attended the 1870 South Kensington Museum exhibition and collected fans at a substantive pace after this time. Lady Schreiber then became involved with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in the late 1870s, before publishing her folio volumes describing examples in her own collection in 1888 and 1890, only a few years before it was gifted to the British Museum and just four years before her death in 1895 at the age of eighty-two. Therefore, it appears Lady Schreiber concentrated upon collecting engraved English eighteenth-century fans as part of those wider attempts to popularise it again. So too, Lady Schreiber's writing of her own fan publications, indicates she was well-aware of the practicalities that needed to be put in place if her fan collection was to remain accessible for future generations and that she had the knowledge and resources to catalogue and publish her own collection.

In the introduction to her catalogue, Lady Schreiber acknowledges that 'MUCH has been written about Fans, their Origin, their history, and their importance', adding that 'many beautiful and costly specimens have been instanced and described and their

vicissitudes recorded'.⁷²⁵ Instead, Lady Schreiber points out that the significance of her text lay in the fact that 'it may not be without interest to reproduce a few examples of a less ambitious kind – brought out at a time when the fashion was at its height'.⁷²⁶ As Lady Schreiber states, all of the fans she describes are 'with one exception (No. 143), printed', with 'the unmounted fans first, being the most numerous', and, 'precedence [...], for the most part, been given to such that bear political subjects or have reference to the popular events of the day'.⁷²⁷ So it becomes apparent that Lady Schreiber is interested in the topicality of these fans and what insights they may offer about contemporary events and interests. Consequently, the folio only includes descriptions of 161 eighteenth-century fans, dating up until 1803; 104 of those are unmounted. Eighteenth-century fans featuring caricature are placed at the beginning of the text.⁷²⁸

The material format, selection of fans and themes discussed within *Fans and Fan Leaves, English* seems to signal Lady Schreiber's aims for her fan collection. Firstly, the material format of the folio, which is very large (55.60 x 37 cm) and heavy, featuring an embossed front cover and containing illustrations of all the fans catalogued, conveys the importance of the subject that she discusses for the reader, both visually and textually. The catalogue's form indicates its expense to buy, indicating its main readership would have likely been fan collectors and enthusiasts. Furthermore, the folio's size denotes its suitability for study and contemplation. Each of the 161 engraved

⁷²⁵ Lady Charlotte Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, Vol.1, London, 1888, B.

⁷²⁶ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, B.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, B. The exception to which Lady Schreiber refers is Francis Chassereau's etched and hand-coloured fan *Garden Scene* (Fig. 171) in 1741. This fan is decorated with a genre scene of a shepherd and a shepherdess seated on a bank and embracing, while sheep graze in a field to the right of the image, framed by flowers and arabesques.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*, B.

fan illustrations are close to the size of the original, although the only categorisation Lady Schreiber inserts is between unmounted and mounted specimens. By focusing on her descriptions on these printed fans, it can be argued that she believed these specimens to be most useful to illustrate the development of the print upon the fan leaf format. Accordingly, this thesis is able to build upon Lady Schreiber's scholarly approach taken in her catalogue – that of describing each fan's subject matter in terms of its cultural context and stylistic design – and is the first to propose a link between one of the fan makers featured in it (Wilson) and conduct literature. She possibly saw an annotated catalogue relating to printed eighteenth-century fans as filling a gap in the intellectual and scholarly analysis of the fan, thus adding to its historiography.⁷²⁹ By combining almost life-size illustrations with explanations of these fans' subject matter, Lady Schreiber elevates the English printed fan as a form of visual and textual aesthetic, historic and social record.

Lady Schreiber places particular importance upon fans depicting figurative characters. This becomes apparent upon reading the first pages of *Fans and Fan Leaves, English*, wherein Lady Schreiber begins by describing the anonymously etched fan print *Sir Robert Walpole's Excise Bill* (Fig. 172), produced in 1733. This fan depicts a satire on the Excise Bill, brought in by the Statesman Robert Walpole the same year as the fan was published but dropped due to its unpopularity. The purpose of the bill was to obtain an increase of revenue which it was hoped would result in land tax being diminished.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁹ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, B.

