Nicholas Till

‘First-Class Evening Entertainments’: Spectacle and Social Control in a Mid-Victorian Music Hall

First-Class Evening Entertainments was the title given to a variety programme presented at Hoxton Hall in East London when it first opened in 1863. In 2000 Nicholas Till and Kandis Cook were commissioned by Hoxton Hall and the English National Opera Studio to make a new music theatre piece for the Hall, which led to an investigation of the content and context of the original programme. In the following article Nicholas Till offers a reading of the 1863 programme as an example of the mid-Victorian project to exercise social control over the urban working classes. Nicholas Till is Senior Lecturer in Theatre at Wimbledon School of Art, and co-artistic director of the experimental music theatre company Post-Operative Productions. He is the author of *Mozart and the Enlightenment: Truth, Virtue, and Beauty in Mozart's Operas* (Faber, 1992), and is currently editing *The Cambridge Companion to Opera*.

THE ENTRANCE to Hoxton Hall sits in a terrace of stuccoed houses, its modest facade, marked by nothing more than two chaste Victorian lamps, presenting no competition to the loud plastic fascia of a nearby Iceland. Across the way a housing estate stands on the site of the former Britannia Theatre, once described by Dickens as the grandest of all East End theatres. Its spirit lingers in the fanciful Shakespearean names of the estate buildings: Miranda House, Falstaff Walk, Rosalind Terrace. Further on up the street is what remains of the ‘Offices for the Relief of the Poor’ (aka the workhouse), built in 1863, the same year as Hoxton Hall, a barracks-like building which was largely demolished in 1982 before its potential for yuppy-loftification was recognized.

‘First-Class Evening Entertainments’ was the title given to a variety programme which was presented at Hoxton Hall when it first opened on 2 November 1863. The programme was published on 7 November in the local *Shoreditch Observer*. This was unusual, but it seems that *The Shoreditch Observer* was closely associated with the Hoxton Hall project, for in September 1863 it had printed a leader with the title ‘Amusements and Morality’, clearly adumbrating the social and ideological premises that underpinned the project.

Additional material about the programme is provided by reviews of the opening night in *The Shoreditch Observer* of 7 November and *The Era* (the *Time Out* of the Victorian variety stage) of 8 November, as reproduced on pages 6–7. The programme (also from *The Shoreditch Observer*, on page 5) offers an eclectic mix of entertainment (magic acts, music, and storytelling); education (an illustrated talk on ‘Healthy Moral Homes’, a presentation on the history of the British Army); and information (an illustrated talk on ‘The Prince of Wales’ Tour in the East’ – a practical demonstration of the transmission of current affairs via the telegraph). It is a mix not unlike that of modern public service broadcasting.

In this article I offer an analysis of the programme as an example of the mid-Victorian project to exercise social control over the urban working classes through a range of ideological and disciplinary regimes, many of which concentrated on the provision of urban leisure. By 1863 the East End of London had begun to gain its fearful reputation for overcrowding, poverty, disease, and crime. In Shoreditch the population numbers reached

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a peak in 1861, before the outer expansion of London began to relieve pressure on the inner city (Mander, p. 61).

From the mid-nineteenth century the Victorian ruling classes recognized that in creating an urban working class they had given birth to a slumbering monster which had merely flexed its muscles in the mass political movement of the age, Chartism. With the collapse of Chartism in 1848 the ruling classes seized the initiative to implement an active programme of social control and ideological education. In a period in which it is estimated that only 3 per cent of the population read daily newspapers, the new ideological doxa had primarily to be transmitted orally and visually (Williams, p. 121), for which public entertainment venues provided the perfect vehicle. During the 1850s there emerged an extensive campaign for the promotion of 'rational recreation' in Britain (Bailey, 1978), and Hoxton Hall was clearly a part of this project, the entertainments being described in *The Shoreditch Observer* as of 'a most pleasing and rational character'.

The 1863 Hoxton programme was intended to contribute to the social project of forging a hard-working, self-improving, loyal, patriotic, and ultimately docile working class. The Victorian faith in technological progress and social improvement, narratives of national identity, the new imperial mission, and a monarchy worthy of sentimental devotion were all represented. The programme also exemplifies some of the ways in which ideology typically works through manipulation and deception: the promised demonstration of telegraphic news direct from the Civil War in America could not actually have taken place since the first transatlantic cable, laid in 1858, was not operative by 1863.

The picture that was presented of British triumphs in the Crimean War and of the exemplary character of the Prince of Wales were equally 'spun'; so the 'entertainment of magical illusions' with which the programme opens could serve as a controlling metaphor for the whole occasion. But as Deleuze and Guattari remind us, social control relies upon more than policing and ideological prestidigitation:

> Modern power is not at all reducible to the classical alternative 'repression or ideology' but implies processes of normalization, modulation, modelling, and information that bear on language, perception, desire, movement, etc., which proceed by way of micro-assemblages.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari, p. 456–9)

The 1863 Hoxton Hall programme must be seen as an experimental crucible for just such an array of micro-assemblages.

Deliberate Strategies of Confusion

Hidden behind the discreet facade of Hoxton Hall and the drably institutional entrance is the original hall: a narrow horseshoe with a high stuccoed ceiling, lined with two ornate cast-iron balconies that run around the room from back wall to back wall of the stage end of the hall, enfolding the stage itself. The stage is a series of platforms rising steeply to the level of the second balcony at the back, without proscenium or wings. Clearly this is not a conventional theatre space for drama. Indeed, the building's original architect, builder, and manager, James Mortimer, would have required a different kind of licence for dramatic presentation – one which would not have allowed him to sell drink on the premises, which was crucial to his project of luring the working classes off the streets and away from their pubs and gin-palaces. The space is in fact an odd mixture of lecture hall and variety theatre, purpose-built for the intended programme of rational entertainments. (It is known that the Hall has undergone some remodelling since it was built in 1863, but the parts of the original scheme that survive make it clear that the hall could never have been used for conventional dramatic presentations.)

The 1863 programme looks to our eyes distinctly postmodern in its eclectic confusion of information, education, and entertainment. In this respect it reminds us of the difficulty of disentangling pre- and postmodernity, for the Hoxton programme seems to straddle both possibilities. On the one hand the programme clearly identifies and distinguishes the three cognitive realms of modernity identified by Max Weber, who, in the words of Jürgen Habermas,

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characterized cultural modernity as the separation of the substantive reason expressed in religion and metaphysics into three autonomous spheres. They are: science, morality and art.

