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from the New Mobilities literature*

KATHRYN ANN WILKINS

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Department of Geography  
Durham University

**Elite networks of the London Season:  
perspectives from the New Mobilities literature**

Kathryn Ann Wilkins

A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Durham University

September 2010

## **Abstract**

### ***Elite networks of the London Season: perspectives from the New Mobilities literature***

**Kathryn Ann Wilkins**

This research investigates and analyses the London Season in the nineteenth century through an engagement with 'New Mobilities' literature. By positioning the research within this literature and connected theories surrounding material and performative geographies, the research provides a historical perspective to this emerging area of geographical enquiry. Using a wide variety of sources, the mobility of this societal group is reassessed, highlighting the crucial role movement played in the practices of the Season. The concept of 'networks' is adopted to enable a detailed analysis of the connections forged during the London Season, revealing the powerful role held by women in the period. This desire to network is understood in detail through an engagement with performance literatures to illustrate the importance of dance to those participating. This detailed engagement with networking practices is continued through a material engagement with the Season; analysing the use of fashion to increase the chances of connection.

The spatial implications of the London Season are addressed through the construction of broad scale analyses using court directories, ball attendance records and rate books. This enabled the popularity of certain spaces to be ascertained, leading to discussions regarding the use of space as a tool by those participating in the Season to attract connections. This active engagement with space moves away from previous interpretations of the period, in which the West End is treated as a banal template. This research also adopts calls from within historical geography (Blunt, 2000a; McDowell, 2004) to utilise biographical material in understanding the past. Individual experiences of the Season are contrasted throughout the thesis, revealing that the period should not be understood as a single, indivisible 'Season', but instead as many 'Seasons' overlapping with one another, yet offering different experiences of the same phenomenon.

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This research is grounded in the nineteenth century and in particular in the London Season. This annual coming together of some of the most elite and aristocratic families in Britain, and from further afield, reinforced the wealth and power of participants.

Undertaking research in this field has been spawned through a long-standing interest in the practices of the London Season. Three specific facets regarding research into this period were particularly motivating. Firstly, the Season was an important stage in history throughout the nineteenth century. As Atkins (1990) stated, the West End during the period was a “container of frighteningly concentrated power” (p. 56). This annual reproduction of power and influence taking place in the concentrated location of the West End is a unique phase in British history, the influence of which spread across the world during the nineteenth century. Secondly, the significance of the period warrants further critical study and understanding, especially when existing research is limited. Extensive literature searches reveal that there are fewer than ten wide-reaching studies of the Season published and, of these, many take a similar approach and hence contain similar information. Many of the studies critiqued utilise the same source material, rarely adopting rigorous questioning regarding the trends they document. Thirdly, the stereotypical knowledge contained in many of these previous studies has infiltrated into popular present-day representations of the period found in a variety of media portrayals of the Season (MacCarthy, 2006; Glinert, 2007). Recent television documentaries have in particular emphasised this stereotypical image. *Last Party at the Palace* (2007) and *Teens and Tiaras* (2009) both relied on the uncritical sources described above to present a one dimensional account of the period. This lack of awareness of the significance of the Season in the nineteenth century is one that this research aims to redress. By understanding the period through a different theoretical lens and utilising a wider range of sources, new conclusions can be drawn and disseminated, negating the stereotypical view of the period offered at present.

An engagement with several key texts has been influential in formulating this research project. These sources have challenged the way in which the Season can

be approached and stimulated further theoretical investigations into the different lenses through which the Season can be understood. Sheller and Urry (2006) argue that “all places are tied into at least thin networks of connections...and mean that nowhere can be an island” (p. 209). This argument signalled a new approach to researching the Season; the concepts of movement, networking, performance and space are rarely present in previous studies regarding the period. The multi-faceted nature of the *New Mobilities Paradigm* influenced this research, drawing on many areas of geography in the overarching engagement with mobility. One of the papers engaging in this mobilities debate was particularly relevant. Pooley et al’s (2006) work relates the theoretical concepts found in the mobilities literature to past geographies. Of particular significance is the way in which mobilities theory is developed through the historical analyses found in their research. Pooley et al’s work offered a successful framework for this thesis and illustrated the potential for understanding historical movements using contemporary theoretical engagement.

A material aspect to the research was inspired by Thomas (2007), who engaged in the materiality of clothing to illuminate new histories of colonial India. She used cloth and associated practices of wearing garments to understand in detail the way in which clothing reflects the desired political and cultural message portrayed by the wearer. This approach to understanding past geographies is significant for the research in this thesis, where the Season can be understood through the importance placed upon material possessions during the period. Thomas’s work also engaged in the individual micro-geographies approach missing in much of the existing literature regarding the Season. In the present thesis, this material approach is combined with biographical sources, following the work of Daniels and Nash (2004). As a collection, the journal issue introduced by these scholars highlighted the possibilities afforded by the use of biographical sources, and the wide-ranging historical situations to which this approach could be applied. Here, the successful application of biographical material was documented as key to uncovering new facets to historical situations. This is applied in this thesis to the context of the Season.

Equally significant to this thesis is much of the existing literature regarding the Season. Sproule (1978), for example, depicts the Season as a marriage market, where the hopes and expectations of every debutante are uniformly applied. Evans and Evans (1976) frequently separate the experiences of men and women without acknowledging the generalisations these stereotyped experiences exert. Whilst

individual experiences are in certain cases utilised to illustrate a point made by an author, an in-depth comparison of the Seasons of different participants is lacking throughout this body of work (Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). By highlighting the negative elements of previous research regarding the Season, the ways forward in terms of this research project become clearer.

### The Position of this Research

As indicated above, this thesis resides firmly in the context of historical geography, drawing on contemporary mobilities theory to uncover new knowledge regarding the Season. At this stage it is important to note that the researcher does not lay claim to analysing every aspect of the Season, or the wider context of every aspect of Victorian London. This would be too large a task for a single research project. Instead, certain aspects of the Season will be discussed, namely those that relate to the specific aspects of the period that connect with the new mobilities literature and which reflect those areas of the Season that are most under-researched in the existing literature.

This thesis is situated amongst scholars of historical geography who have called for a more critical approach to researching past events and situations (Blunt, 2000a; 2000b; Graham & Nash, 2000; Ogborn, 2002). Accompanying this shift in historical enquiry is the methodological turn towards biographical sources discussed above. This research is situated firmly amongst this body of historical geographers advocating the combination of broad trends and individual perspectives. Scholars such as Blunt (2000a, 2000b) and Ogborn (2002) have spearheaded this approach, key proponents in uncovering marginalised histories through an engagement with biographical sources. This research regarding the Season sits alongside the work of these scholars, aiming to combine broader trends with a deeper understanding at an individual level. This thesis also connects with the work of geographers engaged in historical mobilities. Scholars such as Cresswell (2005, 2006a, 2006b), Pooley et al (2006) and Macdonald & Grieco (2007) have all approached the mobilities literature from a historical perspective, suggesting that whilst the context for contemporary mobilities theory may be unique, the conclusions the theory highlights can be applied to historical contexts equally significantly. The present research is particularly aligned to the work of Tim Cresswell in this respect, who not only focuses on networking and movement in the historical context (in relation to the movement of two American suffragists Luscomb and Foley (2005)) but has also researched the performance aspects of mobility in historical situations (in particular

the Tango (2006b)). Cresswell's multi-faceted approach mirrors the method employed in this thesis, utilising a series of interlinking theoretical explorations to expand on the previously one-dimensional analysis of the Season present in existing literature. This thesis is situated in these two bodies of work to enable a fresh understanding of the Season through a new theoretical lens, achieved primarily through a critical engagement with biographical material.

### The contribution of this research

Knowledge regarding the Season is advanced in three main respects in this thesis. Firstly, by applying a mobilities perspective to researching this period (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Adey, 2006; Urry, 2007, Cresswell, 2010), the importance of movement and networking to those participating is understood. This adds depth to previous research in which the activities of the Season are described, without analysis. The mobilities literature also encourages an engagement with the spatial implications of movement and connection (Cresswell, 2006a; Larsen et al, 2006; Urry, 2007). Adopting this principle again adds depth to previous scholarship in which the West End during the period is not discussed. Secondly, the present research supports the work of Pooley et al (2006) and Cresswell (2005, 2006b, 2010) who call for an engagement with historical mobilities. As mentioned above, those working in this field argue that, whilst the context for contemporary mobility enquiry may be unique, the concept of mobility is equally applicable historically. The present research supports this view, concluding that the Season was a significant mobile moment, and as such provides an important historical context to contemporary mobilities debates. Finally, by adopting the biographical approach mentioned above, the thesis sheds new light on the Season. Individual experiences reveal that the Season cannot be treated as a single uniform period. Instead, there existed many Seasons, interacting with one another in the same corner of London, yet dependant upon many factors, and offering different experiences and ambitions. This reveals that the Season was a more complex and differentiated period than has previously been suggested.

These new contributions arose through an engagement with the following research questions, devised in order to investigate the perceived gaps in existing literature, as discussed above:

- 1) What was the role of mobility in the Season?

- 2) Can the Season be understood through practices of network formation and in what way was this networking facilitated and performed?
- 3) How did fashion affect the Season and how was this manifested?
- 4) How was the Season related to residential structures and spaces in the West End?
- 5) What new insights can be brought to an understanding of the Season through the use of biographical sources?

#### A note regarding 1862

Throughout this thesis, the year 1862 has been used to provide in-depth analysis, where this has been required. The use of a single year when discussing individual experiences of the Season must be clarified in several respects. It should be noted that in no way is the focus on a single year used as a 'model example'. The Season evolved significantly throughout the nineteenth century, and cannot, therefore, be summarised by the activities occurring at a particular moment. However, an aim of this thesis was to understand the Season from an individual perspective, which at times required this narrower analysis. Initially, three focus years were chosen to achieve this micro-geography perspective, those of 1832, 1862 and 1892. These years were chosen as they neatly corresponded to the years in which most biographical material had been found regarding the Season, and were spread throughout the century, allowing for any changes during the period to be examined. Correlating this biographical material with an in depth analysis of the Season at the time of this diarist participation was intended to allow for the triangulation of sources described in Chapter 4.

Document collection and analysis began for the central year of 1862. However, the collection and manipulation of this data, collated from a wide variety of sources and archives took far longer than had initially been anticipated. As such, the study of 1832 and 1892 could not be completed in the time frame of this thesis, leaving 1862 as the sole focus year. Whilst the capability to analyse the Season did not diminish as a result of this alteration, an in-depth analysis of the changing nature of the Season over the course of the century could not be so comprehensively discussed. This temporal dimension will be added in future research, as discussed in the conclusion to this thesis.

Using 1862 as a focus year was, as mentioned above, biographically led and therefore not chosen as a 'typical Season'. This was an important decision, taken to allow a comprehensive picture of the Season to be constructed from a variety of perspectives using as wide a source base as possible. The search for a 'typical' Season did not feature in this decision owing to the fact that from the outset the main aim was to challenge the concept that this typical model existed. This decision is significant in the light of the Prince Albert's death in 1861, which prevented court presentations occurring in 1862. This was not the only occurrence of a Season without court presentations (pregnancy, death and illness impacted on the ability for these to be held). Indeed most years of the Season had notable absentees or additions which characterised a particular year, and as such, the lack of court presentations did not make 1862 stand out from any other year during the nineteenth century; a claim supported by the comparisons completed early on in this research between the initial three focus years.

The year 1862 was not chosen to represent every Season occurring during the nineteenth century, and throughout this thesis should not be approached as such. Instead, the year was chosen to provide fluid links between source material and to portray as comprehensively as possible the varied experiences that occurred during this particular moment. Whilst many of the conclusions which were forged as a result of analyses of data relating to 1862 can be applied to other years of the Season, the continually changing nature of the period throughout the nineteenth century must also be appreciated.

### An Introduction to the Chapters

The thesis is organised into the following chapters and sub-sections:

Chapter 2 introduces Season, the context of nineteenth century London and a summary of the position of the aristocracy and elite in Britain at the time. The events which characterised the period and the reasons behind a desire to attend these social occasions are then discussed. The possibilities afforded to those participating in the Season are analysed, highlighting the importance of the period to those taking part. The chapter concludes with a critical review of previous literature regarding the period, stating the most significant gaps in this research.

A review of mobilities literature forms the basis for Chapter 3. The roots and position of the theory in relation to other geographical concepts are discussed, before foregrounding scholars who utilise mobilities literature in a historical context. Contemporary theoretical engagements are then grouped around three key ideas: the links between mobility and power, networks and space. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key ideas most influential for work regarding the Season in this thesis.

Chapter 4 considers the methodological framework in which the research in this thesis has been undertaken. An analysis of past approaches to understanding the Season are discussed. These approaches are contrasted with the mobile methods most commonly proposed by scholars associated with mobilities research. The two approaches are then combined in a discussion of the research questions posed. A justification of these research questions is then undertaken in relation to 'relevant' source material. The sources most consistently used in this research are then analysed before concluding that a multi-source approach has been adopted to allow a full engagement with the Season at a variety of scales.

Chapters 5 to 9 contain the research findings of the thesis, grouped into a series of interlinking themes, each of which utilised a wide range of source material to allow adequate conclusions to be drawn. The first theme is that of movement, discussed in Chapter 5. The importance of movement is addressed, illustrating the way in which movement occurred and the way in which this mobility enabled the Season to occur. The restriction and facilitation of movement is considered, before discussions turn to the use of movement as a tool for performance and display by those participating.

The importance of mobility is contextualised in Chapter 6, in which the connections between mobile participants are considered through the concept of 'networks'. The chapter begins with a discussion of the importance of forging 'appropriate networks' including an understanding of the blurred boundaries of social interaction which occurred during the period. An introduction of the concept of 'network capital' follows which is then applied to an analysis of ball attendance during one Season, uncovering the many contrasting reasons for participation. The regulation of networking is understood through the importance of the Society Hostess, and likewise the facilitation of networking charted by the powerful position of the chaperone.

The concept of networking is built upon further in Chapter 7 in which the performance practices of the ballroom are discussed. The chapter begins with a study of dance during the Season and the way in which the performance of dance was used as a way of displaying the network of a debutante to spectators. It was the only occasion in which direct contact between a suitor and a debutante could occur, and the significance of this networking moment is discussed in relation to the dances performed. The second half of the chapter moves to the display of status through dress and the garments worn by debutantes during performances. Status and wealth were displayed through clothing, and hence were an important networking tool during the period. The way in which clothes were performed is discussed, before an analysis of four individual dresses is undertaken, illustrating the way in which garments were useful tools to aid performance during the Season.

Chapter 8 moves from the processes of connection to the impact this movement and networking had on the spaces of the West End. The concept of a 'part-time place' is introduced, followed by an analysis of the fluid nature of the area during the Season. The concept of a 'network node' is then discussed to suggest that certain streets in the West End were more significant centres of networking than others. This discussion leads on to the concept of spatial capital, and the way in which streets during the period were prescribed with meaning and significance owing to the people who resided there during the Season. The way in which the area was altered to accommodate the Season is then discussed in relation to the concept of the recomposition of space, highlighting the way in which this area of London was characterised by the processes of the Season which occurred in it.

Chapter 9 forms the conclusion to the thesis. It begins by highlighting the way a mobilities perspective and an engagement with biographical sources enabled new understandings of the Season to be drawn. These conclusions lead to a review of the areas of the thesis which could be developed in the future, before some final thoughts turn to the broader scale, identifying the gaps in existing knowledge of the Season and where research into these areas could progress in the light of this thesis.