⁷³⁰ Anonymous, online catalogue entry for *Unmounted fan-leaf, with satire on the Excise Bill*, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1655352&partId=1&searchText=fishermen+and+flowers&page=1, accessed 24 February 2018.

However, this bill was unpopular and it did not pass in to law.⁷³¹ The discontent surrounding the bill is reflected in this scene, wherein a non-conformist cleric is placed in the fan's centre, with a medallion portrait of Cardinal Wolsey (who is included to emphasise his patriotic loyalty in this context, unlike the Excise Bill proposal). As the letters shown above declare, 'Wolsey and his successor here in one behold. Both serv'd their masters noth their country sold', reflecting the fan's propagandist purpose.⁷³²

Notably, as part of her discussion of *Sir Robert Walpole's Excise Bill*, Lady Schreiber mentions the antiquarian Thomas Wright's book *A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art*, published in 1875. This book charts the evolution of the art of caricature from antiquity up until the period in which the artist Thomas Rowlandson was working at the turn of the nineteenth century. She repeats Wright's remark that 'it is a rather remarkable character of society at this period, that the ladies take so great an interest in politics, that the characters were largely introduced on fans, as well as upon other objects of an equally personal character'.⁷³³ The inclusion of Wright's writings into Lady Schreiber's own text highlight her interest in why politics and the development of the art of caricature evolved on the engraved fan leaf format. For example, Lady Schreiber comments upon another of Wright's writings, *Caricature History in the Age of the Georges*, published in 1867, and refers to his discussion of the fan caricatures of the eighteenth century within her discussion of *Sir Robert Walpole's Excise Bill*. Wright presents a historiography of the development of caricature from a

⁷³¹ Anonymous, online catalogue entry for *Unmounted fan-leaf, with satire on the Excise Bill*.

⁷³² Anonymous, online catalogue entry for *Unmounted fan-leaf, with satire on the Excise Bill*.

⁷³³ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, 2.

nineteenth-century perspective. Lady Schreiber replicates some of the terminology presented by Wright in her own folio when describing Wilson's stipple-engraved fan print *A Selection of Beau's Whimsical, Comical & Eccentric* (Fig. 4), produced in 1795, as 'a group of burlesque figures'.⁷³⁴ She titles Wilson's aquatint, etched and engraved fan print *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy* (Fig. 7), produced in 1797 and featuring twenty-five instances of human folly as 'Grotesque Subjects', its title only altered to *The World Grown Odd and Crazy* upon its acquisition by the British Museum.⁷³⁵ So, it appears Lady Schreiber's writings allow a readership to conceive of the history of prints and society as one running tandem, and intertwined, with engraved fan design and, indeed, shape the opinion of the reader to an extent.

In her folio, Lady Schreiber places Robert Cooper's hand-coloured and stipple-engraved fan print *The School for Scandal* (Fig. 173), produced in 1796, directly after the last of Wilson's engraved fan print designs, this being the stipple-engraved *The-Good-for-Nothing Swain* (Fig. 3), produced in 1796.⁷³⁶ As noted in Chapter Two, Cooper made *School for Scandal* after Thomas Rowlandson's stipple-engraved series of female characters, itself drawn from Sheridan's play of the same title. Such a catalogue placement indicates that Lady Schreiber considered Wilson's fans to be exemplars of figurative caricature satirising types of late eighteenth-century conduct for an owner's amusement and instruction.

⁷³⁴ Lady Schreiber, *FANS AND FAN LEAVES, ENGLISH, COLLECTED AND DESCRIBED BY LADY CHARLOTTE SCHREIBER*, 17.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17. *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

⁷³⁶ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

In a sense, by reading Lady Schreiber's descriptions of her unmounted topical English fans women living in the 1890s could glean a visual history of politics and manners enacted one hundred years before. Additionally, they could have gained an appreciation of how the format of the engraved fan leaf in the 1790s developed the evolving art of caricature into an art form. In a final note regarding Lady Schreiber's folio, it includes illustrated copies of eighteenth-century fan makers' trade cards (Fig. 174), pointing towards her interest in the broader business of fan making, and its close relationship to the print trade, and a likely desire to educate her readership to understand more about the fan makers' trade during the 1700s and collect and protect related ephemera.