(Habermas, p. 9)

Yet the presentation of these three cognitive realms within a common space at Hoxton Hall seems to indicate a lingering pre-modern lack of certainty about their substantive differences. On the other hand, the programme also anticipates the means by which postmodern ideology typically operates through the deliberate confusion of fact, value, and pleasure as attributes of those cognitive realms, and to this extent it may be characterized (if we must) as proto-postmodern. It is my object to demonstrate that the deployment of these strategies of confusion to ideological ends indicates a deliberate rather than an unwitting, or pre-modern, confusion.

It is one of the valuable projects of postmodernism that it questions the possibility of divorcing fact, value, and pleasure, insisting that all knowledge is interested. In place of the immanence of a modernist critical philosophy in which the transcendental grounds for each intellectual realm are determined autonomously, a postmodern method brings the different intellectual realms into a critical relationship with each other, offering a challenge to the ideological barriers once erected between positivism and naturalism on one side and a purely formalist ethics and aesthetics on the other. As Habermas argues, 'Communication processes need a cultural tradition covering all spheres – cognitive, moral-practical, and expressive – to overcome the instrumental reifications of modernity' (Habermas, p. 11).

But it is no less incumbent upon us to exercise vigilance against the complete collapse of these spheres into each other. We need only look at the deliberate confusion of information, education, and entertainment – knowledge realms once assumed to be safely self-contained by those who drew up the original charter of the BBC – in the slippery categories of infotainment and edutainment purveyed by contemporary broadcast media. The spheres of science and magic, inform-

Hoxton Hall, High-street, Hoxton.

Proprietor, Mr. JAMES MORTIMER.

FIRST-CLASS EVENING ENTERTAINMENTS.

PROGRAMME FOR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH, AND SUCCEEDING WEEK.

Opening Chorus by the Orpheus Quartet.

Professor LOGRENIA, the Royal Conjuror, and Great Ambidexterous Prestidigitateur's ENTERTAINMENT of MAGICAL ILLUSIONS, introducing the wonderful Performing Russian Cat, Learned Canary Birds and White Mice.

The GREAT BATTLES of the BRITISH ARMY, from Hastings to Inkermann. The Story of a Battle told every evening, by Mr. JOHN M'GILCHRIST, Author of "The Military Heroes of England."

Glee by the Orpheus Quartet.

Mr. M'GILCHRIST will, each evening, tell an ORIGINAL SENSATION STORY.

HOMES of the PEOPLE: As they are, and as they might be. Illustrated by the Lime Light and by Model. By Mr. JAMES MORTIMER, Patentee, Architect, and Builder of Improved Dwellings for the Working Classes.

Chorus by the Orpheus Quartet.

The PRINCE of WALES' TOUR in the EAST, by Mr. W. SEPPINGS. Illustrated by MAGNIFICENT DISSOLVING VIEWS, and Illuminated with the Oxy-Hydrogen Lime Light.

LIST OF VIEWS.

1. The Prince and Princess of of Wales
   Chorus—"GOD BLESS THE PRINCE OF WALES."
2. Interior of Buckingham Palace. } Magnified Photographs.
3. Exterior of Saint Paul's } Magnified Photographs.
4. Leaving Port
   Glee—"THE TAR'S SONG"
5. The First Night at Sea
6. The Storm: Ship Struck by Lightning
7. The Ship on Fire
8. The Escape on the Raft
9. Saved
10. Gibraltar
11. Mount Vesuvius, by Day
12. ,, in eruption, by Night
13. Alexandria
14. Grand Cairo
    Glee—The SOLDIER'S SONG
15. Ruins of Edfou
16. Philœ
17. Pharaoh's Bed
    Glee—SPRING'S DELIGHTS
18. Jerusalem from the N.E.
19. ,, from the Enclosure of the Temple
20. Exterior of Holy Sepulchre
21. Interior ,, ,,
22. Mosque of Omar, by Day
23. ,, ,, by Night, illuminated
    Glee—STARS OF THE SUMMER NIGHT.
24. Pool of Siloam
25. Jericho
26. Nazareth
27. Bethlehem: The Vision of the Angels
28. The Convent on Mount Carmel
29. Cedars of Lebanon
30. Damascus
31. Baalbec: Temple of the Sun
32. Smyrna
33. Constantinople
34. ,, The Maiden's Tower
35. Malta
36. Windsor
37. GOOD NIGHT

The COMICAL ADVENTURES of a TIGER and a TUB, by Mr. W. SEPPINGS. Illustrated by the LIME LIGHT.

Doors open at 7 o'clock—commence at half-past 7 o'clock.

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REFRESHMENTS of the best quality supplied at moderate charges.

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November, 1863.

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ation and education, may remain notionally distinct at Hoxton Hall, but the presentational rhetoric that surrounds them suggests that the Victorian providers of 'rational entertainment' knew precisely what they were doing. As the prospectus cited in *The Era* makes clear, James Mortimer planned the Hall

> with the specific object of affording to the humbler classes an entertainment that shall combine instruction with amusement . . . to form a nucleus for the regeneration, as it were, of that class of mankind who, even in the present enlightened century, have not an idea beyond the pot-house bar and ribaldry that appertains thereto.

'Wholesome Music Hall'

The Era describes Hoxton Hall as a 'Music Hall', a designation that reflects its licensing status. The 1843 Theatres Act had expanded the number of theatres permitted to present plays, but not if refreshments were served in the auditorium; proprietors wishing to serve refreshments – the 'drop of good beer' advertised by Mortimer – had to seek a music licence instead (see Cheshire).

Music halls had developed in Britain in the 1840s as a means of organizing and commercializing the more informal musical entertainment offered until that time largely in pubs, tavern concert rooms, and singing saloons (Scott, 2002, p. 60–73). Musical venues of this kind became one of the most important locations of urban leisure during the 1830s and 1840s, and social reformers were quick to spot the potential offered by such spaces 'to combine social enjoyment with wholesome instruction' (Bailey, 1978, p. 43).

HOXTON HALL ENTERTAINMENTS.