## **Chapter 2: The London Season**



In this chapter, the Season will be introduced at a broad scale and the literature which currently informs our understanding of this period reviewed. The chapter starts by contextualising the Season in nineteenth century London, before then progressing to examine aspects of the aristocratic system. Changes to the Season over the course of the century will be highlighted, ending with a review of the literature and the theoretical approaches which can take research in this field further.

The Season was an annual phenomenon, which saw elite and powerful families in Society descend on the West End of London between roughly May and July, to participate in a daily round of social engagements and dances. Attendance at such events was through invitation, with only the most popular and in demand debutantes being given the chance to attend. To make certain of an invitation it was crucial to know influential participants and to exude wealth and status. Balls, court appearances, trips to sporting events and artistic appearances such as the viewing of the summer exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, and the Opera in Covent Garden were all regular events attended by many during the season. Opulence and extravagance were the expected social norm for all the families participating, with their daily activities driven by the belief that it was important 'to be seen'. This was a time for the arrangement of marriages and the forging of family networks and alliances, bound up in the importance of being fashionable and served to reinforce the wealth and power of participants (Horn, 1992).

### **Nineteenth Century London**

"By 1900 London was unquestionably 'the richest, largest and most populous city' that the world had ever seen; the imperial city, 'Immense....vast!...endless!' to H.G. Wells, 'illimitable' to Ford Maddox Ford. Its population was greater than those of Paris, Berlin, St Petersburg and Moscow combined, greater than those of the twenty-two next largest British cities and towns put together, very much greater than those of Canada or Australia or South Africa" (White, 2001, pp. 4-5).

In a century marked by unprecedented levels of rural to urban migration, London became the largest city in the world in 1890 by a margin of almost 2 million people (Lampard in Dyos & Wolff, 1973). It was not only the size and consequent sprawling nature of London that characterises the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also the rapid nature of this growth. In 1801 the census recorded the capital's population at 675,000, yet by the end of the century this had risen to 6.5 million. One in every fifth person in England and Wales was a Londoner (Davis in Waller, 2000). This was expansion and urban agglomeration on a scale not previously witnessed. London's power in the world during the nineteenth century was not merely a product of its size or population, however. It was also the imperial capital of the world, the heart of the British Empire, the centre of international trade and finance (Ackroyd, 2000; Magee & Thompson, 2010). Despite the economic, human and political costs of imperial expansion, the growth of the empire throughout the nineteenth century brought power and dominance. Britain was viewed by some as the centre of the world, a place of enterprise and advancement, power which resonated from London, the capital of the empire (Jackson, 2004).

London itself was far from a homogeneous unit. "One has not the alternative of speaking of London as a whole," Henry James claimed, "for the simple reason that there is no such thing as the whole of it. It is immeasurable- embracing arms never meet" (James, 1893, p. 27). Characterising this sprawl was residential segregation on an uncompromising scale. West London was characterised as glamorous, wealthy, modern and fashionable, in contrast to the poverty, dirt and criminality of the East (Inwood, 1998; Picard, 2005). The boundaries between the two were undoubtedly more blurred than is often reported (Ackroyd, 2000), however, segregation of some form was evident throughout the century. By the 1880s, it was not only novelists, journalists and popular commentators depicting this divide; it was a bone of contention during the strikes, demonstrations and riots which challenged the prosperity in the West End (Garside, 1984). Whilst those who participated in the Season glided through a prosperous, powerful London, closely proximate others suffered extreme poverty. Slum dwellings, dangerous informal employment, thieving, epidemic disease and high levels of mortality existed alongside prosperity in the capital. Indeed, even within areas of the West End there existed acute poverty alongside extreme wealth. "There are terrible highways and passages round about Westminster Abbey. At the back of Regent Street and Oxford Street are alleys of houses where some of the most miserable of London's citizens abide. There are purlieus in Kensington, Belgravia, Westbournia and the Regent's Park as

heart-sickening as those that skirt the highway of Shoreditch” (Jerrold et al, 2005, p. 109).

This poverty was illustrated by Charles Booth’s *Survey of London Life and Labour* (1889), seen in Figure 1. Amongst the sea of yellow (upper and upper middle class residents) present in the West End were islands of blue and black (coded by Booth as ‘very poor, casual, chronic want’ and ‘lowest class, vicious, semi-criminal’ respectively). The poor were often servants directly or indirectly, illustrative of Engels’ observations of Manchester in 1844: “misery and squalor that form the completing counterpart, the indivisible complement, of [upper class] riches and luxury” (Engels, 1845, p. 86).



*Figure 1: Charles Booth’s Survey into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903)*  
(reproduced with the permission of Charles Booth Online Archive)

Despite this void between wealth and poverty in London, the nineteenth century was nevertheless characterised by development and progress for all citizens. New roads were constructed, ten new bridges were built over the Thames as well as three tunnels beneath it, a vast network of sewers was installed and transport revolutionised by the omnibus, bicycle and the railways, both overground and underground (Thompson, 1988; Taylor, 2001). Gas lighting of London’s streets and

the Metropolitan Police Force and Fire Brigade were Victorian in origin, along with the six collections/deliveries a day postal service, connecting the city with unparalleled efficiency. By the end of the century, many believed that the modernisation of the 'Great Metropolis' of London rivalled the achievements of ancient Rome (Ackroyd, 2000; Sweet, 2001; Jackson, 2004).

Located within a city which wielded substantial power throughout the century, those participating within the Season in London were themselves some of the most wealthy and powerful people in the world at the time. As British control of the Empire grew (Ackroyd, 2000), and as London became a centre for international finance, trade and development, so those participating in the Season found themselves at the centre of the social world. Such a concentration of the world's most wealthy and powerful people within a small area of this Great Metropolis makes the Season a hugely significant period.

### **The Season**

Whilst those participating in the Season may have had substantial influence during the nineteenth century, it is important to recognise that this was a numerically insignificant proportion of the population as a whole. Even in London, with its estimated 2, 362, 236 residents in 1851, families participating in the Season only accounted for 0.8 per cent of the population of the capital (Lee Jackson, accessed 13.10.09). It is also necessary to appreciate that there were differences in the wealth, title and land ownership of families in Britain, and this was reflected in their experiences of the Season, as will be discussed in the following section of this chapter. Atkins (1990) identified three distinct groups participating in the Season: those with landed wealth comprising the traditional aristocracy; those with money amassed from entrepreneurship and commerce whose wealth gradually led to their acceptance in elite circles; and the minor gentry comprising upwardly-mobile professional people. In this research, however, all participants will be referred to as Society, a term used widely in the nineteenth century and one which included everyone from Dukes to the upper middle classes on the outer fringes of the Season aspiring to belong. Beckett (1986) suggested that the elite participants of the Season must be seen loosely as a governing class, stretching from the peerage assembled in the House of Lords, through to the nouveaux riche of the industrial revolution. Within this group, social distinctions are recognisable, yet all were part of

the single indivisible whole which constituted London Society during much of the nineteenth century.

Whilst the Season was far from homogeneous, the desire to participate can be explained most clearly through the old aristocratic system of power that dominated throughout much of the nineteenth century (Worsley-Gough, 1952; Lieven, 1992). This aristocratic system led to the tiered nature of the Season, in which different groups of participants existed, from the elite at the apex of the pyramid, to those at the base who engaged in social climbing in the hope of reaching a more powerful tier (Thompson, 1988). This tiered system is illustrated in the diary of Florence Essery, who participated in the Season below the elite tier. Whilst in London Florence lived with her aunt, the owner of a 'high class fish shop in the city'; the fact she had an occupation at all was indicative of her lower status. Yet Florence noted in her diary her attendance at balls and dinners as well as occasions of riding in Rotten Row. Whilst these events were never on the scale witnessed by the diaries of debutantes firmly positioned in the upper tiers of Society, Florence's experiences clearly point to the existence of less exclusive occasions attended by those of lower status occurring alongside the entertainments of the elite (Dyer, 1997).

### *The Aristocratic System*

The system by which aristocratic families held power was fundamentally linked to land ownership. There have been many estimates as to the exact proportion of the British Isles owned by aristocratic families in the nineteenth century, none proving conclusive. Cannadine (1990) has analysed these estimates, concluding that in 1880 there were 7,000 families owning between them four-fifths of the land. Using Cannadine's figures, it is possible to identify that out of the estimated 7,000 families owning land in 1880, 6,000 owned 'small' quantities of land, between 1,000 and 10,000 acres, generating an income of between £1,000 and £10,000 per year. This income and land would typically provide enough money to support a country estate and the ability to rent or own a town house in London. The second sub-group of landowners owned between 10,000 and 30,000 acres, sometimes concentrated in one county (such as the Earl of Hardwicke where 18,900 of his total 19,300 acres was located in Cambridgeshire), whereas others owned land across the country (Beckett, 1986; Cannadine, 1990). The Earl of Macclesfield, for example, owned land in Oxfordshire, Staffordshire and Devon. Despite the differences in their land holdings, these families were all economically prosperous, earning up to £30,000

per year and typically owning several country estates and a property in London. Their wealth was considerable, yet incomparable to the top 250 aristocratic elite who owned many country estates, palatial houses in London and could expect to receive a gross income of up to £325,000 per year. This was the Duke of Westminster's income in 1883 (Rubinstein, 1981, Cannadine, 1990). These figures clearly illustrate that the aristocracy at the time of the Season were a wealthy elite, controlling land and utilising the wealth that this ownership created. The spatial implications of this land ownership for the nature of England during the nineteenth century can be seen in Figure 2 below.

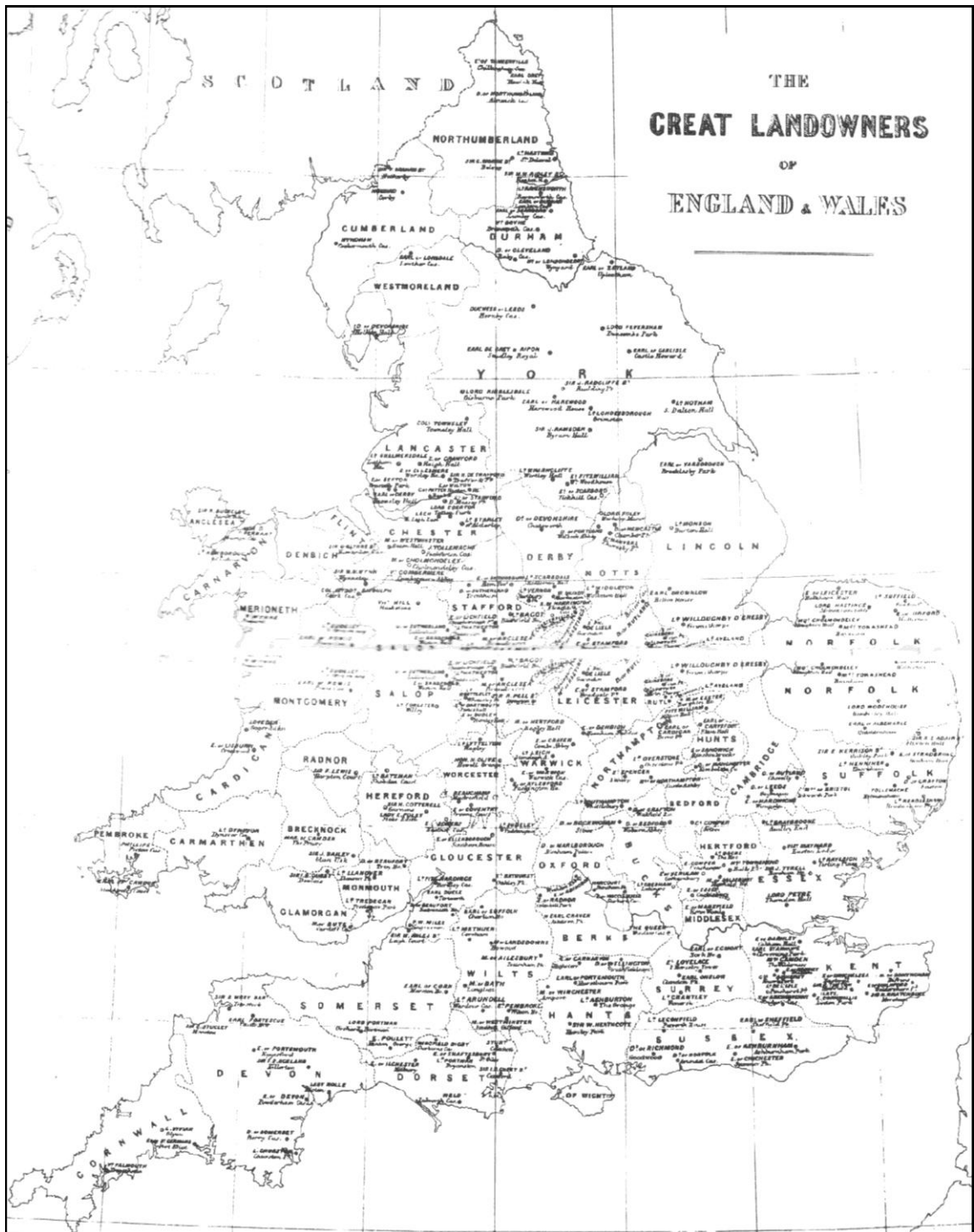


Figure 2: The Great Landowners of England and Wales (from Sanford and Townshend, 1865, reproduced in Beckett, 1986) (reproduced with the permission of Blackwell Publishers)

Aristocratic families were not only powerful in terms of their land ownership, however; many families were also involved in politics (Thompson, 1988; Horn, 1992). Shared amongst these families were the highly esteemed titles of honour that defined gradations of society, and cemented their position at the very top of this social pyramid. In 1880, there were 431 peers, hereditary members of the House of Lords in possession of titles and ranks. Below them were 856 baronets holding hereditary knighthoods, many of whom eventually became peers and rose to the highest ranks of nobility (Beckett, 1986). The landed gentry, totalling 4,250 families, completed the ranks of aristocratic status, without possession of a hereditary title and the levels of influence these brought, yet none the less holding a position of power within their respective counties (Cannadine, 1990). The House of Commons was similarly dominated by patricians until the latter stages of the nineteenth century. Cannadine (1990) suggested that in the 1860s, three quarters of all MPs were members of aristocratic families. Beckett (1986) similarly identified this correlation, calculating that, in 1868, 407 MPs came from families owning 2,000 acres of land or more. There is evidence to suggest that some landed families believed in their 'prescriptive right to rule the country' (Warwick, 1931, p. 24). The Countess of Warwick noted that they regarded the country as: "their domain...and if they administered it with integrity of purpose, nothing more was required of them...Down to the time of the [First World] War, there were houses whose heads regarded themselves as second to none in the kingdom, though they revelled in going through all the forms and ceremonies of homage to their sovereign" (Warwick, 1931, p. 24-5).

Land ownership was important politically: it was the most well used passport to social and political influence and it therefore offered a position in society. In 1883 the four largest landed estates in England were all owned by Dukes, and the next ten largest estates (of over 60,000 acres) were owned by peers (Thompson, 1977). This pattern of hierarchy and land continued down the ranks of social position. The importance of this powerful link to politics was summarised by Cannadine (1990): "almost anybody who was anybody in the British Isles before the 1880s was to be found in one or other of *Burke's* consolidated and systematic guides to the titled and leisured classes: the *Peerage*, and the *Landed Gentry*" (p. 13). The close links to the political system influenced the Season greatly; whole families were influenced by these political connections. The wives of leading political figures were required to hold entertainments during the Season not only for the benefit of social networking, but also for the benefit of their husband's party, and his political career. Horn (1992)

identified that: “the drawing rooms of the leading hostesses became the rendezvous of younger men anxious to advance their careers, as well as of established leaders who found them a useful meeting ground” (Horn, 1992, p. 159). The significance of this political element to the entertainments of the Season can be illustrated by Molly Trevelyan’s memoirs (c. 1964). Married to Sir Charles Trevelyan, a former Governor of Madras, she installed a division bell in their home so that her husband could be away from the House, yet could still arrive there in time to vote. She recalled that “The ring of the Division Bell used sometimes to devastate our dinner parties; all, or nearly all, the men would vanish, and return within ten minutes, as soon as the division was over” (Trevelyan, c. 1964, p. 56). In the ballrooms and homes of the Season, therefore, political networking was just as important as social networking; furthering the link between the aristocracy and systems of political power.