Conclusion

An analysis of Lady Schreiber's involvement with the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers, her *Fans and Fan Leaves, English folio*, networks of connections and collecting practices confirms that there was a sustained interest for collecting fans in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The renewed attention given to fans seems to have been instigated both by the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in their organisation of exhibitions, as well as the staging of displays at museums in London. These shows allowed a way for the wider public to view those fans loaned by members of the gentry and aristocratic classes. The presentation of English fans within an exhibition framework reflected the wider cultural context of the late nineteenth century, in which Britain's industrial might was promoted alongside attempts to promote craft and to educate the populace through the staging of such exhibitions.

Lady Schreiber's tracing of the development of caricature on the fan leaf format highlights a nineteenth-century interest in the relationship established between an owner and fan in its original usage. For a late nineteenth-century audience, viewing and reading about such fans would have brought to life a chronology of the manners and historical events of the age. Likewise, her acquisition of each of every of Wilson's surviving fan designs allows them to be collectively understood as innovative artworks, as well as being reflective of his successful standing as an engraver in the 1790s. Lady Schreiber's scholarly text makes clear how important connections with female fan collecting acquaintances were to enable her to acquire fans which, cumulatively, signify her influence. Furthermore, the act of Lady Schreiber leaving the majority of her fans to the British Museum, where they are amongst prints, draws attention to the importance for the history of eighteenth-century print making to include fans, stresses the importance of her legacy.⁷³⁷ Lastly, the fact that she was a prominent female collector of a female-centred focused object suggests that collecting historic visual and decorative art in the nineteenth century was an important activity for women of social status. Women could both demonstrate their scholarly knowledge and patriotism through the process of collecting and displaying such things as fans. Moreover, research into the female collector aspect of this thesis indicates that wealthy women were considered central agencies in the loaning of artwork for public exhibitions and that their leisure habits included viewing and apprising displays of art as both a civic activity and duty. However, I would argue one drawback of Lady Schreiber's legacy is the fact that the study of her printed English fans does not invite analysis of how they may have formed

⁷³⁷ Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves Presented to the British Museum by Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, 8.

a physical relationship with any owners, nor functioned in their hands, which are areas of scholarship in this field that this thesis progresses.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that using the case study of George Wilson's surviving printed fan leaves as a research methodology allows them to be recognised as a significant art form, because of their contribution to helping develop a knowledge of eighteenth-century print processes, marketing, distribution and use, as well as social and gender conduct in the 1700s. It has explored how these fans, alongside those produced by some of his fan making contemporaries and predecessors, enabled novel forms of eighteenth-century social conduct to be enacted in London. It has advanced understanding of the importance of conduct for women in the context of the period. Importantly, it has also explored how Wilson's fans, in particular, visually confirmed, and made a spectacle of, eighteenth-century attitudes towards perceived gender roles, which were both played upon, and reinforced by his use of figurative print material. For example, this thesis has revealed that the male characters displayed on Wilson's *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* (Fig. 1) would have not only alerted an owner to the conduct of men they might have meet, but taken these familiar tropes of social types and overlaid them with innovative visual and textual satire that made them potent carriers of meaning.⁷³⁸ Studying Wilson's fan leaf oeuvre underscores the point that it was believed by men that women needed guidance over matters of conduct. Equally, it has been established that they could counteract modern modes of masculinity and femininity, which may have upturned conventional ways of living and helped stabilise a society in rapid transition in the 1790s.

⁷³⁸ *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *The Ladies Bill of Fare (1)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.512.