We are pleased to be able to announce the inauguration at the above elegant hall—which has been erected by Mr. James Mortimer, the patentee and builder of improved separate dwellings for all classes—of a series of entertainments of a most pleasing and rational character, which commenced on Monday last under highly promising auspices. The present bill of fare, which will be varied as circumstances require, consists of a performance by the Orpheus Quartett Union, by singing, in very capital style, a fine old English chorus, after which Mr. John M'Gilchrist, the author of "Men who have made themselves," related in a graphic and effective manner, as one of a series of discourses on self-made men, the chief incidents in the life of Lord Brougham, in the course of which he touched upon the circumstances connected with the trial of Queen Caroline, and other points, which told well with the audience.

Mr. W. H. Cockburn then followed with his "Adventures in the Crimean War with the Bashi-Bazouks," which is an attractive sketch, and was given with considerable gusto by Mr. Cockburn, who by the why appeared in the picturesque costume of a Bashi-Bazouk.

Mr. M'Gilchrist then related some of the prominent features of the news of the day, derived from "special sources," which made the audience acquainted with all the stirring events that had occurred, abroad and at home, and which had been ventilated between the time the morning papers had been published and that at which they were recounted by Mr. M'Gilchrist. So that those who seek after novelty must go to Hoxton Hall, where it will be served up every night fresh from the original sources.

The "Homes of the People" were next brought under the consideration of the audience by Mr. Mortimer, who produced models of separate dwellings, erected by him at New Cross, the chief characteristics of which have already been discussed in this journal. After an illustration of the "Homes of the People," as they were, and as they are proposed to be, by Mr. Mortimer, the entertainment concluded by the exhibition of a series of beautiful views illustrative of "The Prince of Wales's Tour in the East." These views, illuminated by the oxy-hydrogen lime-light, under the auspices of Mr. W. Seppings, were highly effective, and were received with very considerable applause. A neat explanatory lecture descriptive of the tour, by Mr. Seppings, added to the interest of the exhibition, and the audience evinced much approval at the efforts which the proprietor had made, as his programme states, to provide "delight to the ear, enjoyment for the eye, and instruction for the mind." We shall from time to time recur to these very entertainments, and would advise those who seek a pleasant evening's diversion to avail themselves of the opportunity by them afforded.

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In 1862 the manager of Wilton's Music Hall, which opened in 1859, claimed that the decrease of drunkenness and breaches of the peace in the East End since the 1840s could be attributed to 'nothing else but the establishment of cheap and rational entertainment which these music halls have provided for the working classes of this country' (Honri, p. 27). And the benefits were not just with regard to crime and drunkenness, as one proprietor made clear in 1851:

> Is not the working man . . . more beneficially, more properly, and less harmfully employed, when listening to such music and innocent entertainments . . . than he would be drinking and smoking in some taproom, talking politics until he becomes a Chartist or a rebellious democrat dangerous to society?
>
> (Russell, p. 86)

But of course the entertainments were hardly innocent.

Regulation through Illumination

An elegantly-fitted and brilliantly-lighted Hall.
The Era, 8 Nov. 1863

HOXTON MUSIC HALL.—There is seldom an evil without an attendant good resulting therefrom—a fact that may be said to be exemplified by the opening of a new Hall, situate in the High-street of Hoxton. This Hall has been erected by Mr. James Mortimer, for the specific object of affording to the humbler classes an entertainment that shall combine instruction with amusement. Mr. Mortimer is the patentee and builder of improved separate dwellings for all classes, and owing to the important pending question regarding the "poor of Bethnal-green and Shoreditch," he has been induced, not alone to devote his talent to the designing of cheap and separate dwellings for the poor inhabitants of this populous district, but further to erect a Hall wherein the visitor shall find a half literary and a half musical entertainment. He provides for him a "a drop of good beer," a comfortable seat in an elegantly-fitted and brilliantly-lighted Hall, music that would do credit to many a second-class Concert-room, and information on all the important events of the day, coupled with those of "days long vanished," by which medium Mr. Mortimer seeks to form a nucleus for the regeneration, as it were, of that class of mankind who, even in the present enlightened century, have not an idea beyond the pot-house bar and the ribaldry that appertains thereto. The auspices under which this new establishment was opened on Monday night were of a most satisfactory nature, inasmuch as the somewhat novel programe provided for the occasion met with the most genuine appreciation of a crowded and well-conducted audience, whose attention appeared as fully absorbed in the news conveyed in the latest telegrams from America and the insurrection in Poland, as in the harmony sent forth by the members of the Orpheus Quartet Union, or in the dissolving views illustrative of the Prince of Wales's Tour in the East, which were admirably described by Mr. W. Stebbings. In the course of the evening Mr. Mortimer delivered an address explanatory of the system he intended to pursue for the "intellectual, healthful, and innocent amusement of the masses," which is to comprise narratives of the "Great Battles of the British Army, from Hastings to Inkermann," by Mr. John M'Gilchrist, author of "The Military Heroes of England;" "Adventures in the Crimean War with the Bashi Bazouks," by Mr. W. H. Cockburn, who did and will appear in the costume of a Bashi Bazouk; glees every evening by the Orpheus Quartet Union: "The Story of the Lives of Poor Men who have risen from the Ranks, including Robert Burns, George Stephenson, William Cobbett, Lord Brougham, Josiah Wedgewood, James Watt, &c.," also by Mr. M'Gilchrist, author of "Men who have Made Themselves;" and lectures on the "Homes of the People—as they are and as they might be.' Each of these subjects was introduced with the greatest success, and after an agreeable evening the audience departed evidently pleased with what they had both seen and heard.

Many of the contemporary descriptions of Victorian music halls admire their brilliant illumination. Thus, in 1858 Dickens visited the Britannia Theatre in Hoxton Street, and noted that it was 'magnificently lighted by a firmament of sparkling chandeliers' (Mander, p. 92). For people used to living in dank and poorly lit dwellings, whose leisure was customarily confined to dingy alehouses or murky gambling dens, the brilliant lighting of the music halls must have added a particular lustre to a night out at the theatre.

But let us cast more light on the meaning of so much light. Of the Canterbury, the first music hall to be so designated, a journalist could claim in 1852 that 'The magnificent and brilliantly lighted hall, in which the concert is held, exercises no little influence upon the morals of the audience' (Scott, 1946, p. 139) Within these palaces of glitter and dazzle the illusions of ideology did not need to be secured through subterfuge; they were brazenly displayed as spectacle. Jean-Eugene Robert-Houdin, the founder of modern stage magic in the 1840s, explicitly advocated the importance of good lighting for his acts.