This aristocratic system of land ownership, wealth and political power is significant, because until the latter stages of the nineteenth century, there was a close correlation between wealth, status and power generated by this system. The power afforded to owning land, and participating in the political mechanisms of the period fuelled the desire for social climbing between the tiers of the Season, as participants wished to secure their own wealth and status through an association with this powerful elite.

### *Entry into higher tiers of Society*

The social climbing and consolidation of position in Society was most easily achieved during the nineteenth century through marriage. Marriage provided the opportunity for those at the top of this social pyramid to renew social positions, to select a new member for their family based upon reputation, wealth and land holdings<sup>1</sup> (Perkin, 1989; Perkin, 1993). This process allowed their estates to be maintained, and their power, by forging links with an equally influential family, was secured. By marrying into a wealthy family, any debts which threatened their land ownership were also eased (debts were often inherited, or caused by the maintenance of large country houses and estates: some unfortunate aristocratic

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<sup>1</sup> During the nineteenth century, arranged marriages between members of Society were no longer socially acceptable, however, marriage still remained an important tool for families. Bargaining took place between the two fathers of the pair involved, and terms of the marriage agreed. These terms differed in individual cases, but most often involved exchanges of money or land (known as the dowry and the dower) (see Davidoff, 1973).

families were forced to declare themselves bankrupt, the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos accrued insupportable debts of £1.5 million by 1848 (Cannadine, 1977)). Further down the social pyramid, however, marrying into families with greater amounts of land, wealth or status than their own afforded the family a step up the rung of social acceptability. Marriage provided opportunities for increased power through association (Perkin, 1989), though this came at a cost through the rules of settlements and jointures (an estate secured to a wife upon the death of a husband). This system ensured that every marriage had a small, yet direct effect upon the nature of aristocratic power, the precise detail of land holdings and the political control these afforded. Such was the importance placed upon marriage for the preserving of aristocratic influence that these powerful families utilised the Season for these means (Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976), attending, in part, to secure a suitable marriage partner for their offspring.

Marriage was not the only means by which social climbing or consolidation could occur, however. Demonstrating knowledge of others in Society and exhibiting appropriate Society etiquette accordingly was also a means by which a position in society could be maintained. Testament to the importance of this knowledge acquisition was the number of participants taking part in the Season without unmarried children (Worsely-Gough, 1952; Turner, 1954). The nineteenth century was renowned for the development of communications technologies, the first telegraph machine was invented in 1831, the Uniform Penny Post was established in 1840 and the telephone followed in 1876 (Picard, 2005). Whilst these developments would have been utilised by elite families, those participating in the Season also relied upon the oral and printed information networks in place during the Season, ensuring participation remained essential in maintaining connections. The gossip from a ball, news of arrivals and departures from town, announcements of marriages and deaths were, according to Worsley-Gough (1952), essential pieces of information to those wishing to secure position in Society. Knowing day to day details of the Season was an invaluable resource, enabling participants to anticipate future events, direct their attention for invitations, prepare to make calls on those newly arrived and, most fundamentally, learn of the changing situation regarding potential networks and alliances (Davidoff, 1973). Newspapers of the period in particular provided a daily resource invaluable in the transport of information to the homes of those participating in the Season. Many of the London weekly papers, such as *The Court Circular*, *The Times*, *The Queen* and *The Morning Chronicle* included this intelligence, however, it was the daily papers such as *The Morning*

*Post*, which provided the most instantaneous source of information. Within its 'Court Circular' column of this newspaper was included information regarding: the daily arrivals into town, those who expected to be leaving, births, announcements of engagements and details of weddings, families who were in mourning following a family death, notices of upcoming events and concerts, lists of all those who attended the previous evenings balls and notifications of which hostesses had issued invitations to future balls. The ability of information to move through the medium of the newspaper in this way is significant in two respects. Firstly, knowing the day to day details of the Season was important for social etiquette. Participants in the Season were expected to know and remember the changes in circumstances of one another, in order for them to network in the correct manner. Jalland (1986) suggested that to reveal ignorance regarding such details, irrespective of whether a participant was even acquainted with the family in question, spelt social ruin. Secondly, the organised movement of information to the extent witnessed within the Season bound the group together. Every participant was expected to be aware of, and show an interest in, the private business of everyone else participating (Worsley-Gough, 1952).

The above section illustrates that securing advantageous marriage alliances, and being in possession of knowledge regarding other members of the elite were two of the most crucial ways in which the aristocracy maintained and built power and status during the nineteenth century. It is for these reasons, as well as many others, that the Season was such an important period in the lives of its participants as a means by which marriage alliances could be forged, and knowledge regarding Society shared.

### *The history of the London Season*

For the purposes of this research, it was only in the eighteenth and particularly nineteenth centuries that the capital's function as a hub of social networking and power formation came to prominence. For various reasons, mainly in relation to politics or the law, it was necessary for at least some of the men in the family to travel to London for several months each year. As technological advancements in travel had not progressed to a sufficient degree to enable anything resembling modern day commuting, a town house in London would have been rented for the period. Evans and Evans (1976) have suggested, however, that it is the responses

from female members of the aristocracy that explain the evolution of the Season. It was through the boredom of being left at home during the parliamentary summer months that the social life of London took hold (Pullar, 1978). Wives and daughters began to accompany their husbands, fathers and brothers to London, building a tradition whereby the entire household would migrate to the capital for the period. During this period, aristocratic families held entertainments and visited one another. This formed the beginning of the whirl of social networking and marriage arrangements that characterised the Season at its height (Margetson, 1980).

### Expansion of the Season

During the eighteenth century the Season was on a modest scale. Mingay (1963) estimated that its participants were three to four hundred of the most influential of aristocratic families, as detailed above. The scale of the Season grew throughout the eighteenth century; however, it was not until the 1800s (the start of the present research period) that the Season reached its full significance. Accompanying the turn of the century was a growth in the number of participating families, and the formation of a more complex web of social connections as a result. Whilst a precise estimate of the number of participants 'doing the Season' is impossible (Jalland, 1986), the overall trend can be witnessed in *Boyle's Court Guide*, a directory published twice yearly detailing the addresses of the majority of those participating in the Season. In 1800 the directory included the names of 6,000 families; this had risen to 19,000 families by 1850 and 26,000 families by 1900 (Atkins, 1990). Davidoff (1973) attributed the increase in numbers of participants to the development of medical care, suggesting that extended families were much larger and more connected simply because more children were surviving to reach adulthood. Increased numbers of sons and daughters led to an increased urgency to find appropriate marriage partners to fund familial estates; ensuring the Season remained an important element of the social calendar.

More fundamental changes to the Season took place in the latter stages of the century. The pressure to marry was further accentuated by the agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century, beginning in the 1870s. As production costs abroad fell, accompanied by a reduction in the cost of transportation in the advent of new technology, agricultural produce became cheaper elsewhere (Lieven, 1992). This widespread lowering of profit margins from the land owned by the aristocracy undermined the ability of their tenants to pay rent, which likewise caused

a loss in the income of these landowning families (Jaher, 1973; Beckett, 1986). This decline put aristocratic finances under substantial strain, resulting in the need for their children to marry to secure the family's wealth. This financial crisis enabled the dilution of the elite in Society as the newly industrialised rich became more widely accepted, if begrudgingly, owing to the fortunes they possessed (Davidoff, 1973). This shift in Society was documented by *The World* newspaper, which protested in 1891: "People are now presented and present their daughters, whose life and interests are entirely foreign to Court surroundings" (13th May 1891). The widening of the base of Society membership during the late nineteenth century is significant. Whilst examples of entrepreneurs participating in the Season can be found throughout the century, these were rare. However, as industrial wealth increased, and aristocratic wealth decreased as a result of the agricultural depression and expanding costs, these wealthy industrialists were able to purchase land and gain titles (Beckett, 1986; Thompson, 1988). Whilst this method for the acquisition of status was sneered at by members of the traditional aristocracy, this group became increasingly powerful and were gradually accepted into the networking events of the Season (Davidoff, 1973). Ellenberger (1990) highlighted the increasing numbers of court presentations<sup>2</sup> taking place during the century: from 300 presentations per year in 1840 to over 1000 per year in 1890. This increase in the size of the Season led to the relaxation of the strict rules of attendance (highlighted later in this chapter), significantly altering practices of network formation. As Turner (1954) indicated, during this period: "the tradition of dowries and settlements still persisted, but increasingly love laughed at lineage" (p. 184). The dilution of the power of the elite in all areas of the Season is evident in the marriage figures analysed by Thompson (1988). In the 1880s, less than 20 per cent of marriages occurred between two elite participants in the Season, the top tier of the aristocracy.

This expansion of the Season and subsequent changes to marital patterns can be linked in part to the arrival of American debutantes in London (Turner, 1954; MacColl & Wallace, 1989; Jennings, 2007). As the Season expanded and social status became less strictly demarcated, these foreign debutantes became popular brides. Whilst they may have lacked hereditary titles and did not own land, American debutantes were wealthy, and as such were sought after by struggling aristocratic families in the wake of the agricultural depression (Pullar, 1978).

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<sup>2</sup> 'Court presentations', where a debutante is presented to the monarch for the first time, signalling her 'coming out' in Society, will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

Rumours circulated in 1876 that William Vanderbilt spent \$10,000,000 on securing his daughter Consuelo's marriage to the Marlborough dukedom (Abbott, 1993). Between 1870 and 1914, 104 of these marriages between peers and American girls took place, 'trading titles for dollars' (Thompson, 1988). The increase in eligible wealthy participants fuelled the system of the Season leading to further increases in size; participation became necessary to ensure an appropriate and wealthy match was made for a son or daughter before a desired partner could be attracted by an alternative offer. Politically, too, there was a decline in the power of traditional aristocratic participation. Changes to the voting system, and the reorganisation of constituencies led to an increase in party politics. The polarization of political parties which culminated in the Whig secession in 1886 resulted in the concentration of the aristocracy to one side of the House, thus reducing their dominance (Thompson, 1977; McCord, 1991).

Whilst the decline in traditional aristocratic dominance changed the nature of the Season in the latter stages of the nineteenth century, and is therefore important background, the present research focuses instead on the practices of the Season at its height, and will not, therefore, consider the end of the Season and the decline in its power in great detail.

### *The Events of the Season*

The Season is difficult to summarise in its many forms and facets, however, Thompson has offered a description which highlights, albeit at a broad level, the nature of the period:

“This was the world of politics and high society, of attendance at the House and gaming in the clubs, the place where wagers were laid and race meetings arranged, the source of fashion in dress and taste in art, as well as being the world of drawing rooms and levées, glittering entertainments and extravaganzas, soirées, balls and operas” (Thompson, 1963 p. 104).

The Season was made up of many constituent parts; the daily round of events that allowed for the social mixing for which it was designed.<sup>3</sup> As Evans & Evans (1976)

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that just as the Season itself was constituted of many layers, involving many different ranks and statuses of people participating, so too were the events of the Season. It is important to understand at this stage that not all events taking place during the

have identified, Society to some extent transformed events for their own purposes, an example being the Ascot races. In addition to these adopted events, there were a range of purposely designed engagements, both public and private, created to provide further opportunities for social mixing and congregation. By the 1820s there were so many different events taking place each day that it would have been necessary for participants to choose which networking opportunities to attend. Thus, events were subject to scrutiny and careful preparation was required to ensure the maximum number of social functions were fitted into a single day, thus optimising networking possibilities (Evans & Evans 1976; Sproule 1978). Evidence of such planning has led Sproule (1978) to the conclusion that the Season was so prescribed an occasion that it was possible to predict the happenings many months, or even years beforehand. Networking opportunities were clearly taken: Lady Dorothy Nevill recollected that in 1843 she attended fifty balls, sixty parties, thirty dinners and twenty five breakfasts (Nevill, 1920). Lady Mary Coke launched herself into a similar ambitious timetable of networking, on a particularly frenetic day visiting 32 separate friends and acquaintances (Kennedy, 1986).

The frenetic networking practices witnessed during the Season would have been impossible without the ability to be mobile. Debutantes relied on private carriages to travel between events. Without this means of transport the Season could not have occurred at the same pace, or with the same intensity. The ability of these Society families to move must be seen in the context of the period in which they lived. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, most 'ordinary' citizens' only means of travel was either on foot or the omnibus if it could be afforded. Journey distances were limited by these economic and technological restraints (Taylor, 2001). Yet within this world of immobility existed our elite group of mobile people, heavily reliant upon technology and moving about with a frequency akin to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It was this unique possibility, and desire, to live a mobile life that shaped the London Season.

Not only was movement fluid and seemingly limitless within London, long distance mobility was also displayed during the period. For several days of the Season, Society uprooted to attend sporting events outside the capital. The Eton v Harrow cricket match, Henley Royal Regatta and Ascot were all events travelled to by many of the elite within Society: without mass transport mechanisms, and involving the

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Season were the same. Events which were seen as crucial, must-attend gatherings by one grouping the Season will have been approached differently by a group of a different status.

majority of the transient population of West London. *Harper's Magazine* estimated that only one fifth of those travelling to the Eton v Harrow cricket match in 1886 actually had any interest in watching the match; the vast majority merely attended because it was socially important to do so (*Harper's Magazine*, May 7 1886). Once again, this disregard for distance which characterised the Season must be recognised.

Participating in the Season was costly, aside from the maintenance of a carriage and accompanying horses. The expected standard of living during the Season was high; displays of wealth were seen to be crucial in forging alliances (Horn, 1992). There is evidence of the huge financial costs of formal entertainments and ceremonial display throughout the nineteenth century. Earl Fitzwilliam is thought to have spent £3,000 on entertaining guests during the 1810 Season alone, a figure dwarfed by the Duke of Northumberland in 1840, who spent over £20,000 (Sheppard, 1971). Evans & Evans (1976) have suggested that a lady would not have spent less than £50 on a single dress during a Season in which many women would have worn a different dress every day. In equivalent terms, the same amount of money at the time spent on just one dress would have been almost enough to purchase a Clarence Carriage (Picard, 2005). The level of expense required by the Season was crippling to some members of the aristocracy with large estates to maintain, and a balance had to be struck between the benefits of avoiding the Season to save money, and the risk of losing the opportunity to secure the contacts that might help to solve such financial constraints. Horn (1992) revealed that in some cases, the problem was solved by selling family heirlooms. The Earl of Dudley, for instance, sold £240,000 worth of china, portraits and jewels between 1886 and 1902. As the costs of the Season were so high, it is hardly surprising that there was pressure felt by participants to make appropriate networks and prove 'value for money'. It is important to remember, however, that a defining feature of the Season was its voluntary nature; it was not a requirement for families to participate (Davidoff, 1973). The fact that so many did so, despite the cost, is testament to both the significance and importance of the Season.