The thesis has highlighted how Wilson formed associations with a variety of visual compositions, pictorial motifs and literary tropes in order to convey the point that virtuous modes of English conduct was essential to contesting the threatening influence of foreign modes of behaviour and ritual in the 1790s. It has examined how he encouraged a range of satirical and innovative ways to learn about manners and deportment in the 1790s. The desire for Wilson's female customer base to absorb a new kind of conduct instruction led him to astutely rearrange virtuous and satiric tropes from a diverse array of conduct literature on the fan leaf surface. My research demonstrates that a few of his fan designs, such as the engraved and etched fan print *The Folly of Man or The World Grown Odd & Crazy* (Fig. 7), produced in 1797 and illustrating a series of modern follies, when carried by a woman in the public sphere, likely promoted them as protectors of civic conduct.⁷³⁹ In addition, this thesis contributes to knowledge in this field by uncovering that these modes of instruction include edification, amusement, as well as satire. Some of Wilson's fan print designs evoke contemplation, encapsulated by the stipple-engraved *The Female Seven Ages (I)* (Fig. 45), produced in 1796.⁷⁴⁰ This thesis has confirmed that Wilson's fan print designs were effective in aiding an owner's understanding of conduct, in part, as a mounted fan print could easily collapse the physical distance between itself and the person holding it and allowed for all imagery to be shown simultaneously.

Some of Wilson's fans alerted an owner to, and helped them to recognise and take note of, modern modes of masculine conduct that they saw around them and actively react

⁷³⁹ *The Folly of Man or the World Grown Odd and Crazy*, hereafter referred to as *The Folly of Man*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.495.

⁷⁴⁰ *The Female Seven Ages (I)* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Seven Ages (I)*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.415.

either positively or negatively to these. The chapters in this thesis have discovered that preoccupation over well-established and newer modes of behaviours were issues both skilfully played upon, and reinforced by, fan makers' reuse of print and literary material, and so, in turn, contributed to such debates in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Indeed, it appears a few of Wilson's fan print designs, such as the line-engraved fan print *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart* (Fig. 10) ridiculed obsessions with modes of conduct to help a female customer base focus on their own behaviour and understand that of others.⁷⁴¹

Close analysis of Wilson's fan print designs show that they helped to identify visually emerging types of male conduct in the 1790s, as well as mocking these new models of masculinity. This author believes that investigation on contemporary viewership should consider the engraved narrative fans produced by Wilson as empowering to an extent because, even though designed by a man, they provided alternative modes of entertainment and conduct, and permitted consumer choice for women. More than this, Wilson's adaption of the novel process of viewing series of imagery relating to textual sources, as exhibited in literary picture galleries in the 1790s, has been shown to offer an original way in which his fan print designs' educational message could be conveyed and understood.

⁷⁴¹ *The Quiz Club, Dedicated to all the Beaus in Christendom; by S.A Professor of Physiognomy & Corrector of the Heart*, hereafter referred to as *The Quiz Club*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.510.

This thesis ultimately determines that, by the end of the eighteenth century, the fan leaf format had effectively become the alternative form of conduct instruction for women, emerging with new consequence and appeal. Not only this, it has revealed the engraved fan leaf format to be an important outlet for experimentation with engraving techniques and compositional forms. Indeed, I would contend that the fan leaf form enabled a separate route by which artists could influence public opinion, perception and taste. Accordingly, this thesis's analysis has effectively reframed Vivian Jones's way of interpreting conduct literature put forward in her 1996 essay 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature'.⁷⁴² It confirms Jones's argument that it is important to take a more nuanced reading of eighteenth-century conduct books, as 'something more interesting and more varied than is sometimes implied' can indeed equally be applied to Wilson's fan print designs.⁷⁴³

In Chapter One, the fan shop was revealed as a dynamic nexus of print, fashion, novelty, politics and entertainment. It expanded contemporaneous understanding of print culture in eighteenth-century London by establishing fan shops as central players in the variety of visual culture that proliferated within it. Investigation of the emergent types of spaces in which fans, as well as other types of artwork and literary texts, were sold, showed the appeal of such selling establishments based in the Pall Mall area. Furthermore, the space of the fan shop was recognised as bringing together a diverse range of objects, notably fans, prints, books and magazines; all of which helped ally the fan leaf format in the minds of customers with the subject matter that these other visual

⁷⁴² Vivian Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', Roy Porter and Marie Roberts (eds), *Pleasure in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1996.