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(Cook, p. 192). The conjuror had nothing to hide; but the real trick lay in the disciplinary effect of the illumination itself, which was turned not upon the performers on stage, but upon the audience.

Music halls were spaces in which the poor of the East End, enticed from their invisibility in back alleys and slums, or from the teeming 'nomadic' life of the streets (to use the term employed by Henry Mayhew), could be contained and exposed to the light of surveillance. Thus Hoxton Hall may be recognized as a part of the general project of nineteenth-century urbanization, as clearly described by Guy Debord:

> After the French Revolution, the efforts of all established powers to increase the means of maintaining order in the streets finally culminates in the suppression of the street. . . . The general movement of isolation, which is the reality of urbanism, must also include a controlled reintegration of workers depending on the need of production and consumption that can be planned. Integration into the system requires that isolated individuals be recaptured and *isolated together*. Factories and halls of culture, tourist resorts and housing developments are expressly organized to serve this pseudo-community.
>
> (Debord, Section 172)

The Control of Space

In London unregulated spaces such as Bartholemew Fair, closed in 1855, were replaced during the 1840s and 1850s by controlled public spaces such as parks and entertainment venues. Foucault describes a new panoptic architecture 'that is no longer built simply to be seen (as with the ostentation of palaces), but to permit an internal, articulated and detailed control – to render visible those who are inside it' (Foucault, p. 172). Such buildings are described by Foucault as like 'so many small theatres' for the display of subjects as actors (ibid., p. 200).

At the Britannia Theatre Dickens had observed that, as a theatre catering almost exclusively for a working-class audience, it did not have to maintain the usual spatial distinctions of class.

> Here they were not put away in a dark gap in the roof of an immense building . . . they were in possession of eligible points of view. . . . Instead of being at a great disadvantage in comparison with the mass of the audience, they were here the audience, for whose accommodation the place was made.
>
> (Quoted in Barker, p. 35)

If the audience was in possession of eligible points of view they were at the same time, of course, viewable. And Dickens did indeed comment upon

> the appearance of the audience, as seen from the proscenium – with every face in it commanding the stage, and the whole so admirably raked and turned to the centre, that a hand can scarcely move in the great assemblage without the movement being seen from thence.
>
> (Quoted in Carlisle, p. 167)

But as Foucault and others insist, panopticism is about more than simply surveillance. The panoptic society works to produce subjects through the imposition of an array of self-regulating disciplinary regimes. At the cheaper 'penny gaff' music halls in Shoreditch, dark and rowdy, police had to be deployed to ensure that order was maintained (Scott, 2002, p. 71; Stedman-Jones, p. 478). At the Britannia, however, Dickens was able to observe that the audience policed itself, ejecting anyone who was disruptive, and thereby keeping 'excellent order' (Carlisle, p. 167).

Jonathan Crary has described the inculcation of 'attentiveness' in both work and leisure as one of the most important disciplinary devices of the nineteenth century. Through the attentiveness that the new forms of entertainment demanded, working-class audiences were to be inducted into standards of public decorum and manners that were deemed essential for their new role as 'respectable' public citizens and subjects, an effect recorded by the social reformer Henry Morley when observing the audience at Sadler's Wells theatre:

> There sat our working-classes in a happy crowd, as orderly and reverent as if they were at church, and yet as unrestrained in their enjoyment as if listening to stories told them by their own firesides.
>
> (Carlisle, p. 170)

At Hoxton Hall, whose prices of 3d, 6d, and 9d indicate that it was clearly aimed at a

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better class of audience than the infamous penny gaffs down the road, such was the effectiveness of Mortimer's disciplinary format that the newspapers could similarly describe the first-night audience as

> crowded and well-conducted . . . whose attention appeared as fully absorbed in the news conveyed in the latest telegrams from America and the insurrection in Poland, as in the harmony sent forth by members of the Orpheus Quartet Union or in the dissolving views illustrative of the Prince of Wales's Tour in the East.
>
> (*The Era*, 8 November 1863)

Making Music Respectable

The Orpheus Quartet, which provided the musical fare for the programme, is billed as singing choruses and 'glees', each of which was chosen for its suitability to the different items of the programme. Even if the musical component of the Hoxton Hall programme might essentially have been considered as an item of entertainment rather than instruction, Victorian educators could none the less find many justifications for the disciplinary uses of music.

Dr Kay Shuttleworth, the government's education adviser in the 1840s, once argued that singing was 'an important means of forming an industrious, brave, loyal, and religious working class' (Bailey, 1978, p. 58). Shuttleworth's faith in the moral effects of singing would have been founded upon the value of participatory music-making. This was indeed the basis of the entertainments offered in the tavern concert rooms and song-and-supper clubs which had preceded the growth of formal music halls.

The development of the music hall proper must be seen as an aspect of the general trend towards the professionalization and commercialization of music in the nineteenth century. Jacques Attali identifies the relationship between the economic and ideological aspects of this process, whose effect is to 'deritualize a social form, repress an activity of the body, specialize its practice, sell it as spectacle, generalize its consumption . . . ' (Attali, p. 5). Participatory musical activity was to be increasingly relegated to the home as an aspect of domestic leisure for which specific forms of music could be marketed. Amongst these were thousands of formulaic glees and part-songs written by hugely successful composers such as Sir Henry Bishop (Britain's first musical knight).

At the same time the boisterous and often subversive cultural production of the street, operating according to pre-capitalist economic principles that precluded the extraction of surplus value, was to be controlled and commodified through the establishment of supervised commercial venues where acceptable discourses might be disseminated for profit. Attali sees this professionalization and commercialization of musical activity as part of a progressive silencing of dissident voices: 'The monologue of standardized, stereotyped music accompanies and hems in daily life in which in reality no one has the right to speak any more' (ibid., p. 8).

The presentation of what are largely domestic glees at Hoxton Hall in 1863 must be seen as a signifier of the 'respectability', offered in contrast to those newer forms of musical entertainment being developed in the commercial music halls. Glees were unaccompanied part-songs, and although tavern concert singing had been largely unaccompanied in the 1840s, by the 1860s it was common for at least a piano to accompany the newly popular solo 'character' songs (Bennett, in Bratton, ed., 1986).