No amount of money or preparation, however, would have assured the social acceptability necessary for attendance at particular events. In order to ensure that only the aristocratic and elite were eligible to network (to ensure offspring could not associate and marry the wrong 'sort' of person); Society created exclusionary systems. Scott (1991) argued that during the eighteenth century barriers were

created by the cost of participation alone. However, as the Season evolved through the nineteenth century, and changes in the economic conditions of the country led to the emergence of untitled nouveaux riches, this was no longer the case. To combat this 'problem', and to preserve the carefully honed system of the Season, there occurred a 'privatization of sociability' (Scott, 1991). Whilst cost remained a barrier for many with hopes of participation, new barriers were erected for those who had crossed existing lines of defence. These came in the form of the securitisation of activities which had once been public affairs, repositioning them in the private settings of individual homes, or through the adoption of a system of formal invitation. Those wanting to attend balls needed to do so by acquiring acceptance from the hostess of an event in a screening process, perpetuating the patterns of behaviour which united the elite and aristocracy in the face of economic transformation (Ellenberger, 1990).

Sproule (1978) suggested that during this time Society became fixated with rules. Rules of behaviour in every social situation were constructed to be followed rigorously by those wishing to take part in the Season. "Everything in the upper class world of the [nineteenth century], needed to be controlled, to fit into its own place or time, to proceed according to established ideas of what was suitable" (Sproule, 1978 p. 24). The evolution of prescribed, expensive and time-consuming social procedures and events became the ideal machinery for separating the elite from those aspiring to join them. A fully fledged member of this elite quasi-community would have been invited to all the most important social gatherings of the Season. Securing such invitations therefore became the perpetual concern for everyone with the exception of Society's leaders at the time.

A significant and expensive first hurdle in the many barriers to social acceptance involved the presentation of a daughter at Court, a ritual which signified her entry into adult society (Inwood, 1998). The mechanisms of the Season dictated that it was necessary to have a personal introduction with the monarch through the use of a sponsor, who was already accepted in the Royal Circle. Sponsors would send his or her card along with the card of the girl wishing to be presented and these would be screened in advance to consider the birth, wealth and associations of the applicant. If accepted, the pair would attend one of the four 'drawing rooms' of the Season (held in St James's Palace, until the 1890s when it then shifted to Buckingham Palace), where presentations to the monarch were performed (Margetson, 1980; MacCarthy, 2006). Ellenberger (1990) suggested that only

sponsors of the highest calibre and reputation were acceptable. An influential mother was desirable for a debutante, as this was an immediate and clear display of the family's situation. However, knowing a high ranking society dowager who was prepared to act as sponsor was another route for the less well connected (Margetson, 1980; Ellenberger, 1990; MacCarthy, 2006). Throughout the history of court presentation, the event took on a feature of display to rival the runway of any modern fashion show.

The public face of the London Season was displayed in Hyde Park where carriages were driven along Rotten Row daily and at Ascot, Henley and the Eton v Harrow cricket match, amongst other sporting events. Despite these instances of public display, the majority of the Season took place in the semi-private spaces of the ball room or in the drawing rooms of London townhouses. Balls were held most evenings during the Season, usually by the most influential Society hostesses of the day (Evans & Evans, 1976; Pullar, 1978; Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980). With the exception of Almack's Assembly Rooms in St James's, the site of the most exclusive balls controlled by ten aristocratic ladies, balls occurred in the homes of the wealthy and powerful in Society, who regulated their events by selecting guests based on status (Davidoff, 1973; Horn, 1992). Balls could not be attended by a debutante alone; a well connected chaperone thus proving key to the chances of receiving invitations to events (Margetson, 1980). Forging connections involved intricate processes of leaving cards, paying calls and formal introductions. The leaving of a card was a gesture of politeness, and a signal of the wish to visit and begin the processes of Society communication. The recipient would return the card if this wish was granted, ignoring the card if establishing a connection was not desirable (*Etiquette for Women*, 1902). This ritual extended to the second phase of 'calling', a highly scripted process in which the two parties would meet to either begin the process of acquaintance, or to build on a pre-existing link (for a detailed account, see *Manners & Rules of Good Society*, 1887). This initial process of introductions permitted subsequent communications to be made at a later date; ultimately acting as a method of gate-keeping.

Once a connection had been established, and admission to a ball granted, the forging of links could begin in earnest. This involved an elaborate system of performance, through either the rituals of etiquette or through dance. Dances during the Season were highly prescribed, with rules dictating which dances would be performed, and how many times the same partner could be asked (Turner, 1954).

This was the only occasion during the Season where contact between the debutante and her potential suitor could occur. Described by some scholars as nothing more than a 'mating ritual' (Inwood, 1998) it was during the performance of dances that connections either grew stronger or were discarded. Thus, it was in the intricate world of the ballroom that many of the most influential alliances between families were forged.

### *The Spaces of the Season*

The numbers of families participating in the Season may have been numerically insignificant; however, the spaces of West London within which they lived, socialised and worked were at the peak of desirability. Although spatially relatively confined, creating a unique concentration of power, the area directly utilised by Society spanned Oxford Street in the north to Westminster in the south and from Kensington in the west to Piccadilly in the east (Evans & Evans, 1976; Picard, 2005). This geography played a vital part in creating the Season. Participants resided, socialised, shopped, entertained and travelled within this area of the West End, only leaving it to attend infrequent sporting events such as Royal Ascot or the Henley Royal Regatta. Evans and Evans (1976) suggested that the heart of Society beat in Mayfair, and that Piccadilly formed the private high street of the Season with every building linked directly to the lives of Society.

This residential clustering was made possible by the nature of the West End, partly attributable to the development of land for building by wealthy members of Society itself. The Duke of Bedford was responsible for 80 acres of development in Bloomsbury, the Duke of Portland owned much of Marylebone, and the most influential of all the great aristocratic landowners in London were the Grosvenor family (titles: Baronet 1622, Baron 1771, Earl Grosvenor 1784, Marquis of Westminster 1831, Duke of Westminster in 1874) (*Burke's Peerage and Baronetage, 107th edition*). Sir Thomas Grosvenor, third Baronet, acquired 500 acres of London property through an advantageous marriage in 1677, most of which was in Mayfair and Belgravia. Known as the Grosvenor Estate, this area of the West End formed the heart of the Season throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Olsen, 1864; Borer, 1975; Kennedy, 1986). Building began in 1721, developing large houses and private squares designed with Society tenants in mind (Picard, 2005). By the 1820s the Grosvenor Estate had become synonymous with the work of developer Thomas Cubitt who was responsible for the building of much

of Belgravia, taking advantage of the popularity of the area following the building of nearby Buckingham Palace in the 1830s and its elevation to the status of home of the monarch Queen Victoria in 1837 (Beckett, 1986).

The importance of the estate development of the West End cannot be underestimated for two chief reasons. Firstly, the large-scale planning of an 'aristocratic townscape' (Davis, in Waller, 2000) created a unique part of London which, due to leasehold regulations, remained relatively unchanged for centuries. The area was purpose-built with Society in mind. Secondly, the success of the investment is testament to the importance of proximity to the social hub of the Season. Several scholars (Davidoff, 1973, Horn, 1992) have argued that without the building of large numbers of rental properties within a spatially confined area, the Season itself would not have functioned in the same way. With the desire to attend as many social events as possible in order to achieve maximum networking opportunities, proximity to events and to one another was a necessity. Such residential proximity was possible due to the planned estates of Mayfair.

The nature of Society's usage of these properties is equally significant spatially. Houses in the West End were rented from the Grosvenor family each year for the duration of the Season. As was mentioned above, families would migrate to London to coincide with parliamentary sessions throughout the summer months, requiring a home in London during the period (Atkins, 1990). Houses were taken each year to suit the needs of families, and their relative budgets. Families wishing to display their wealth (for instance in the hope of attracting a suitor for their child) would rent a larger house in a popular area, but for many the rental of a townhouse merely served as a useful base from which to explore London Society (Margetson, 1980). The competitive and vigorous rental market this created was unique, made all the more important by fashion. Not only were families who wished to participate in the Season required to secure a satisfactory rental home for the duration; they were also at the mercy of fashionable trends. As Atkins (1990) has shown, the cachet of certain streets and areas was subject to change from Season to Season. By studying court directories from the period, he identified the shifting residential patterns of the Season over time, concluding that whilst the central area remained popular throughout, the east of the West End declined as the western periphery became more popular. Locating oneself in an unfashionable area would have spelt social disaster (Davidoff, 1973), and so market forces operated in the rental market.

The desire and necessity to secure a fashionably appropriate house for the Season was a crucial string to the bow of the networking campaign each year.

### Mobile Lives

The temporally confined nature of the Season raises an important point about the lives of Society studied in this research. Whilst families migrated from their country estates to London for the months of the Season, this was by no means the only movement they made during the year; instead it was one stop in a year-round programme of travel and engagements (Sproule, 1978). The experiences of movement documented by Meriel Talbot in her diary for 1861 provide an illustration. The Talbots stayed at their country estate in Kent for a total of five months of the year, spread between nine visits. London was their base for four months, at their home in Great George Street. Meriel's parental home of Hagley Hall was visited for a total of two months, and a variety of small country house visits filled the remaining month of the year. In all, Meriel's family made a total of 25 moves during the year. It was not just families who moved extensively, however. Some young men were encouraged to take the 'Grand Tour', a programme of travel designed to encounter members of European Society and polish their knowledge of culture and manners in readiness for the marriage markets of the Season (Worsley-Gough, 1952). Travel abroad, of a less specific kind, was frequent for all family members. Following the Season in London, families would travel to continental Europe to visit the German and French spa towns for a period of relaxation accompanied by the usual round of social engagements. The arrival of Autumn would signal the migration of Society back to their country estates, the only time of the year that needed to be spent at 'home' to participate in shooting, hunting and the running of the estate (Girouard, 1978). This time was far from static, however, with regular travel throughout the country undertaken to visit the estates of people within their networks. After Christmas, the English winter was swapped in favour of warmer climates, participating in continental Seasons (such as that held in the south of France) or a tour of European cities to make further contacts. The coming of summer would signal the return to London and the routine would begin again (Sproule, 1978). Whilst the London Season may have been characterised by the mobility of participating families, it must also be understood that this propensity for movement existed throughout the year. The Season was just one stop in the networking calendar.

By combining knowledge of the Season, the context of nineteenth century London as a whole and the aristocratic situation within Britain at the time, it is possible to understand why the Season was of such great importance both to those participating and as a period in British history.

### **A Review of Existing Literature**

The London Season has been the subject for a small, but detailed number of scholars. It is possible to find short accounts in publications detailing the general history of London, or the British aristocracy, but few scholars have examined the Season in its own right. It is essential to understand the foci of this past body of work, the ways in which scholars approached researching the topic, and the sources and methodologies they drew upon in order to achieve their research goals. Through completing this historiography, research can be placed in context, identifying where previous scholarship can be built upon, and where the present research can forge new angles and perspectives.

Discounting accounts written towards the end of the nineteenth century, and focussing solely upon contemporary research, yields fewer than ten examples, the most recent of which was published 18 years ago in 1992. Previous scholarship has largely relied upon the same areas of source material, with only two publications adopting a truly multi-source approach. All these previous publications rely heavily on the visual, including photographs from the period (relating to the last decade of the nineteenth century when photography was popular). In no instance are these images interpreted semiotically to gain insight into the Season; they are merely utilised to aid the reader's imagination, as can be seen in *The Social Calendar* by Anna Sproule (1978) on page 20. Perhaps surprisingly, only one source, *The Party that Lasted 100 Days: the Late Victorian Season* (Hilary and Mary Evans, 1976, pp. 30-1) uses any form of mapping. For a period so distinguishable, both in terms of its compact locality and its influence over space, to omit this spatial element of the Season is surprising. A source more frequently employed is that of newspapers or periodicals of the period. Articles written regarding the Season are the most common source utilised, often included to provide illustrative quotations. Again, the positioning of the original author of the article is never discussed, and is rarely commented upon critically. This can be seen most clearly within Evans' and Evans' work, on page 59, where a section by Richard Harding Davis, written for *Harpers*

*Magazine*, is included to provide a description of Hyde Park at the time, yet is not the subject of further analysis.

Leonore Davidoff's work *The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season* (1973), utilises the widest range of source material, including the perspectives of novelists writing at the time. She draws (p. 37) upon the words of Virginia Woolf in *Orlando* to understand the anatomy of Society, whilst Trollope's *Ayala's Angel* is included in a discussion of the importance of marriage (p. 50). Whilst scholars such as Dennis (2006) on the work of George Gissing have utilised topographical novelists to shed light on urban history in general, no scholars appear to utilise the novel as a topographical source specifically to illuminate the nature of the Season. The greatest criticism of these past works' use of source material, however, is their lack of an individual perspective. Whilst biographical accounts are included within several past literatures, this was by no means the norm; many accounts of the Season ignored diary or autobiographical material entirely, focussing on a generic, standard experience of the Season. *The Best Circles* (Davidoff, 1973) and *High Society: the English Social Elite 1880-1914* (Horn, 1992), the two publications which do engage with biographical material still fail to provide a context for these accounts. Whilst the biographical input is useful in enlightening the reader about a particular area of the Season experience, it is used largely as a means to illustrate a point made by the author. Although readers are told to whom the memories belong, no detail is given regarding their age, position within Society, family situation or marital status. It is this level of detail which would facilitate an understanding of the diverse nature of the Season, and allow us to compare the views of different people participating in the same experience. This lack of context is well illustrated in *High Society*: "Maurice Baring's recollections of the summer of 1896 capture the atmosphere of some of these events: 'I went to the Derby that year and backed Persimmon; to the first performance of Mrs Campbell's Magda the same night; I saw Duse at Drury Lane and Sarah Bernhardt at Daly's; I went to Ascot; I went to balls....'" (p.19). Whilst this account is extremely useful in illustrating the point Horn is making regarding the number of events attended during a Season, nowhere in the text is Maurice Baring introduced.<sup>4</sup> We know nothing about him, and this disables us from analysing his recollections in any greater depth.

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<sup>4</sup> Maurice Baring (1874-1945) was born in Mayfair, the eighth son of first Baron Revelstoke. In later life he became a prominent novelist, social commentator and travel writer (Letley, 1991).

Source material aside, previous writing on the Season has approached the period from a variety of different perspectives; the foci chosen by the authors are wide-ranging. Some scholars such as Stella Margetson (*Victorian High Society*, 1980) and Pamela Horn (*High Society*, 1992) focus heavily on providing detailed accounts and interpretations of the events that occurred during the Season. For example, Margetson (p. 75) discusses and describes the importance of particular table decorations when hosting a dinner party, including the types of crystal used, the positioning of the silver plateau on the table and the necessity of having a floral centrepiece. This detail gives us insights that would otherwise be missing from our knowledge of the Season. Whilst less detailed in her account of the specificities of certain events, Sproule (*The Social Calendar*, 1978) links the events to the context of the yearly lives of its participants. Moving beyond the Season in London she describes the period abroad and the role of the country estate. This examination of the wider lives of those participating in the Season provides a useful context and one which is often missing in the work of other scholars.

Philippa Pullar (*Gilded Butterflies: the Rise and Fall of the London Season*, 1978) takes a different slant again by delving into the historical foundations of the period. Beginning in the twelfth century, she details the nature of aristocratic involvement in England, and the growth of the Season in later centuries. Whilst this work lacks detail regarding the Season itself and does not draw upon many of the sources utilised by other scholars, Pullar's work provides an important historical background. By understanding the foundations of the Season, Pullar appreciates its role in a wider context and the growth and consolidation that Society underwent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries during which the Season was at its peak.