⁷⁴³ Jones, 'The Seductions of Conduct: Pleasure and Conduct Literature', 109.

and textual forms displayed for sale. A study of London based fan shops helps an understanding of how printed fans were circulated alongside a wider variety of paper-based material, such as prints, and acted as a connexion of a variety of visual culture, craft and entertainment. This analysis reveals Wilson's printed fan designs were at the intersection of fine and decorative arts, innovative in their updating of age-old themes and visualisations of nationalistic political agendas, as well as enabling artistic experimentation. Hence, Wilson's enterprise expands current understanding of the circulation, and fluid interplay, of images in the latter half of the eighteenth century; their relationship to popular culture, novelty and manufacture; and their relationship to prints.

Chapter Two focused on fans and conduct literature. This thesis's study of Wilson's engagement with virtuous and satirical literary tropes circulating in London in the 1790s adds original knowledge to this field by showing that he tapped into satirical, scandalous and instructional accounts of behaviour discussed in conduct-related literature. It can be surmised that the decorative and thematic aspects of Wilson's fan print designs together facilitated the engraved fan leaf's transformation into a new form of effective mobile conduct instructor. My research has demonstrated that three of Wilson's fan leaves, *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist, Seven Ages (1)* and *The Good Swain*, relate to sources of conduct literature that discuss virtuous tropes of female conduct. *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* presents a model of how a woman can partake in entertainments 'with honour & Moderation', while *The Lady's Adviser, Physician & Moralist* offers preventative advice against such things as looking 'at the unpleasant side of every object'.

Wilson captures the attention of his female customers by composing some of his fan print narratives from a female viewpoint. *Seven Ages (1)* offers an ideal mode of female living throughout life and encourages spiritual contemplation, and *The Good Swain*, produced by Wilson as a stipple-engraved fan print in 1795, depicts an idyllic partnership and set of behaviours between man *and* wife throughout life.⁷⁴⁴ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan print, produced by Wilson a year later in 1796, bears close visual and textual parallels with satirical conduct writing's strategy of utilising a type of disagreeable behaviour so that it can be improved.⁷⁴⁵ In a similar fashion, *The Ladies Bill of Fare, or a Copious Collection of Beaux (1)* and *The Folly of Man* are closely aligned with sources of conduct literature that discuss the satirical tropes of the beau and the fool, and alerting an owner to the conduct of men they might meet, as well as highlighting societal follies relevant to a female clientele. Significantly, Wilson's fan print designs take tropes of social types and overlay them with visual and textual satire in ingenious ways. These methods are found to include: the depiction of characters and events on the same page so as to let a viewer see it simultaneously; the depiction of pictures on the walls of some interior images that comment upon the narratives below them; and the incorporation of symbolic detail. Thus, the content of his fans can be seen to humour, educate, as well as alert a female carrier in an immediate and interactive way.

⁷⁴⁴ British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.483.

⁷⁴⁵ *The Good-for-Nothing Swain* fan leaf, hereafter referred to as *Good-for-Nothing*. British Museum Accession Number: 1891,0713.482.