Henry Mayhew informs us that in the 1850s, when there were still many itinerant glee singers working the streets, these often consisted of family groups. One such family complained vigorously to Mayhew that the new character songs were 'now more approved in the concert-rooms than Bishop's'. Mayhew's informants, who are proud of their 'high musical education', are dismissive of the new character songs, noting that they are often lewd and improper (Mayhew, Vol. 3, p. 194–5). The Orpheus Quartet may perhaps have been just such an itinerant family group, probably more used to plying their trade between public concert rooms of dubious repute and the street, often resorting to knocking on the doors of middle-class houses to offer their services. Such a group would have been well contented when

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Mortimer offered them a regular contract to sing their more old-fashioned 'respectable' glees at Hoxton Hall.

The glees served as that part of the programme which worked affectively, operating beneath the basic economy of rational positivism and scientism which informs most of the programme to reinforce its message through a subliminal appeal to the feelings – as in film and TV music. Adorno and Eisler offer a clear analysis of this function of film music in relation to the technological positivism of the mechanical film image (or, indeed, Mortimer's 'Magnificent Dissolving Views . . . llluminated with the Oxy-Hydrogen Lime Light') as 'an extreme version of the general function of music under conditions of industrially controlled cultural consumption. Music is supposed to bring out the spontaneous, essentially human element in its listeners and in virtually all human relations' (Adorno and Eisler, p. 20–2).

More specifically, in silent film presentations Adorno and Eisler suggest that it was the function of music to drown the disturbing mechanical whirring of the projector, and they must have remembered back to their own childhoods for an analogy:

> There remains the question of why should the sound of the projector have been so unpleasant? Hardly because of its noisiness but rather because it seemed to belong to that uncanny sphere which anyone who remembers the magic-lantern performances can easily evoke. The grating, whirring sound actually had to be 'neutralized', 'appeased', not merely muted. . . . The experience in question is probably a collective one akin to panic, and it involves the flashlike awareness of being a helpless inarticulate mass given over to the power of a mechanism. . . . This is precisely the consciousness of one's own mechanization.
>
> (Adorno and Eisler, p. 76)

The glees that accompanied the magic lantern projections of the 'Prince of Wales' Tour in the East' evidently pre-empted Adorno's and Eisler's disturbing experience.

Capitalism as Conjuring Trick

Professor LOGRENIA, the Royal Conjuror, and Great Ambidexterous Prestidigitateur's ENTERTAINMENT of MAGICAL ILLUSIONS, introducing the wonderful Performing Russian Cat, Learned Canary Birds and White Mice.

The literal meaning of the term *prestidigitator* is 'nimble-fingered', but its connotations extend to the idea of illusion, imposture, deception. Magic as deception and illusion may be equated with the workings of both ideology and consumerism. The puzzle of ideology is how the great mass of people are persuaded to support systems which are contrary to their own interests. Marx himself uses the metaphor of the *camera obscura* to depict the way in which ideology works to turn things upside down, representing them as the inverse of what they really are. Like magic, consumerism is also a con trick, which persuades people to invest in dreams and illusions which are never fulfilled; both Walter Benjamin and Adorno deployed the metaphor of the illusionist's 'phantasmagoria' to describe the workings of capitalism.

Magic and conjuring acts had migrated from the street to the stage during the early nineteenth century. Robert-Houdin had insisted on a distinction between pre-enlightenment magic, founded on the pretence of supernatural powers, and 'modern' magic, presented, in the words of James Cook in his book on *The Arts of Deception*, 'as an explicitly disenchanted form of theatrical entertainment', which emphasized 'manual dexterity, mechanical and scientific effects' (Cook, p. 166, 170). Cook describes the way in which Victorian magicians carefully deployed the rituals of the lecture rather than of entertainment to give authority to their acts, adopting 'a bourgeois form of dress (the tuxedo), stage design (much in the style of a Victorian parlour), and public rhetoric (they referred to their performances as scientific exercises, designed to instruct rather than deceive)' (ibid., p. 26). The Hoxton Hall conjuror was clearly assuming this guise when he designated himself with the quasi-academic title of 'Professor Logrenia'.

It is possible that 'Professor Logrenia' may have been the same 'street exhibitor of birds and mice' whom Henry Mayhew encountered in Shoreditch 1861, and who did indeed also work with a trained cat and

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canaries. Of the canaries, he explained to Mayhew:

> I have names for them all. I have Mr and Mrs Caudle, dressed quite in character: they quarrel at times, and that's self-taught with them. . . . They ride out in a chariot drawn by another bird. . . . Then I have Marshall Ney in full uniform, and he fires a cannon, to keep up the character.
> (Mayhew, Vol. 3, p. 219–20)

'Taming' the Labouring Classes

Mayhew's street exhibitor here offers a perfect metaphor for the control of the animalistic natures of the urban working classes which Victorian social reformers so desired. Mid-century Social Darwinism had encouraged the transfer of observation from the animal kingdom to human society. Thus, art historian Caroline Arscott has demonstrated the way in which the numerous Victorian animal paintings exhibited at the South London Art Gallery in Peckham, a gallery intended for working people, were employed to this end. Referring to egregiously sentimentalized paintings of families of domestic rabbits, Arscott suggests that:

> At one level these well-behaved and contented rabbits offer a straightforward equivalent to the working-class audience that the organizers of the South London Art Gallery wished to see.
> (Arscott, p. 80)

A cute image bred from acute stakes, for the rabbit also presented problems as a model for the desired image of a disciplined working class:

> How could this marauding pest with libertine breeding habits and cowardly disposition turn tail to become the object of emotional identification? (Ibid., p. 78)

This was the function of the paintings. Even closer to the panoptic architectural projects of James Mortimer (see below), Arscott tells us that 'rabbit farmers' handbooks of the period are filled with discussion about the most effective and economical means of providing heating and ventilation for the hutches'. (Ventilation was an issue of the greatest concern amongst Victorian housing reformers: it is, as we shall see, a crucial component of Mortimer's schemes for working-class housing, and Dickens was especially admiring of the ventilation system at the Britannia Theatre). 'All this translates very easily into the terms of the social policy of the interventionist state, or the measures proposed by paternalist philanthropy.'

With reference to the problematically 'cowardly disposition' of the rabbit/working-class man, the military apparatus of the street exhibitor's birds demands comment. It subjects the beasts to a very specific kind of disciplinary regime which had also been extended to the ordinary working man when the civil defence Volunteer Movement was founded in 1859. The fact that the authorities considered it safe to allow tens of thousands of working-class men to carry arms was itself a sign of post-Chartist confidence, but the pay-offs were clear. Not only would it make working men, in the words of a contemporary enthusiast, 'more attached to the government in every way, and less likely ever to promote political agitation'; there were also more immediate disciplinary advantages: 'It would impart unto the youth of the nation obedience, promptitude and self-respect, and provide a safe and salutary occupation for the increasing hours of leisure at men's disposal' (Cunningham, p. 28, 2).