This broad overview of the Season contrasts significantly with the work of Davidoff (*The Best Circles*, 1973) and Evans and Evans (*The Party that Lasted 100 Days*, 1976). Focussing in detail upon the period, these scholars uncover why the Season was important to participants, describing the different ways in which connections between individuals were forged. This is a significant departure from other work because it attempts to understand the Season from the perspective of those participating, using a range of sources. Although biographical material used is not given individual context, it still leads the authors to examine the importance of making connections, a feature missing from the majority of the literature. This approach is illustrated well in the following quotation: "one of the most important privileges of being in Society is having access to a vast information network:

information about jobs, investment possibilities, secret political decisions. At the same time participation in the group is a reward and a badge of arrival into these positions, a public seal of approval into elite status” (Davidoff, p. 37). Going beyond pure description, Davidoff attempts to understand the necessity of the Season for those participating.

There are, however, some aspects of the Season which are absent from all the past work regarding it. As mentioned previously, the spatiality of the Season is mentioned infrequently, it is left to specific articles and surveys to tackle this element fully (Sheppard, 1980; Atkins, 1990). The most significant omission in this work is the importance of movement in the Season. Sproule (1978) briefly touches on the congestion of carriages on the streets during balls, and Davidoff (1973) discussed the logistics of migrating from a country estate to London, but this is the extent of a mobile consideration.

#### *Theoretical approaches to advance an understanding of the Season*

The literature review above highlights the lack of recent research regarding the Season. Knowledge is reliant upon a small number of literatures which approach the period from the broad scale, sharing many of the same conclusions. Advancing research in this field therefore requires a critical approach, uncovering aspects of the Season in the nineteenth century which the existing broad and unreflexive literatures fail to unearth. As the Season is such a complex and multi-faceted period, there are many potential theoretical lenses through which knowledge could be advanced. For example, the role the Season played in the lives of those participating in terms of identity formation, understood through an engagement in theories surrounding the geographies of belonging, could have been adopted. Scholars such as Gregson & Rose (2000), Ahmed (2004) and Hetherington (2003) have undertaken research in which sensory and emotional engagements with places or objects shape identity. This theory could have been used to understand the Season, in particular in investigating whether the frenetic social activity may have been developed, not necessarily consciously, to create a group identity, and consequently, to retain and generate power. Similarly, with etiquette dominating behaviour during the Season, rendering objects such as clothing and flowers important in displaying status and wealth, a semiotic approach could have been adopted. Understanding the meanings behind, and significance of, symbols during the Season may have shed new light on the hidden practices and meanings of the

period (Williamson, 1978; Bal & Bryson, 1991). Moving from the hidden signs of the Season to the display of empire during the period and another research lens through which to understand the Season could have been applied. A post-colonial perspective (McEwan, 2000; Blunt & McEwan, 2002) in part understands the impacts of colonialism on the cultures of colonising communities. With many of the participants of the Season connected in some way to the politics of empire, exploring the period through the context of colonial connections would have again shed further light on the Season.

Whist these, and many other approaches could have been adopted to begin to fill the gaps in our understanding of the Season, it is the theoretical lens of the mobilities literature that has been adopted in this research. The literature review above highlighted in particular the lack of existing knowledge regarding the importance of a mobile lifestyle to those participating in the Season. A mobilities perspective, which focuses on the impacts of movement, the connections forged through movement and the spatial implications of such connections (Larsen et al, 2006) provides the most coherent lens through which these particular gaps can be explored, and hence this theory has been selected as a means through which to research these aspects of the Season.

### **Chapter 3: The New Mobilities Literature**

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As detailed in the previous chapter, the ‘new mobilities’ literature and the associated theories and academic debates stemming from this body of work offer a foundation for this research project. In this chapter, research engaging with these concepts of mobility and connection will be introduced, including the links between mobility and power, connection, performance and space. Throughout the chapter, the way in which this material can be useful to an understanding of the Season is suggested. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the ways in which the Season is a useful lens through which to explore mobilities literature, adding a further historical dimension to this body of work.

The term ‘mobilities’ itself was unveiled by Sheller and Urry in 2006, however, scholars several years previously had been calling for a turn towards the study of ‘mobility’. In 1972, Goffman stated that “the realm of activity that is generated by face to face interaction and organized by norms of co-mingling...has never been sufficiently treated as a subject matter in its own right” (Goffman, 1972 p. 13). Addressed directly by Urry in 2003, Goffman’s observations lie at the heart of the current literature. Urry challenged mainstream academic visions of so called ‘transport geographies’ (Shaw & Hesse, 2010), instead calling for research which forged a link between movement and socio-spatial associations. This paradigm has been widely labelled the ‘mobility turn’, “transcending the dichotomy between transport and social research” (Urry, 2003a, p. 157). Cresswell encapsulated this contemporary philosophy in his 2005 paper, stating that “contemporary society and culture should be understood through its modes of mobility as much as by its spaces and places” (Cresswell, 2005 p. 448). Such thinking forms the basis for Larsen et al’s (2006) claim that social science must adopt the mobilities paradigm and systematically map “*social networks and associated networking practices*” and it is this assertion upon which this research on the Season is based. Whilst the literature review which follows predominantly focuses on the wide range of scholarship which comes under the umbrella of ‘mobilities’, it is important to note that a turn towards mobilities is prevalent not only in this work, but more broadly across geographical enquiry (for example, Wylie (2005) in relation to walking; Merriman (2005) in relation to the cultural geographies of motorways, Spinney (2006) in relation to the

embodied practices of cycling; Tolia-Kelly (2004) in relation to the material cultures shaping diasporic homes).

### **The theoretical position of the new mobilities literature**

Before a mobilities perspective can be examined in further detail, however, it is important to note the theoretical position of the paradigm. Viewing the world through a mobilities lens forges a path through two sets of extant theory, 'sedentarism' and 'nomadic metaphysics'. The paradigm instead suggests that places must be seen as constantly in processes of production and reproduction, made and remade as people and objects move and perform networks in them. Sedentarism as a theory emerged in the 1970s, swept in on the wave of humanistic geography. Key proponents such as Tuan (1977) and Relph (1976) sought to put people back into thoughts regarding place, creating 'geographies of the lifeworld'. In this way, and despite the work of scholars such as Seamon who developed the concept of 'place ballet' (1979), place was seen as the root of human experience: it was bounded and secure. Mobility and movements were seen negatively in this world view as disruptive to place. This vision can be contrasted by the work of 'nomadic metaphysics' and scholars such as Deleuze and Guattari (1988) who revisioned the world through lines of flight and speed. Place in this hyper-mobile world is relegated to a marginal position, seen as irrelevant in a constantly moving age; difference and the politics of identity is de-contextualised in the romanticism of movement (an argument proposed by scholars such as Wolff, 1993). Mobilities scholars such as Cresswell have gone some way to negotiating a path between these two sets of theory, suggesting that place is important in geographical enquiry, yet it must be viewed in a light where it is never complete, never bounded and always in a continual process of becoming (Cresswell, 2002). It is this notion of place which is at the heart of the 'new mobilities paradigm' and one which remains central to the way place is viewed and explored in the present thesis.

Although the mobilities paradigm as a bounded theory was established by Sheller and Urry, its roots lie in the work of several key theorists. It is not my intention to discuss their role at great length here, but rather to acknowledge the roots of this modern theory. Simmel was one of the first scholars to call for a theoretical agenda which analysed the characteristic displayed by humans to make connections between one another. His theories regarding social life form the frameworks for many of the different strands of the mobilities debate. He distinguished humans

from animals by suggesting that humans were able to make impressions on the earth, “freezing movement in a solid structure” (Frisby & Featherstone, 1997 p. 171), and creating lasting evidence of such connections in the forms of paths, roads and bridges. By thinking in this manner, Simmel paved the way for much contemporary thinking linking mobilities with materialities. It is Simmel’s thinking regarding flow and flux of movement as identified by Lash (2005) which captured the imagination of Urry. Lash suggested a re-reading of Simmel in which mobility is not depicted as a smooth flow, but instead in flux; involving tensions and conflict, or as Urry elaborates, intersections between mobilities and immobilities (Urry, 2007). Jensen (2006) highlighted the ongoing importance of re-reading Simmel in this way, suggesting that his thinking on proximity and movement can also help to make sense of contemporary networks of social interaction, another key element of the mobilities debate. Some parallels can be drawn between this area of Simmel’s work and that of Goffman, another seminal author whose interpretations of the interactions involved in everyday life have shaped the mobilities debate. Termed ‘facework’ by Urry (2004), Goffman’s privileging of performance has been influential in framing debates surrounding the importance of co-present meetings for the sustaining of networks in present-day global society. A thorough history of the works of these two important scholars, and there are many others who could also have been included, is not the intention here, but, as Jensen (2006) has highlighted, when embarking upon research surrounding theories of mobility and flow in cities, it is important to acknowledge the significant role of these founding philosophies.

Before introducing some of the key elements of the new mobilities paradigm, it would be entirely inappropriate to ignore the importance of the work of Hägerstrand. Pursuing the links between movement and space further than either Simmel or Goffman, Hägerstrand introduced the mapping of everyday time-space geographies. His work is perhaps the closest the academy has previously come to adopting a mobilities perspective. However, as identified by Hannam et al (2006), in his search for ‘spatial *ordering*’ (emphasis in original), Hägerstrand and others have failed to recognise how such spatialities involve conflicts over movement, with travel portrayed as a neutral entity. This is a key difference between Hägerstrand’s work and that of the modern mobilities theory which follows it.

### Defining 'mobility'

'Mobility' is complex to define, and scholars have struggled to demarcate the term. For the purposes of the present research, however, mobility is understood as both the physical and imagined movement of people, objects and ideas, and the social mobility (the change in status) and connections of people, objects and ideas in social space. Therefore, as identified by Canzler et al (2008), one can move without being mobile, can be mobile without moving and can move and be mobile. This unique combination of ways of approaching socio-spatial analysis is important for illuminating movement in the nineteenth century, understanding it both socially and spatially.

The context of this shift in thinking regarding mobility and socio-spatial life is important. Firmly grounded in the globalised twenty first century, "all the world seems to be on the move. Asylum seekers, international students, terrorists, members of diasporas, holidaymakers, business people, sports stars, refugees, backpackers, commuters, the early retired, young mobile professionals, prostitutes, armed forces- these and many others fill the world's airports, buses, ships and trains. The scale of this travelling is immense" (Sheller & Urry, 2006 p. 207). This theoretical pathway has emerged at a time when there are 4 million air passengers taking off from airports all over the world every day. In this era of movement, a theory arising from it which centres upon such mobility is perhaps unsurprising, yet its contemporary footing is no less significant for an examination of the specialities of social life in any age or context as a result of this. The 'new mobilities paradigm' does not simply document the novelty of a world in which movement has to a certain extent become an expected norm, it is rather part of a wider call to move beyond scholarship in which places are documented as spatially fixed containers in which social processes are conducted.

The fact that the 'new mobilities paradigm' is in many ways a product of contemporary society is significant for this research project. Clearly many aspects of, and case-studies using, mobilities theories are based very much in the contexts and conditions of the present day. Urry (2007), in calling for a mobilities turn, highlighted twelve main mobility forms, many of which (such as asylum and gap year travel, and military mobility) can only be linked and understood in the context of contemporary society, and are therefore irrelevant for the present thesis. The rise of air-travel, the internet, email communications and mobile phones are also all

facilitators of modern day mobility focussed upon by mobility scholars which are largely irrelevant to this research (Adey, 2004; Laurier, 2004; Parks, 2005). For a research project based firmly in the nineteenth century, there are intrinsic difficulties surrounding the employment of an emerging theory rooted in the landscape and experiences of the modern world, and the particular political situation of the evolving present. The mobilities paradigm has grown out of the technological age, and whilst the nineteenth century was by no means devoid of hugely significant technological advancements (Axhausen, 2007), the context of the theory is very different to that of its historical application in this research, and therefore renders some aspects of the paradigm irrelevant. Therefore, in the review that follows there are intentional holes in the breadth of material included.

### Historical mobility

Whilst it is important to be aware of such irrelevancies, this does not impact upon the ability of the mobilities turn to aid researching the historical. Despite being rooted in the present, the paradigm holds at its core the desire to view society and space in a different way, a viewpoint relevant to any time period and spatial context. Urry (2007) suggested that the 'new mobilities paradigm' at its heart asks why people travel, the uses of their travel, and the physical, social and spatial ramifications of their decisions to be mobile. This principle can be applied to any context in which mobility is a desired consideration.

Indeed, there are many scholars engaged in mobilities debates who turn to the historical for inspiration. Macdonald & Grieco (2007) have suggested that whilst the changes in mobilities are new, the challenges they pose for citizens and society recur. They use the Victorian postal system by way of example and argue that its impact (six deliveries and collections per day) in central London was highly significant for life in the city, fundamentally altering communications: as significant in their view as the effect of contemporary technological advancements. Significant mobility moments in history are also highlighted by Cresswell (2005) who investigated the mobilities of two suffragists, whose travel in 1911 on transatlantic voyages, can be equated to the significance of the mobility discussed by Sheller and Urry in 2006. Merriman (2006) too, regarding the design of the M1 motorway, called for cultural geographers to engage in the historical, tracing a history, in this case of decision making, which enables an identification of the embodied practices of movement in the landscape, giving the present context. Whilst these examples

range in geographical fields, all show the possibility of historical events as illuminators on current academic thinking surrounding the practices of movement. In particular, the work of Pooley, Turnbull and Adams (2006) regarding historical mobilities has clear resonance with this thesis and has been influential accordingly. In the context of everyday mobility, they suggested that whilst the new mobilities paradigm highlights important challenges and changes in the way in which people move and interact, these challenges are not new. They suggest that “every generation has had to cope with new forms of transport technology, and has had to negotiate the impacts of the new mobilities on society” going on to state that “by examining the historical antecedents of mobility change we can place contemporary experiences within a broader perspective” (Pooley et al, 2006 p. 253). Using a variety of historical data including biographical material, they concur with Cresswell, adding that mobility aspirations have changed little since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their argument assesses the way in which new transport and communication systems have affected both individuals and societies in the past, drawing upon historical sources in their discussion, and in so doing attempt to counter ‘the assumption that recent mobility change is novel’. The importance of a historical contextualisation of mobility was highlighted once again by Cresswell in 2010. In his paper ‘Towards a politics of mobility’, Cresswell suggested that: “historically and geographically specific formations of movement, narratives about mobility and mobile practices; reveal the importance of a historical perspective which mitigates against an overwhelming sense of newness in mobilities research” (2010, p. 17). Such thinking provides an important background to this thesis, and one which is a significant, yet still often overlooked, aspect of mobilities literature.

### **Mobilities literature and the Season**

Theories surrounding mobility are far reaching and are in many cases still rapidly evolving, however, there are several broad concepts in this field which provide a useful lens through which to approach the Season. This literature review, and the engagement with mobilities theory throughout this thesis, is organised according to the work of Cresswell (2010), who suggested that engaging in mobility through his concept of the ‘constellations of mobility’ enabled a way of accounting for the “historical senses of movement that is attentive to movement, represented meaning, and practice and the ways in which these are interrelated” (2010, p. 26). Cresswell’s metaphor of a constellation provides a framework through which the

mobilities literature can be accessed and evaluated within a historical setting such as the Season.

The review will begin by understanding physical mobility and immobility and the power associated with the ability to be mobile. This literature will then move on to discussions regarding 'networks', the reasons behind much movement, and in particular the reason behind extensive movement during the Season. The final section of the literature review details the way in which these movements were embedded in the spaces in which they occurred, understanding the importance of place to the practices of being mobile. The chapter concludes by introducing how the Season supports the work of Cresswell (2006a, 2010) and Pooley et al (2006) in demonstrating that the processes of movement and networking are not 'new' as the paradigm states, but instead prevalent in historical situations.