In Chapter Three, an investigation of advances in late eighteenth-century fan design highlights the pervasive influence of the concept of novelty on many areas of late eighteenth-century life. Even examination of the possible use of a few of Wilson's fan leaves designs lends support for the case that the dissemination of such fan imagery proved pivotal in providing an original form of spectatorship and readership in London. Furthermore, this chapter establishes that picture and literary galleries, such as the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery, helped spectators to 'read' a tale as imagined in pictorial form, which could be viewed simultaneously when standing in the gallery. It is proposed that female visitors to these spaces could then, if they owned one of Wilson's narrative fans carrying a literary theme, both respond to the literary narrative and possibly more effectively engage with its own instructional message of conduct, as set across the fan leaf surface. It can be surmised that engraved fan narratives, like Wilson's *Shakespeare's, Seven Ages*, therefore offered an important novel route of dissemination on which textual and visual sources relating to modes of conduct were presented.⁷⁴⁶

Not only this, innovations in fan design opened up opportunities for innovative types of conduct to be enacted. Novel fans could facilitate threats to normative conduct, mask one's true identity and allow new modes of observing others for well-intentioned, curious or, indeed, ill-intentioned ends. Likewise, Wilson's innovative use of text and image on some of his fans, like *Good for Nothing*, point to the fact that they could possibly incite more disruptive moral codes, such as encouraging the actions of a ne'er-do-well. Equally, use of the *Necromantick Fan* (Fig. 131) would have allowed a woman to powerfully redirect the focus of gaze from a female to a male, while a handler who

⁷⁴⁶ Luisa Calè, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: Turning Readers into Spectators*, Oxford, 2006, 6.

chose to take up some of the instruction included on *Fanology or Speaking Fan's* (Fig. 138) surface could visually challenge the advice advocated in much conduct literature and, in so doing, produce their own spectacle of sorts. So, it can be argued that the language of fans and novelty fans responded to the different forms of conduct commented upon in conduct literature, examined in Chapter Two of this thesis. I ascertain this was done through the form of the fan itself and by way of its compositional design. Thus, Wilson's fans provided an aid for an owner to visually identify the modes of conduct of men and women around them, but so too allowed them to facilitate acts of misconduct themselves if desired. The fan leaf form had the advantage of having the ability to unite unique sensory, visual and functional elements, as well as enable multiple meanings and uses depending on the gender of the viewer and/or owner, in a single mobile instrument.

Finally, Chapter Four addressed Wilson's fans beyond their contemporary eighteenth-century context, by examining their collection in the nineteenth century by Lady Schreiber. The renewed attention given to fans in the nineteenth century seems to have been instigated by the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers in order to try to enable a revival of the British fan industry. The presentation of English fans within an exhibition framework chimed well with the wider cultural context of the late nineteenth century, one in which Britain's industrial might was promoted alongside attempts to educate the populace through the staging of such exhibitions. The study has found that Lady Schreiber's collecting practices, when contrasted with those of a few of her prominent contemporaneous fan collectors, point towards a different aim for her own collection. Lady Schreiber's tracing of the development of caricature on the fan leaf format serves

to highlight her interest in the relationship established between an owner and fan in its original usage and seems to account for an interest in Wilson's fan designs. For late nineteenth-century audience, viewing and reading about these fans would have brought to life a chronology of the manners and historical events of the age. Thus, it can be concluded Lady Schreiber's interests and intellect facilitated an insight into the relevance of conduct for women in the 1700s and the use to which a female owner may have been able to put such fans.⁷⁴⁷ Yet, this thesis progresses scholarship in this area by examining how the case study of Wilson's printed fans contained in Lady Schreiber's collection, through their physical form, could facilitate close relationships with their owners and be used in a number of novel ways in their hands.

The chapters in this thesis have ultimately revealed some of the realities Wilson's fans told about society in the eighteenth century and aid realisation that they still bear meaning for women's circumstances today; in a world where the multiple ways to view one's own and others' conduct, in visual, textual and online formats, allow for scrutiny as never before. Thus, the benefit of this research for a new interpretation of eighteenth-century fans in this field lies in its placement of the fan print at the heart of a complex relationship with other types of printed artwork and texts. This thesis's highlighting of the central role fans possibly played in a female owner's life indicates that analysis of Wilson's prints is perhaps timely, opportune and even urgent.

⁷⁴⁷ Lionel Cust (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Fans and Fan-Leaves, Presented to the Trustees of the British Museum by the Lady Charlotte Schreiber*, FB & c Ltd., catalogue, London, 2015, 8.

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