If Professor Logrenia was also Mayhew's street exhibitor, and if his act did therefore include the military display, the presentation which followed would only have served to reinforce the message about the value of military discipline.

Purveying a Narrative of National Identity

The GREAT BATTLES of the BRITISH ARMY, from Hastings to Inkermann (followed by a talk on 'Adventures in the Crimean War' by Mr W. H. Cockburn, in the picturesque costume of a Bashi-Bazouk).

This item was presented by John McGilchrist, who was James Mortimer's partner in the Hoxton Hall project, and whose well-documented political, social, and educational views clearly confirm the reading of the ideological objectives of the project pre-

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sented hitherto. McGilchrist was a journalist, writer, and as a popular educationalist the author of exemplary biographies of great Victorians. He was also engaged in political agitation for the parliamentary representation of 'working people and smaller tradesmen', a topic on which he spoke at a public meeting held at the newly built Hoxton Hall, advertised in *The Shoreditch Observer*, which also supported the policy (*Shoreditch Observer*, 21 November 1863).

McGilchrist's views were typical of the petty-bourgeois radicalism of the period, maintaining a clear distinction between political and social/economic rights – according to which 'Social inequality is a natural difference; political inequality is an error and a wrong' (McGilchrist, 1857, p. 313). McGilchrist's electoral rights were also limited to the *respectable* working classes:

> There are whole classes of men, amounting to hundreds of thousands in this community, who possess no kind of fitness. They are incompetent, from extreme ignorance or vicious habits, to the performance of the most ordinary duties of social life. (Ibid., p. 291)

Like most Victorian reformers, McGilchrist made an essential distinction between the feckless and the 'deserving' poor, and it was the latter at whom Hoxton Hall was clearly aimed. His talk on battles alternated in the Hoxton programme with another entitled 'The Story of the Lives of Poor Men who have Risen from the Ranks' (*Shoreditch Observer*), presumably based on his book *Men Who Have Made Themselves: whence they started, how they journeyed, what they reached* (London, 1863). It was a theme that would have chimed well with the ideology of that classic Victorian best-seller, Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* of 1859.

McGilchrist's talk on the great battles of the British Army would have been derived from another of his books, *The Military Heroes of England*, also published in 1863. It represents a typical contribution to the construction of approved historical narratives of national identity during the Victorian era. In its positive portrayal of the British Army it also conformed to the specific agenda of the period to transform the public image of an body whose credibility had been seriously damaged by the disastrous management of the Crimean War – which was also the first war in which the public was kept abreast of developments through regular newspaper reports, transmitted home by telegraph and through illustrations and photographs.

Representations of the Crimean War had formed a regular item in popular theatrical representations both during the war and after (see Bratton, in Bradby, ed.). In 1857 a panorama of the Battle of Alma was presented at the Bolton Music Hall, accompanied by an address 'interspersed with familiar descriptions of Military Tactics, Evolutions, Siege Operations, Gunnery, etc., and profusions of interesting anecdotes' (Kift, p. 56). The theatrical representations offered during the war itself were part of a move to sustain public support for the war effort, to counter the damaging reports of political and military incompetence that had reached the public.

After the war, major reforms of the British Army had been undertaken by the Cardwell Commission, and these were accompanied by a vigorous campaign to promote a new image. The project was both practical and ideological, as explained by one historian:

> Through the Cardwell reforms and success of the Volunteer Movement, the army lost its old unpopularity and became a central element in national life. Cults of heroes from both distant and more recent past were assiduously promoted through children's literature, a powerful iconography, and the new education. (MacKenzie, p. 3)

McGilchrist's history of the British Army is clearly part of this project – a classic example of Whiggish historiography, a narrative which describes the progress of Britain towards a nationhood founded on the struggle for political and economic liberty based on free trade. Its tone is in fact far from militaristic, but what is inescapable is its *Boy's Own* endorsement of the spirit of 'heroism' and sacrifice represented by the British Army.

Press reviews elucidate the item described as 'Original Sensation Story', which consisted of 'news conveyed in the latest telegrams from

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America, and the insurrection in Poland' (*The Era*), 'ventilated between the time the morning papers had been published and that at which they were recounted' (*Shoreditch Observer*). The title of this item again hints at the project's pre- and postmodern aspects: it draws quite clearly on the lurid promotional language of street broadsheet sellers, but may also be seen as a precursor of the commodification of news as spectacle purveyed by the later Victorian mass media.

Celebrating the New Technology

The item also conveys the typical Victorian faith in science and technology. The international race to be the first to lay key submarine telegraph cables played the same role in national morale and prestige as the space race in the last century. Economic grounds for this faith were not hard to justify. The telegraph itself had proved to be the 'dotcom' miracle of its day, second only to the railway as a source of profit (until its 'nationalization' in 1869 – the first state nationalization to take place in modern Britain, proving that the Victorians were well aware of the relationship of information and power).

Like the railways, the telegraph had also contributed enormously to the development of trade and commerce (Standage, p. 155–7). The military grounds for this faith in science and technology had been conclusively proved by the strategic use of the telegraph in the Crimean War, which may have been most germane in the government's subsequent determination to take control of the apparatus.

Demonstrations of new scientific and technological developments were a favourite item of mid-Victorian public entertainment. In 1850 the Panoptikon in Leicester Square presented the following scientific novelties:

> Diving Apparatus, demonstration of Hydrostation (ascentional force of balloons in water), Holme's vacuum coated flask, Aurore Borealis Apparatus, the Thunder House, Manufacture of Pins, Gas Cooking Apparatus, Cork Hats, patent ornamental sewing machine, Euphatine, Exhibition of Pyrography (drawing with fire), the Musical Narrator (machine for recording improvised piano music), Electro-Magnetic Apparatus.
> (Scott, 1946, p. 187)

The facts of science were, of course incontrovertible. Or were they ?