### *Mobility and Power*

Mobility is closely associated with power formation and a politics of speed in much contemporary literature. Mobilities are differentiated, and the ability of different subjects to be mobile and to participate in mobility is relational. Therefore, whilst the twenty-first century is typified by the extensive mobility of people across the globe, each mobile system is partnered by the relative immobility of many other citizens, a politics of speed in which those who are able (both physically and financially) to be to be fastest have power over those who are slower (Hubbard & Lilley, 2004, Adey, 2006, Redshaw, 2007). Massey (1993) stated that mobilities are caught up in the power geometrics of everyday life, with 'differential mobility empowerments' reflecting hierarchies and politics of power, in terms of gender, race, age and class, both globally, and locally. Whilst this literature is useful in understanding the power associated with mobility, in the context of the Season this engagement with power reveals the extent to which those participating used movement to gain social advantage, a facet of the period lacking in previous literature. Analysing mobilities, therefore, requires us to examine the consequences of differential experiences of movement, of the different people in spaces occupying what Hannam et al (2006) term 'the fast and slow lanes of social life'.

Strengthening the links between mobility and power further, it is important to identify that such 'slow lanes' of social life are not benign, but are actively made slow by the 'gates' of mobility that enhance the movement of certain people whilst

simultaneously reinforcing the immobilities of others. For those without the means to access mobile systems, these immobile infrastructures and technologies which organise and control the flow of people and objects, act as barriers to movement (Sheller & Urry, 2006). For mobile people able to utilize such systems, they are merely gates to be passed through, or linear stop-start journeys, as explored by Adey (2007). This hierarchy of mobility empowerments (Preston et al, 2006) can be contextualised by the experiences of the Season. The aristocracy during the nineteenth century were linked to the advancement of mobile technologies, such as the carriage and the telephone. This group of highly mobile people had the means and partnership with technology to pass through the 'gates' of mobility and utilize these developments. Those without the ability to do so, without the money to use a private carriage would instead have found the technology to be a barrier, not only to their movement, but to their social life in general.

Mobility, therefore, cannot occur without the cooperation of many enabling objects and technologies. These 'mobility systems' as termed by Urry (2007) make movement possible, combining people and technologies which enable repetitive mobility. Access to such technologies is by no means benign, dependent as it is upon financial resources and service provision. Again, in the nineteenth century, aristocratic families would have travelled in private carriages; both expensive and exclusive. These afforded the user high levels of individualised mobility, and correspondingly, as suggested by Sager (2006), a greater level of personal power and freedom, ultimately making a person 'more mobile'. This is a characteristic according to Sheller (2004) most likely to be achieved by affluence and the elite, as was the case in nineteenth century London. Private carriages can be viewed in much the same light as cars in contemporary mobilities literature. The independence gained by owning a car (or private carriage) allows drivers an autonomy of decision making which consequently creates a level of power that is not witnessed with other methods of mobility (Shove, 2002, Rajé, 2007). Relating these ideas to the Season, those families with the greatest levels of personal mobility (through owning a carriage) were going some way to ensuring they were also the most powerful, and as such the Season provides a historical context through which this contemporary theory can be understood.

The use of a private carriage (or car in contemporary literature) can also be read in terms of exclusion. Unless by choice through the opening of a window or door, travelling in these private modes of transport cocoons the subject from the world

around them, in a 'mobile gated-community' (Freund & Martin, 2007). This level of personal and private mobility affords the user an additional layer of power: the power to control with whom they are interacting whilst being mobile. Understood through the work of Freund and Martin (2007), families who had access to private carriages during the Season were able to control the experience of their own mobility, a level of power which could not have been encountered by those with a lesser degree of personal mobility freedom. The ability to participate in a high degree of mobility also leads to another important form of mobility power documented in the literature and also evident in the experiences of the Season: that of expectant mobility. Rajé (2007) carried out research which suggested that those with a relative ease of access to mobility systems come to expect such systems to be operational and readily available for their usage. In this way, mobility becomes a taken for granted commodity. The expectations of 'normal' mobility are raised, and thus the desire to be more than merely mobile is increased. Rajé's 'expectant mobility' is illustrated clearly during the Season, where the support and demand for innovative mobilities technologies was perpetual. Of course, as highlighted by Freund and Martin (2007), this leads to a situation where the distance between the hyper-mobile and the immobile continually widens as those with the ability to be mobile are setting the standards of 'normal' mobility, further evidence of the power afforded to and gained by being mobile.

The partnership between mobility and immobility is the subject of Urry's 2003 book 'Global Complexity', in which he explores these tensions through the metaphors of the mobility/moorings dialectic. Wherever there is mobility, there will also exist directly relational immobility. "The complex character of such systems stems from the multiple time-space fixities or moorings that enable the fluidities of liquid modernity to be realized. Thus mobile machines such as mobile phones, cars, aircraft, trains and computer connections, all presume overlapping and varied time-space immobilities" (Urry, 2003b, p. 125). According to the mobilities literature, however, the power afforded to mobility and technology is not only that associated with physical movement. Sager (2006) indicated that the potential to travel, denoted 'motility' by Kaufmann (2002), is the correct indicator of individual levels of mobility. Motility is representative of the way in which an actor builds his/her relationship with space and less about the possibilities already existing in a given place. It can be described as the way in which an actor has the capacity to create personal travelling potentials (Kaufmann, 2002, Flamm & Kaufmann 2006), and build their 'motility capital'. Using this concept, it is clear that those participating in the Season, with a

means and a need for personal transport had significantly high levels of motility. In this context, where private carriages, horses, coachmen and footmen were continually poised, ready to facilitate the movement of participating families, these elite members of society can be said to have ultimate 'motility'. Understanding participants of the Season in terms of their motility allows for an appreciation of the power of being mobile in this manner, a previously under-researched element of the period.

Returning to the moorings debate posed by Urry (2003b), it is crucial within the context of the Season to understand that such mobility systems are reliant not only on technologies, but on vast swathes of relatively immobile people to act as architects of mobility; enabling the mobility of others, whilst being relatively immobile themselves. The most obvious example of these people during the nineteenth century are those who built and maintained carriages, and those who cared for the horses required to pull them. The servicing of mobile families also extended to footmen and lady's maids who played a different role in the mobility system of the household. Unlike the relatively immobile people maintaining technologies of mobility, footmen and lady's maids were often as highly mobile as their employers as they were required to drive the carriages or travel with the family on journeys. This type of mandatory hyper-mobility is touched upon by Frello (2008), who suggested that in the scheme of differential mobilities, there are some mobile people who are not in control of their own movement, but are instead obliged to move by the context in which they operate. The context of these 'servants of movement' employed during the Season clearly demonstrates the concept of mandatory mobility proposed by Frello.

Whilst discussions regarding mobility and immobility as concepts are important, it must be remembered that actual and lived mobility or immobility cannot be generalised. Movement is not a singular experience, but instead highly differentiated. Indeed, as Massey has discussed (1993), two people's experiences of the same journey or mobility moment have the potential to be extremely different. Therefore, in order to understand mobility and immobility these must be viewed in social contexts (Cresswell, 2001). This is significant for research on the Season and is again an area of mobilities scholarship which can be extended through an engagement with this historical context. Whilst the aristocracy were enjoying the relatively hyper-mobile consequences of private carriages, it is important to avoid concluding that people without access to such technologies were immobile. Those

living in the cramped conditions of the East End of London certainly did not have access to carriages, yet they cannot be declared as immobile. Studies (Lawton & Pooley, 1977; Green, 1988) have shown that whilst their mobility may have been highly localised and largely carried out on foot, it was no less prolific and significant for daily life as those people in the West End of London travelling greater distances in private carriages. What are important here are the relational differences (Adey, 2006) between the two for an understanding of Victorian London.

Skeggs has read these relational politics of mobility in relation to gender, suggesting that the mobilities paradigm can be linked to a “bourgeois masculine subjectivity” (2004, p. 48). She argues that mobility for women is highly different to that of men. The issue of relational gender mobility is a significant one, both in the present day and during the nineteenth century, as highlighted by scholars such as Bieri and Gerodetti (2007). Their aim was to become aware of the social practice and movements involved in producing gender in early-twentieth century train stations and in so doing illustrating the potential to explore mobilities themes in a historical context. In discussions regarding mobility and power, it must be identified that the power afforded by being physically mobile is accompanied by an increase in social mobility. As Cresswell indicated: “the way in which people are enabled or constrained in terms of their mobile practices differs markedly according to their position in social hierarchies” (2005, p. 448). Physical movement here is directly related to social movement, being able to move between places with relative ease is a source of status and power, whilst conversely limiting the social mobility of those who cannot move so freely. The links between movement, power and social mobility are developed in the following section of this chapter.

### *Mobility and Networks*

Since the 1950s, average distances between members of familial, occupational and social networks have significantly increased. These networks are more spread out, and members are often required to actively work on maintaining their connections (Cass et al, 2005). Mobilities theory forms an integral part of thinking regarding networks because mobilities operate in social contexts, the contexts of the networks and connections which constitute social life. Hannam et al (2006) represented mobilities in such thinking as a series of multiple and extended connections, organized through specific nodes, which according to Lassen (2006) comprise distinct social spaces that orchestrate new forms of social life in so called ‘smooth

corridors of mobility'. In this way, mobilities scholars represent the mobility and movements they document as networks and connections between human and non-humans. Law (2006) and Conradson and Latham (2007), however, indicated that such movements do not constitute a single network, but a complex intersection of different 'regimes of flow'. Networks are never sealed entities, always colliding with other networks, creating multiple flows co-existing between the same group of individuals. Linking this concept to the Season, the various mobilities can be considered as fluid interdependencies, enabling an analysis of the complex patterning of participants' social networking activities. The Season, which evolved through a desire to network, therefore provides an important historical background through which these contemporary debates can be explored.

Wittel (2001) has examined the way in which the fluid interdependencies witnessed in networking situations lead to his notion of 'network sociality' consisting of fleeting, transient and mutually beneficial intense social connections (see Rajé, 2007 for a discussion of this regarding reliance upon networks for travel). He has suggested that such activities take place in pockets of prosperous post industrial urban centres with close links to the cultural economy in which the commodification of human relationships can take place most effectively. The identification of 'network sociality' is hugely significant because it acknowledges the prominence and significance of networks to shape spaces, fuel mobilities and guide connections between different people. Although far from post-industrial, the spaces of the Season displayed similar characteristics to that of 'network sociality', the rounds of social meetings and engagements taking place in localised spaces for the creation of mutually beneficial networks was the defining characteristic of the phenomenon. Once again, the Season can be used to push the concept of networking sociality to a historical appreciation for networking communities.

Parallels can be drawn between the fleeting networks described in Wittel's 'network sociality' and theory regarding 'weak ties', as termed by Granovetter in 1973. He suggested that social networks involve many weak ties between individuals, generating 'small worlds' (Watts, 1999) between those who would appear to be completely unconnected. Granovetter showed that people with extensive weak ties of acquaintance experience success in locating new job opportunities, concluding that these people network to 'collect' contacts which may be advantageous. This concept is similar to the principles which drove participants of the Season to network and is therefore utilised as a tool for analysis in later chapters of this thesis.

Macdonald and Grieco (2007) remind us, however, that such weak ties are fleeting, existing in both time as well as space. As the subjects of networks move through life, networks gain and lose significance, a concept which Pahl has termed the 'social convoy' (2000). Using this concept it would be plausible to expect that as participants in the Season moved through the courses of their lives their desire for certain networks would diminish, in favour of networks which were more temporally beneficial. However, to extend this concept of stretched networks of weak ties further, Larsen et al (2006) have suggested that it is not merely weak ties which are maintained over long distances, but strong ties as well. Ohnmacht (2009) confirmed this assertion in relation to Granovetter's concept of weak ties in the context of Switzerland, concluding that the more geographically mobile people are, the more likely it is that their strong networks are non-local; criticising Putnam's neighbourhood communities ideology (2000).

The identification of geographically dispersed strong ties has provided fuel for scholars such as Urry (2007) to dispute the concept of social capital as discussed by Putnam (2000). The apparent decline in the frequency of physically connecting with people in propinquitous communities documented by Putnam (2000) has been compensated for by an increase in the communications between individuals who are geographically dispersed. Networks of support, care and resources, what Putnam would term 'social capital', have not diminished, but can instead be traced over greater geographical distances. As the nature of networking has become more dispersed, Larsen et al (2006) have called for a turn towards the notion of 'network capital'. Urry (2007) defined this as: "the capacity to engender and sustain social relations with those people who are not necessarily proximate and which generates emotional, financial, and practical benefit" (p. 197). Urry uses the concept of network capital to critique that of social capital, arguing that the concept of network capital is more relevant to a society where social relations are conducted through networks at a distance and where that society is continually mobile. Despite relating his theories of network capital to the global present (and an application of the concept in this context, for example in the work of Rettie (2008) regarding mobile phones), the theory is valuable to research on the Season and should not be seen as solely applicable to the twenty first century as is insinuated by Urry (2007). For many months of each year, whilst participating families were residing at their country estates or abroad, the networks created during the Season were maintained at a distance. Those with the greatest network capital were those who maintained these networks most successfully before meeting again the following year. As has been

highlighted in previous discussions, those families most able to maintain connections will have had the greatest amount of resources, and therefore power, at their disposal when attempting to find a marital partner for their child. Network capital can therefore be used to understand the goals behind participation in the Season, an argument highlighted in later chapters.

The metaphor of a network itself is by no means uncontested, however; many scholars have given their own interpretation to the term. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the work of Sheller in this debate is particularly relevant. Sheller (2004) suggested that it is necessary to move beyond the metaphor of a network in thinking about mobilities. Drawing on White's (1992) description of 'messy' social spaces, Sheller employs instead the metaphor of a gel, "suggestive of the softer, more blurred boundaries of social interaction...Rather than a clean break between the micro and the macro, the private and the public, or the local and the global, we can think in terms of this messy gel of sociality occurring at different scales and scopes" (Sheller, 2004 p. 47). In this 'polymer goo' of social interaction (as termed by Sheller), actors will be simultaneously in touch with many different people, and have access to many different kinds of resources facilitated by such social connections. Using Sheller in relation to the Season, the links between individuals, and the social meetings and spaces that such networks create, can be understood as being both formed by the ability to move and lie at the heart of the need to be mobile. This assertion pinpoints why a networks perspective is a useful and necessary lens through which to extend research regarding the Season.

Linked to debates surrounding network capital and the increased distancing of strong network ties is the notion of 'co-presence'. Boden and Molotch introduced the concept of co-presence in 1994, indicating that virtual travel will never completely replace corporeal travel because co-present interaction is fundamental to social life, a compulsion to proximity (Urry, 2002). Urry, with Büscher, reiterated the importance of co-presence in 2009, suggesting that occurrences of travel to engage in co-present interaction require explanation: an understanding of the meetings which initiated the act of movement. Co-presence links movement and networking; contextualising mobility through the co-present meeting at the end of a journey. Larsen et al (2006) concluded that networks only function if they are occasionally 'activated' through these co-present meetings, cementing weak ties together until the next period of co-presence is possible. In this sense, meetings are essential for the production of network capital. The Season itself can be understood as the yearly

co-present meeting between networks of aristocratic families. Scholars such as Urry link back to the work of Goffman in relation to co-presence, who suggested that connections between individuals could only be fundamentally made when the 'eyes are joined'. These 'complex dances of face to face encounters' (Wellman, 2001) reaffirm friendships and shared interests. Physical travel to maintain networks is not carried out solely through choice, however. Many co-present encounters occur through obligatory travel, termed the 'mobility burden' by Shove (2002). Obligations to family events, work meetings or social gatherings comprise much of co-present engagement. As stronger ties are conducted over greater distances, the demand for people to travel to maintain the various strands of networks of which they are a part increases. The extent to which obligatory networking existed during the Season will be discussed in later chapters of this thesis.

### *Embodied travel*

So far in this discussion regarding movements, networks and connections, travel itself has been largely ignored. Scholars such as Sheller (2004) and Sheller and Urry (2006) have highlighted this tendency in much of the literature regarding movement: "car consumption is never simply about rational economic choices, but is as much about aesthetic, emotional and sensory responses to driving" (Sheller, 2004, p. 222). To negate this gap in knowledge, both Sheller and Urry call for research which focuses on 'travel time', arguing that the time spent moving between places is not 'dead time' but is actively 'used'. Whilst much literature resulting from this call to engage in the practices of moving has been conducted in relation to car travel (Redshaw, 2007; Sheller, 2007; Laurier et al, 2008), a product of the twenty first century transport mechanisms upon which the new mobilities paradigm was founded, there has been a significant body of research conducted regarding the embodied experience of cycling (Jones, 2005; Furness, 2007; Pesses, 2010) and railway travel (Bissell, 2007; Watts, 2008). This interrogation of the embodied nature of a range of modes and contexts of travel is shown to be an important element of mobilities thinking, and as such can be applicable to the private carriages used during the Season. Symes (2007) suggested that we must see containers of travel such as the carriage as places in themselves, drawing on Kesselring who argued that these connectivity spaces are utilized by those travelling as resources, meaning that it cannot be presumed that travelling time is not also activity time. Travellers fill their movement time with social practices, creating what Wong (2006)

described as 'sociable dwelling in motion', such that the act of travelling is as important as the meeting upon arrival.

The notion of embodied travel in the historical context has been explored by Urry (2007) who suggested that the introduction of the railways in the late nineteenth century challenged passengers to embody movement in a new way. Facing other passengers in small compartments created new forms of possible interaction, as well as different and faster ways of seeing the passing landscape. Applying Urry's historical engagement to the context of the Season, embodied travel is significant. The congregation of carriages riding along Rotten Row several times daily was created as 'activity time', the purpose of participation being to engage with potential contacts also riding. As Urry (2007) has suggested people know how to behave 'on the move', the movement is performed by those participating in it. Once again, this idea can be strengthened through an understanding of the display potential of movement utilised by those participating in the Season.

### *The Performance of Mobility*

The embodied travel discussed above can be linked closely with the work of performance theorists. Goffman (1963, 1972) is a key scholar in the development of these ideas. Performance, for Goffman, was essential for understanding interaction, both as a dramaturgical metaphor and as an engagement between individuals and audience (the way in which Goffman's work inspired scholars such as Nash (2000) and Cresswell (1996a) will be discussed in Chapter 7). Elements of this theory are explored in the work of Butler (1990, 1993), who utilised performance as a metaphor through which to explore the body and sexuality. Butler is important because she argues that men and women learn to adopt the practices of routine gendered behaviour as a result of the existence of societal norms of behaviour, useful in the context of the Season in which strict gender differences were maintained during performance. The core of Butler's argument was utilised more recently by the work of non-representational theorists, in particular the work of Thrift (1996, 1997, with Dewsbury, 2000). The relationship between performance and non-representational practice fundamentally revolved around the notion that the conduct of human beings is shaped around mundane everyday practices. Thrift reflects the way in which subjects engage in subconscious practice, in an 'unformulated grasp of the world' (Taylor, in Thrift, 1996, p. 10). Edensor (2007) in response argues for a reinterpretation of most acts of mobility, viewing them simply as unreflexive and

habitual (Jones, 2005). These 'banal mobilities' are seen by Edensor and others to be the crucial movements in the construction, form and function of places, repeated movements learned over time which consolidate a sense of belonging in a place (Edensor, 2007, Binnie et al, 2007).

This non-representational view, in which performance is used to highlight habitual practices, has been challenged by scholars such as Nash (2000) and Cresswell (2006b) through the use of dance theorists. Wolff (1995), Desmond (1997) and Foster (1996) have been adopted by these and other cultural geographers to critique the habitual nature of performance as discussed by Thrift. They instead call for an appreciation of the way performance is mediated by the representational elements of the teaching of steps, the scripted nature of routines, and the way in which the dance is consumed by an audience. Nash (2000) used the specifics of dance theory to question the use of non-representational theory in this context, instead calling for an appreciation of the sets of norms and representations through which performance is enacted. This is relevant in the context of the Season where the prescribed dance steps and appreciation of flawless performance moved beyond the realm of non-representative, habitual practice and instead reflected the specific role dance played in the formation of networks during the Season. As such, performances highlighted in Chapter 7 support the work of Nash, engaging in the historical geographies of dance she considered in her 2000 paper.

The work of performance theorists has been adopted by other groups of mobilities scholars, who have largely rejected the work of non-representational theorists such as Thrift. Jensen (2006), for example, has emphasised that performance in certain spaces depends upon the expectations of how others in the same space will interpret the act of performance, echoing the work of Goffman. In this way, mobility and movement spaces can be seen as enacted, with participants performing behaviours in ways they deem appropriate. This notion can also be linked to power, particularly relevant in relation to the Season. Cultural geographers such as Gregson & Rose (2000) used the work of Butler to suggest that performances (what individuals do, say, or act-out) are always connected to performativity (the practices which reproduce and subvert discourse). Performativity, in the case of the Season, involved the saturation of performances with power, the power to dictate appropriate behaviours and performances in the ballrooms of London. Understanding performance in this way during the Season is therefore an important addition to current understandings of the period.

### Material Networks

In an earlier section of this chapter, the role of technology and material systems in enabling movement was highlighted. This discussion is reconvened in this section entitled 'material networks'. Whilst mobility systems and technologies which enabled the physical act of movement to occur are a significant and indispensable element of contemporary and historical mobility, the importance of material objects in the act of networking is also a significant element of mobility systems. Hybrid systems (Whatmore, 2002) of materialities and mobilities combine objects, technology and sociality, producing and reproducing places. As Hannam et al (2006) have discussed in an analysis of networks, certain networks are coupled with enduring connections between people and objects across distances and time; reaffirmed by Urry in 2010 (in Adey & Bissell, 2010).

A 'Material Geographies' (Anderson & Tolia-Kelly, 2004; Tolia-Kelly, 2004) approach directed the present research to analyse and incorporate the nature, flow and material structure of the social networks which shaped the socio-geographical form of the Season. Law and Hetherington (2000) reiterated the value of this engagement more generally, suggesting that objects of the everyday are not idle, rather they are performative, forming part of a "heterogeneous network of bits and pieces of all kinds, that participate in the generation of information, of power relations, of subjectivities and objectivities" (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 4). This call for the appreciation of the performative potential of objects is echoed in the work of Löfgren (2008). He understood how materialities of movement shaped people's experiences of railway travel in the nineteenth century; illustrative of the relevance of exploring material concerns in a historical context. Whilst Löfgren's work is useful in illustrating the importance of understanding the role of the material in past moments of mobility, his work approaches the material at a broad scale, lacking the intimate engagement with specific objects, namely luggage, that influence the experiences of a journey as seen in the work of Watts (2008). This contemporary micro-scale approach displayed by Bissell is necessary for an understanding of the Season, in which individual objects had the power to shape the experiences of this period.

In the London Season, the role of objects was highly significant. Beckett (1986) stated that the nature of the Season and its spatial concentration in the West End was not an aristocratic master plan, but merely a consequence of the adherence to fashionable housing trends. Following fashion afforded individuals power: "the ever

changing rules of fashion often became an element of control by such groups” (Davidoff, 1973 p. 37). The importance of following fashion as a passport to social acceptability had a significant impact on the spatial formation of the West End; certain houses became desirable centres for entertainment because of their material characteristics. Drawing on work by Miller (1998), Jackson (2000), however, stresses that there is a need to understand why some objects, such as those related to the fashions of the Season, ‘matter’, suggesting emphasis must be placed on “when and where the materiality of material culture makes a difference rather than assuming its importance in an *a priori* manner” (Jackson, 2000 p. 13). In terms of the Season, the importance of networking and performing mobility was of such significance that the objects associated with this performance were also loaded with significance and therefore ‘mattered’ as Jackson described. Maycroft (2004), however, has built on the work of Jackson, calling for an engagement with the ‘use-value’ of objects, suggesting that daily engagements with space are constantly reappropriated through the changing roles of the material. The use of calling cards, carriages, and fashionable items of clothing were all material objects loaded with importance in terms of forming social alliances during the Season. Lees (2001), with regards to architecture reminds us, however, that such associations should not be regarded as fixed, instead suggesting that the meaning of an object (in this case a building) is continually produced and reproduced through the daily activities of the users associated with it. It is important to remember that throughout the Season, as technology advanced and the very nature of the Season changed, objects holding significance would have changed too, and in some cases may have been replaced altogether.

The adoption of a material geographies approach within mobilities studies and cultural geography more broadly has not been confined to contemporary experiences. Just as Cresswell (2006b, 2010) and Pooley et al (2006) have engaged in historical mobility, so too have other scholars focussed upon the material histories of the past. In contrast to more traditional foci of representation, (broad-scale understandings of phenomena and place, for example McLaughlin, 2000; Robinson, 2004), this new approach holds material histories at its core. Geographers such as Gunn and Owens (2006) have called for an understanding of the ‘material histories of everyday life’, appreciating the way in which the material has shaped the lives of people throughout history. They engage with the material by suggesting that intersections between human and non-human forces have influenced and facilitated the construction and maintenance of the modern city, an

argument which has been adopted in Chapter 8 in relation to residential spaces. This theoretical position is being investigated through the work of the ongoing project '*Victorian London: Material Histories of Everyday life*' (Queen Mary, University of London), in which archaeological and documentary evidence of life across three contrasting localities in the capital are collected and analysed to gain a deeper understanding of the social life and complexity of London during the nineteenth century. By engaging with these material objects, the domestic sphere of these three sites has been understood in new ways, highlighting the relationship both between Londoners and the wider urban world and historical context of the period.

Whilst the present research on the Season will not adopt this wholeheartedly material perspective, and is not wholly reliant upon material evidence, as a theoretical concept it nevertheless provides an opportunity to understand the Season, or certain elements of the Season, in a different way. By combining the material perspective discussed within the new mobilities paradigm with the work of historical geographers in this field, the importance of material objects and technologies to the lives of those participating in the Season becomes immediately evident. Carriages, horses, uniforms and mews not only enabled the Season to occur, but these material objects also shaped the experiences of those participating and their engagement with the spaces surrounding them. The focus on these objects of the Season correlates with the work of Moran (2005) and Highmore (2002) who called for a focus on the historical everyday objects that shaped past societies. The carriage, horse, and liveries were the taken-for-granted everyday objects of the Season, which must be more fully understood through an appreciation of their material significance in facilitating mobility.

### *Mobility and Space*

Intrinsically linked to debates surrounding networks of both humans and non-humans are the spaces of network nodes: the places where people travel to, to exchange in social interaction. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the formulation of the new mobilities paradigm was in part attributed to the gap between two spatial theories, that of sedentarism and nomadic metaphysics. The critique offered by mobilities scholars regarding these theories has shaped much contemporary engagement with concepts of place. The relationship between place and mobility builds upon the work of Harvey who termed the spatial, infrastructural and institutional moorings which configure and enable mobilities as the 'spatial fix'.

Sheller (2004) drew upon this work, suggesting that forms of deterritorialization or detachment associated with mobile networks (as depicted by theories relating to nomadic metaphysics) are accompanied by 'rhizomic attachments' to place (an attachment prominent in sedentarism), combining the two approaches detailed above. Not only do mobilities scholars such as Sheller combine the two strands of thought, but they develop this enquiry further in suggesting that reterritorializations directly reconfigure place; migrants develop and modify place in accordance with previous residences or social spaces to which they belonged, changing the nature of the space. This re-grounding is significant because it calls for an appreciation of the way that such networks are shaping space. Work on space in relation to the Season in the present thesis is built upon the assertion by Sheller and Urry that: "as people, capital and things move, they form and reform space" (2006, p. 216). Despite relating to contemporary mobilities, this statement regarding space is applicable to any situation in which movement occurs, or has occurred, and hence can be associated with past mobility moments.

Many scholars working in the mobilities realm have called for a similar re-imagining of how such spaces are viewed, suggesting that by combining the construct of place as an enduring site fixed in geographical space and time, whilst also embracing concepts of fluidity and flux, places can be understood as spaces of encounter and interrelation (Conradson & Latham, 2007, Adey, 2006). This vision is present in the work of Cresswell (2002) a prominent critic of nomadism, which he believed confined place 'to the margins'. Instead, Cresswell and many others researching mobility following him, have called for a re-imagining of place in terms of mobilities as a network core, constantly being made and remade by the actors existing and networking in it. His work draws heavily upon the ideas of Massey, who argued that place must be re-imagined progressively, "distinguishable from simple locatedness" (Massey, 2004 p. 8). The networks of interaction between people in places, these network nodes (Sheller & Urry, 2006), are not motionless, never fixed or bounded, but processes which shape both the network itself and the place in which it occurs. It is, therefore, the ability of people and materials to move and to be mobile that allows for such recompositions of place, to some extent unifying the two contrasting views of sedentarism and nomadic metaphysics. The way in which mobility, immobility and practices of network formation continually reconfigures place is extremely significant for work regarding the Season, where mobility and networking were at the forefront of everyday activity in the West End. Understanding the spaces of the Season in this way contradicts previous research regarding the

period, in which London at the time is treated as fixed, a banal template on to which the Season was imposed.

### Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the way in which mobilities literature can inform an understanding of the Season has been discussed. In particular, scholars such as Pooley et al (2006), MacDonald & Grieco (2007) and Cresswell (2005, 2006a, 2010) have been used to illustrate the successful adoption of a mobilities approach within historical enquiry. These scholars have also used their various historical settings to illustrate that the concepts discussed in much contemporary literature are not new, instead having been experienced in different contexts in the past. The present research on the Season engages with this mobilities literature in a similar way. Much of the mobilities literature discussing contemporary situations fails to acknowledge the importance of movement to historical situations, nor does it explore the responses to changes in movement technologies in the past. With the Season reliant upon the technology of the carriage giving these elite groups of people access to private and fluid movements long before the advent of car and air travel, the Season provides a further example for those working in the field of historical mobilities, adding to this important dimension of contemporary scholarship. Similarly in terms of connection and the formation of networks, much contemporary scholarship looks to the present for examples of this form of mobility. Instead, this research into the Season provides a historical example of these contemporary theories, adding depth to work in this area, and in turn supporting the work of scholars such as Pooley et al (2006) and Cresswell (2005, 2006a, 2010) in calling for an appreciation of the historical geographies of mobility.



In this chapter, the methodological considerations of investigating the historical mobilities of the Season will be discussed. The chapter starts with an appreciation for recent developments in historical geography as a whole, before considering the past methodological approaches to researching the Season. These approaches are then contrasted with a review of the 'mobile methods' adopted by contemporary mobilities researchers. The research questions for this thesis will then be introduced before discussing the relevant source material which could be collected in the light of these questions. The source material used in this research will then be discussed in detail, before concluding that a triangulation of sources is necessary to enable a comprehensive engagement with the research questions posed.