The telegraph was hardly new by 1863. It had been developed extensively throughout Britain in the 1840s, and used for police investigation, news reporting, and railway timetabling. A 1861 map of the telegraph network of the London District Telegraph Company shows that a telegraph line, which would have been slung across the rooftops, ran from the company's own main office in Shoreditch to Dalston along Hoxton Street (Kieve). The development of methods of laying submarine cables had allowed direct communication between London and Paris by 1852. In 1858 the first transatlantic cable was laid, an event which was widely celebrated. In a book hastily published in 1858 to capture the moment, the cable was described as 'the greatest event in the present century', showing 'that nothing is impossible to man' (Briggs and Maverick, p. 2).

The Hoxton entertainments took place at a crucial moment in the American Civil War between the Battle of Gettysburg in July and Lincoln's Gettysburg address on 19 November. Like the concurrent Polish insurrection against the Russians, the progress of the anti-slavery Unionists in the American Civil War was a matter of keen interest to the kind of British Liberal opinion represented by McGilchrist and Mortimer.

Yet the news conveyed to Hoxton Hall from America raises a difficulty. The first transatlantic telegraph cable had indeed been laid in August 1858, but it had ceased to work after a month. News of its failure was kept under wraps for as long as possible, leading to speculation that the whole thing had in fact been an elaborate hoax (Standage, p. 81). The second and permanent cable was not laid until 1866. How, then, could the latest news have been brought by telegraph from America in 1863? Magic? Illusion? Con trick? *The Shoreditch Observer* report explains: it is news that has been 'ventilated' since the morning papers; it has not actually been

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telegraphed direct from America, but from an office in London.

Healthy Homes, Healthy Morality

James Mortimer's own contribution to the programme for which he built Hoxton Hall was a talk entitled 'HOMES of the PEOPLE: As they are, and as they might be'. In this talk Mortimer presented plans and a model for his 'Improved Dwellings for the Working Classes'. Show-house examples of these had already been erected near New Cross Station in South London, having been announced and advertised as 'cottage Residences with Gardens' in the *Shoreditch Observer* earlier in the year, with the additional support of an editorial puff. ('Healthy and Cheap Suburban Residences for the Industrious Classes of the Metropolis', 8 August 1863).

Mortimer's plans and theoretical prospectus, published in 1862, have survived his suburban cottage residences, which were demolished in the 1960s. The prospectus is entitled 'Healthy Moral Homes for the Industrious Classes' (consider that predicate in relation to the social views of Mortimer's partner McGilchrist). Apart from affirming the Victorian preoccupation with ventilation and sanitation, Mortimer is perhaps even more concerned to provide for the moral well-being of his tenants:

> There are but few must have observed the heart-rending sufferings experienced, and immoralities practised, when no separation of the sexes, much less families is carried out, and this constitutes the great social want even of the more genteel portion of society. (Mortimer, 1862)

Mortimer's housing project encapsulates a number of Victorian ideas on issues of housing and poverty. In 1863 St Leonard's Workhouse at the top of Hoxton Street was rebuilt to house 1,200 inmates; those who were fit worked in a stone-breaker's yard alongside Hoxton Hall (Mander, p. 52). The working classes who were not poor enough for the workhouse were housed in appalling conditions provided almost entirely by private landlords. Overcrowding was normal, with seven or eight families living in one house, where insanitary conditions contributed to high mortality rates.

Public concern about housing was initially roused by fears concerning public health: the slums bred and transmitted illness and disease from which even the ruling classes in the West End were not immune. The 1848 and 1875 Public Health Acts gave local councils the power to inspect and to regulate housing standards, and the 1868 Artisans and Labourers Dwelling Act gave local authorities powers to clear slums. But until the formation of the London County Council in the 1890s local boroughs lacked the power to provide public housing, and alternative housing was provided by private bodies such as the Society for Improving the Conditions of the Labouring Classes (1844) and the General Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Working Classes (1852), whose barrack-like but solidly built tenements continue to house the industrious poor of the capital.

Aside from health, the other issue that concerned Victorian housing reformers was 'morality' – the possibility of sexual activity, and even incest, occurring in overcrowded housing conditions, which is alluded to by Mortimer in his notice. The Sir John Simon report in 1865 on public health and housing discreetly raised this issue, which was more directly addressed in the Royal Commission of 1884–85, which eventually led to the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Acts (see Wohl, in Dyos and Wolff, ed.).

The majority of schemes for housing the working classes assumed high density inner-city tenements as the best solution. However, by the 1850s there were a number of proposals being made for the working classes to be housed in the suburbs, thanks to improved rail links to the city and government legislation requiring railway companies to provide cheap commuter fares for the working classes (Mearns). Mortimer's scheme makes reference to the nearness of his housing to New Cross Station, which linked to Shoreditch in fifteen minutes. Suburbanization had the advantage of removing the working classes beyond the city, where they were less troublesome, and where their radicalism could be blunted and their voting

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power diluted (see the prospectus of the Artisans, Labourers, and General Dwelling Company in *Homes for the People*, 1874). In this respect Mortimer's projects were in advance of his time, preceding the hitherto first recorded suburban housing scheme for working people, built by the Metropolitan Association in Beckenham in 1866 (and still standing).

There is a clear correlation between the social objectives of Mortimer's domestic and public architectural projects – the healthy moral dwellings for the poor, full of air and light, and the well-lit and well-ventilated spaces of Hoxton Hall, offering, in the words of his opening address, 'intellectual, healthful and innocent amusement for the masses'. The architectural journal *The Builder* made this correlation explicit when it suggested that the hygienic facilities of the Britannia Theatre might indeed serve to 'induce habits' of cleanliness in 'the unwashed' (Carlisle, p. 169).

Edwin Chadwick, the public-health guru of mid-Victorian Britain, certainly saw social improvements of this sort as part of a general panoptic system whose aegis spread across all aspects of the life of the working classes (Donajgrowzki, ed., p. 71), and whose wider benefits had been clearly advertised in a statement by his mentor Jeremy Bentham, quoted by Foucault: 'Morals reformed – health preserved – industry invigorated – instruction diffused – public burthens lightened' (Foucault, p. 207).

A New Image for the Monarchy

'The Prince of Wales' Tour in the East' was a slide-show presentation of scenes from the Middle East associated with the young Prince of Wales's widely publicized tour to the Holy Land in 1862. Like other items in the Hoxton Hall programme, this was a topic also exploited at other entertainment venues of the period. In October 1863 *The Era* had announced that Talbin's diorama of the Holy Land, also illustrating the Prince of Wales's Tour in the East, would be shown at the Egyptian Music Hall, accompanied by a descriptive lecture (*The Era*, 25 October 1863).

The Victorians invented the modern image of the monarchy as an ideal bourgeois family devoted to duty and service. They also employed the public relations methods that would spectacularize this image in a way that led to an impossible conflict between the values of bourgeois respectability and the demands of showbiz that has eventually played itself out in the tawdry soap opera of the monarchy today.

The 1860s were the crucial transitional years in this transformation. After the death of Prince Albert in 1861, Queen Victoria's removal from public life (in 1863 the Queen refused even to open Parliament) led initially to a period of deep unpopularity, giving rise to the most significant republican movement in post-Cromwellian Britain (Cannadine, in Hobsbawm, p. 111). This diminution of the Queen's involvement in political life in the event cleared the way for a more ceremonial role; and as the Queen abandoned power she gained in respect. But during the 1860s her absence from public life meant that attention was focused on the young Prince of Wales.

The Victorian spin doctors had a task on their hands, however, for the Prince of Wales was a notorious *bon viveur* and womanizer who fully enjoyed the aristocratic pleasures offered by his status. 'The Prince of Wales, ensnared successively in the Mordaunt Scandal and the Aylsford Case, damningly described by Bagehot as an "unemployed youth", was hardly able to add any lustre to this dowdy and unpopular crown', observes David Cannadine (in Hobsbawm, p. 110).

The Prince's visit to the Holy Land in 1862 had thus been instigated originally by Prince Albert in an effort to remove his son from unwelcome public attention. The visit was represented in the contemporary press as a spiritual pilgrimage (see *Early Years of H.R.H. Edward the Prince of Wales, including Travels in the East*, 1863), although it also involved some sharp diplomatic negotiations to secure Britain's imperial interests in the Middle East; and it was crucial in the repackaging of the Prince of Wales's image, along with his wedding to the chastely beautiful Danish Princess Alexandra in 1863. The wedding had been celebrated in a song specially com-

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posed for the occasion, *God Bless the Prince of Wales*, sung by the Orpheus Quartet to accompany an image of the Prince and Princess as an introduction to the slide show of the Prince's tour.

The promotion of a new image of monarchy was seen as an essential component in the binding of working-class sentiment to the modern state. Mayhew had been shocked by a young crippled Bird Seller who, on being questioned about his knowledge of the Queen, replied: 'It's nothing to do with me who's king or queen, it can never have anything to do with me' (Mayhew, Vol. 2, p. 66–9). He was right, of course; but Victorian social and political theorists soon came to realize that it was important that it *should* matter.

The Storyteller as Lecturer

The COMICAL ADVENTURES of a TIGER and a TUB by Mr W. Seppings.

Storytelling often took the place of dramatic representation in venues such as Hoxton Hall whose licence for music and variety precluded theatrical representations. The prohibition would probably not have troubled Mortimer, for purveyors of rational entertainment, many of whom were nonconformists, were typically suspicious of theatre and theatricality. As the historian Alison Byerly suggests:

> Victorian antitheatricalism found a perfect outlet in reading performances, which represented a domestication of theatre, a compromise for people who wished to be entertained but were suspicious of overt theatricality.
>
> (Byerly, in Scott and Fletcher, p. 126)

The best known of such reading performers was, of course, Charles Dickens.

Byerly also tells us that, like the magicians described by James Cook, 'The most popular Victorian readers . . . presented themselves as lecturers (rather than actors) in order to emphasize the domestic and educational connotations of reading aloud.' And the form of the lecture, employed throughout the Hoxton Hall programme, is ideologically crucial; its performativity consists in the concealment of performativity, as Erving Goffman once suggested in an elegantly staged performance of a lecture – 'the controlling intent being to generate calmly considered understanding, not merely entertainment, emotional impact, or immediate action' (Goffman, p. 165). The medium is, in effect, the message, for 'Every lecturer, merely by presuming to lecture before an audience, is a functionary of the cognitive establishment.'

Foucault's 'rituals of truth' are at work here (Foucault, p. 195). In the storytelling of Mr Seppings, as with the glees sung by the Orpheus Quartet, a form of domestic cultural production has been commodified and then re-deployed to give social legitimation to the programme, derived from its domestic origins. But unlike the other components of the programme, Mr Seppings, his comical tale, and his lime light, have vanished without trace, leaving only the residue of a cultural form in the programme.

From Hoxton Hall to Millennium Dome

The disappearance of Mortimer's Hoxton programme from both the supportive *Shoreditch Observer* and the other listings magazines shortly after the venue opened suggests that Mortimer's improving project must have soon collapsed. The hall is recorded as the home of the Hoxton Hall Academy of Dancing in December 1863, and in August 1864 it hosted 'The North London Working Classes Exhibition'. By 1866 the Hall had a new proprietor offering more familiar music-hall fare: character songs, comic acts, sketches, and dance acts.

Elsewhere rational reformers had already learned that even with the introduction of music as an element of entertainment into suh educational programmes, 'the working classes did not appreciate such a cheap and rational amusement as that' (Golby and Purdue, p. 109). By 1872 *The Era* was dismissing the new 'temperance' entertainment movement that had superseded the rational recreation movement, arguing: 'The artisan tired with his day's labour wants something to laugh at. He neither wants to be preached to, nor is he anxious to listen to the lugu-

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brious effusions of Dr Watts or the poets of the United Kingdom Alliance' (Stedman-Jones, p. 491).

Indeed, the evidence of Mortimer's project suggests that even the more socially aspirant working classes who attended Hoxton Hall sought less didactic forms of amusement and recreation. By the end of the Victorian era the cognitive spheres of modernity had fully asserted their autonomy and authority. The press, the universal education movement, and the entertainment industries had carved out their own social and economic domains, and had learned at the same time how to embed ideological and disciplinary strategies so effectively that they passed unnoticed. According to the now well-known thesis of historian Gareth Stedman-Jones, by the end of the Victorian era music halls had become one of the main vehicles for the dissemination of conservative ideologies of patriotic nationalism and contentment with one's lot.

While I was undertaking the research for this article, the sorry saga of the Millennium Dome rumbled away in the background. With its replication of the cognitive spheres of Mortimer's Hoxton Hall programme (Science Zone, Spiritual Zone), uncertainty whether to be worthy or tacky, whether to offer education or entertainment, and compromised by its own commercial subtext (remember that Mortimer used Hoxton Hall as a platform to promote his property developments), the Dome could surely have learned from Mortimer's failure a century earlier.

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