### **The Development of Historical Geography**

This research falls within the realms of historical geography and has been influenced by the methodological approaches of this sub-discipline. Traditionally, adopting an historical geography perspective would have guided the thesis to a structural approach, with a large focus placed upon the collection of quantitative data (Dennis, 2000; Holdsworth, 2003). The availability of quantifiable sources such as census enumerators' books, directories and rate books directed the type of historical enquiry undertaken, resulting in the structural approach typified in Atkins' research on class solidarity in the West End of London (Atkins, 1990). In this research, directories were consulted and their data processed to allow for the drawing of detailed cartographic representations. Whilst this research is important for understanding the residential movement of the upper classes during the nineteenth century, and whilst quantitative sources are extremely significant for historical research, a human perspective is lacking. Nevertheless, as discussed by Butlin (1990), this reliance upon historical data sets to reconstruct past geographies, albeit at a variety of scales, shaped the nature of historical research for decades.

More recently, the structural root of historical geography scholarship has been challenged, heralding a new wave of 'modern historical geography' (Graham & Nash, 2000). Recent work in the discipline has moved away from the previous reliance upon purely quantitative analysis, to one which critically engages with the ways in which historical interpretation is bound by theoretical context (Graham &

Nash, 2000). Contemporary historical geographers began to research historical situations through contemporary theoretical lenses and positions, ranging widely from feminism to post-colonialism (McEwan, 2000; Legg, 2008; Magee & Thompson, 2010). This shift has led to a broadening of the approaches to recent historical geography enquiry and has influenced the way in which the present research project was conducted (Lorimer, 2003). Whilst not all the theoretical positions emerging are relevant to the work conducted in this particular research on the Season, an awareness of the changing nature of the discipline is essential in understanding its foundational influences.

Feminist perspectives have particularly influenced the geographical direction of research in recent years. Scholars such as Rose (2000) and McDowell (2004, 2005, 2007) have moved beyond previous structuralist approaches to uncover the under-researched gendered dimensions present in historical situations. In her research regarding Latvian women's experiences of war-time Europe, McDowell (2004) called for historical enquiry which uncovered the sometimes purposeful forgetting of events, as well as championing groups of people, such as women, whose histories had previously been underrepresented. This same approach has been adopted by Blunt (1994 (with Rose), 2000a, 2000b), for example in 2000 when she attempted to understand the Indian siege of the Lucknow Residency in 1857 through a focus upon the domestic sphere, rather than the front-line (Blunt, 2000a). The foregrounding of women's voices by these and other scholars illustrates an important shift in the discipline, achieved through the adoption of new theoretical approaches.

These approaches can again be witnessed in the recent development of material histories. Using the theoretical backdrop of material geographies, scholars such as Thomas (2007), Hill (2007) and Jeffries et al (2009) have developed research which uncovered the historical importance of certain material objects in past geographies. Thomas used the clothes, in particular, ceremonial dresses, of Lady Curzon, a former Vicereine of India, to uncover the way in which the clothes she wore represented colonial power. Likewise, the recent project *Living in Victorian London: material histories of everyday domestic life in the nineteenth century metropolis* headed by Jeffries et al adopts a similar material approach to historical geography, this time with reference to the everyday spaces of three sites in London (Jeffries et al, 2009).

These two small examples of the divergence of historical geography enquiry are representative of the broadening of the discipline, a shift which has been influenced not only by the consideration of theoretical positions, but also the adoption of new methodological approaches. Purely quantitative sources could no longer provide the answers to the questions raised by different theoretical standpoints. The work of Blunt in understanding the domestic sphere in a war zone, for example, could not be illuminated through traditional quantitative data sets, where domestic voices were underrepresented. Therefore, a move towards theoretical reflexivity was accompanied by an equally significant shift towards a more agency-centred approach to researching the discipline.

This move from the broad structural approach offered by quantitative sources to a focus on agency, and the experiences of the individual, led to an uncovering of qualitative sources such as diaries, autobiographies, letters and novels. These sources have significantly influenced the way in which historical geography is undertaken, championing the opinions and lived experiences of those in the past to understand the event/period in the present day. In so doing, these sources allow for previously marginalised histories to be uncovered, as biographical material enables individual stories to be told (for example, Bressey (2005) on Sarah Forbes Bonetta, and Pred (2004) in relation to African-Caribbean slaves). Scholars such as Ogborn (1998, 2002) pioneered this approach, for example using royal letters to understand the voyages of the East India Company in the early seventeenth century (Ogborn, 2002). In this, and other research projects, Ogborn argued that broad issues such as the production of power and knowledges in a historical period can be approached and understood by studying the life or lives of an insignificant number of people living during the period. Scholars such as Matless & Cameron (2007), in relation to the friendships of Marietta Pallis, and Peterson (1984), who detailed the education of three generations of the Paget family, have also followed this agency-centred approach in understanding the friendships and family connections between the subjects of their research. This contrasts with past approaches to the discipline which largely ignored sources which illuminated experiences, in favour of those which produced relatively quantifiable data.

The move towards an agency centred approach in the field of historical geography has influenced this research project significantly.

## **Past Approaches to the Season**

Previous research on the Season has generally failed to adopt the agency-centred approach proposed by scholars in the discipline. Much of the existing scholarship pre-dates the agency turn, and therefore cannot be judged as having deliberately rejected it, but the absence of insights garnered by a focus upon agency is significant. As Chapter 2 discussed, the Season is an under-researched field in historical geography; works regarding it can be counted on two hands. Yet, whilst the content of these literatures may differ, the similarities between this small body of research are extensive, particularly in terms of approach. Virtually all past research combines multiple sources to paint a picture of the Season; the population census, directories, newspapers and etiquette books are used most frequently (see Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976; Horn, 1992). This multi-source approach is testament to the fragmented nature of the evidence available. Several scholars such as Davidoff (1973) and Horn (1992) do make some use of biographical material, largely relying on excerpts from autobiographies to illustrate a particular point. In both cases, what these scholars fail to provide is any context for these accounts. The featured work comes without reflection regarding the social classifications which were important during the period; for example, the age, marital status or societal position of the people to whom the account belonged. This lack of a critical approach to the sources employed is significant, because it limits the ability of the work to fully reconstruct and consider these past geographies. Likewise, the work of Sproule (1978) draws upon newspaper articles to advance discussions regarding the ballroom; however, nowhere in her work is the source critically reviewed. In the past work on the Season, sources are used to prove a particular point made by the author, without reflection as to the significance of utilising a source, or the role that using such material plays in the research.

Another significant difference between past research on the Season and the agency approach adopted by scholars such as Blunt (2000) is the scale at which it is conducted. Without exception, all previous research into the Season operated at a broad scale (Pullar, 1978; Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980). The methodologies used were not designed to distinguish between participants spatially or socially. The result of this approach is an account of the Season in which every participant is assumed to have experienced the period in the same way. This can be contrasted with the work of scholars such as Peterson (1984) who used sources conducive to an agency approach, such as diaries, to investigate an historical period at an

individual level. Peterson used this biographical data to understand the lives of Victorian women in the same family, analysing in detail their contrasting personal experiences to critique the traditional views of a Victorian upper-middle class childhood. Whilst this obviously rendered Peterson's work to the small scale, using an agency approach illuminated the period she studied, foregrounding previously undiscovered ideas and experiences. The broad scale, largely uncritical, approaches adopted by previous scholars regarding the Season are illustrative of the fact that they fail to substantially build upon one another to create new knowledges.

### **The Theoretical Lens of Mobilities: Mobile Methods**

In the present research, the Season is understood through the theoretical lens of the new mobilities literature. Based firmly in contemporary situations, mobilities theory advocates a range of methods suited to researching the mobile (see Watts & Urry, 2008; Büscher & Urry, 2009). In announcing the mobilities paradigm in 2006, Sheller and Urry proposed that mobilities perspectives could be best researched through the use of observation, mobile ethnographies, the keeping of 'time-space' diaries, 'cyber-research' and performances of memory. These methods were designed to understand the 'patterning, timing and causation of face-to-face co-presence' (Sheller and Urry, 2006). Such methods and sources have been adopted by many mobilities scholars to achieve these aims. For example, Rettie (2008) based research into network capital around mobile telephones, in which the detailed use of this technology was observed. Watts (2008) employed the technique of mobile ethnography to observe how commuters on inter-city trains travelled, how the spaces of the carriage were utilised and the behaviours adopted whilst 'on the move'. Likewise, Bissell (2009) has also focussed research on train travel, conducting interviews in railway waiting rooms to understand the spaces of stillness in mobile situations and combining this method with time-space diagrams constructed through observations on Newcastle Central station. Combining these two mobile methods allowed Bissell to draw conclusions regarding the differential mobilities of the everyday experience. Researching the everyday experiences of mobility has also been undertaken by Kesselring (2006) who used in-depth interviews to understand the way in which people moved on a routine basis and the decisions they made regarding these mobilities.

Clearly, the mobile methods proposed by scholars such as Sheller & Urry (2006), Urry (2007) and Adey (2010) are designed for the contemporary context of much of the mobilities literature. Observations of movement, interviews and mobile ethnographies are methodologies firmly located in the present day context. Adopting a mobilities perspective in historical geography is therefore challenging methodologically. The mobile people of the Season cannot be observed by today's researches, nor can they be interviewed; as Baker (1997) stated "the dead don't answer questionnaires". Concerns must be raised as to the implications of this position. There are intrinsic difficulties surrounding the use and employment of an emerging theory and its associated methodologies in a historical context for which it was not initially intended. In moving past this potential limitation, however, it is useful to draw upon an increasing body of mobilities scholars who have successfully used this theoretical lens to understand the historical. Cresswell in particular has developed strategies for understanding past mobilities. In discussing the political and corporeal mobility of American suffragettes Foley and Luscomb (2005), he drew on the use of diaries to chart the movements made by these women as well as the political interactions they made. In so doing, Cresswell used the diary as a substitute for interviews and ethnography. These two women could no longer be asked about their extensive mobility, nor could they be watched accomplishing it, yet their diaries provided Cresswell with an insight into their lives in sufficient detail to draw reliable conclusions. Similarly, in 2006, he turned to historical sources to understand the production of mobility in the English ballroom at the start of the twentieth century (Cresswell, 2006b). Utilising contemporary performance theory, Cresswell answers Nash's (2000) question regarding the difficulty in understanding past performance by drawing upon a variety of secondary sources, as well as diaries, to gain insights into these past ballrooms. The use of individual accounts and stories is a popular method with scholars researching historical mobility. Pooley et al (2006) compiled individual life histories to create a broad picture of commuting since 1890, and Adey (2006) drew upon newspapers and airport archives to investigate the usage of Liverpool Airport in the 1930s, a technique also employed by Merriman in relation to motorway planning (2005, 2006). What these examples demonstrate is the way in which contemporary theory has been used by scholars to act as a framework for understanding past geographies, and the way in which the traditional mobile methodologies are substituted for parallel historical documents which enable understandings to be drawn. Many of these documents involve adopting an agency approach to historical geography, utilising biographical material to uncover individual mobilities.

## **Research Questions**

The theoretical opportunities afforded by an engagement with mobilities theory (as detailed in Chapter 3) combined with a critique of current literature regarding the Season (Chapter 2) has led to the formulation of specific research questions. These questions have been designed to allow for these gaps and new avenues to be explored against the backdrop of recent methodological developments in historical geography. Combining these strands of enquiry has enabled the Season to be investigated from a different perspective. Research questions 1 and 2 build on the work of mobilities scholars in foregrounding the importance of researching movement and networks in understanding phenomena and place. This signals a new approach through which to research the Season. Material Geographies, also present in mobilities literature are reflected in research question 3, and reflects the lack of a material perspective in current literature regarding the period. Research question 4 was formulated in a similar vein, identifying a gap in exiting research and exploring this through the theoretical avenues regarding space present in mobilities literature. The final research question reflects calls in historical geography to approach understanding aspects of past geographies, such as the Season, through the use of biographical sources (as discussed earlier in this chapter).

The research questions formulated are as follows:

- 1) What was the role of mobility in the Season?
- 2) Can the Season be understood through practices of network formation and in what way was this networking facilitated and performed?
- 3) How did fashion affect the Season and how was this manifested?
- 4) How was the Season related to residential structures and spaces in the West End?
- 5) What new insights can be brought to an understanding of the Season through the use of biographical sources?

### **What is relevant source material?**

Utilising specific research questions requires a discussion regarding relevant source material. The nineteenth century provides a rich source base to draw upon for research, albeit fragmented and dispersed. Owing to the varied nature of the source material available, however, it was important from the outset to identify sources

which were relevant to the specific research questions posed by this particular piece of research (Baker, 1997; see also Cockayne (2007) on selecting relevant source material with regards to researching filth in Victorian London). Research questions 1, 2, 3, and 5, in which concepts of movement, networking, performance, fashion and individual life stories are key concepts, have relied heavily upon biographical material. This source group is particularly relevant to these research questions because it enables a further layer of understanding. A micro-scale analysis of specific networks, modes of performance, fashions worn and experiences lived adds to the broader analysis present in much existing literature regarding the period. These detailed insights are brought about through an engagement with these biographical sources alongside more traditional sources such as newspapers, etiquette manuals and court directories.

Court directories were more heavily utilised as a source in research question 4, where the specific data contained in this source was employed to create maps and aid analysis of the spatial trends and patterns witnessed in the West End during the Season. Biographical material is not so relevant a source to this research question owing to the broader nature of the question posed. The spatial impact of the Season in terms of the West End therefore required source material which could elicit these trends at a wider perspective than the individual. The more quantitative approach to this research question was furthered by the use of rate books and census data, both traditional historical sources though utilised differently through an engagement in contemporary mobilities theory. This research question was not solely investigated through quantitative sources, however. An understanding of the social uses of space and the development of estates in the West End relied upon a range of less widely adopted sources. The reminiscences of coachmen, as well as the autobiographies of residents living in the West End during the nineteenth century were also employed. This combination of quantitative and qualitative material allowed for this research question to be understood from a variety of different perspectives.

A wider range of sources were called upon to answer research questions 1 and 3 where no single source could supply all the relevant research material. In both cases, biographical material was supplemented by an array of less frequently utilised resources such as guidebooks, handbooks, etiquette manuals, official documentation, maps and diagrams. These sources provided specific, and often technical, information ranging from the number of carriage licenses issued in a

specific year through to the definition of a particular shape of bustle popular in a specific Season. By combining this wide variety of specific sources, a more comprehensive investigation of the research question can be undertaken, a process of triangulation discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Certain sources utilised in this thesis are relevant in several different respects and are employed in a variety of contexts dependant upon the research question investigated. Newspapers are the most significant source in this respect. The ball attendance lists found in the pages of *The Morning Post* were used to construct the map of networking streets (Figure 13) relevant to all five of the research questions posed. The source is used in a contrasting way in research question 3 where articles and editorial comments regarding the fashions of the period are relevant in providing context to the individual dresses present in biographical material. Research question 1 posed different demands on the source, advertisements found in the pages of newspapers were the most relevant source in illustrating the demand for certain material technologies of mobility. Newspapers are, therefore, representative of the way in which the same source can be relevant in a number of contrasting respects, dependant on the demands posed by a specific research question.

Adhering to the specificities of the research questions posed has also led to the rejection of certain sources altogether. Trade directories, wills, probate records and death duties were all irrelevant to the specific questions posed by this thesis. Whilst rendering them no less useful in other studies regarding the Season and past geographies in general, their rejection in this research is illustrative of the selection process by which only those sources most applicable to this research were utilised. Combining this specific range of sources enabled the Season to be understood in greater depth, foregrounding individual perspectives supported by a broader background.

### **Using Secondary Data and Archival Material**

The source material used in this research was gathered in a range of settings; libraries, archive collections, museums, galleries and walking around the spaces of West London as they exist today. The use of secondary sources and archives for research is well documented in academic literature (Plummer, 2004; Kitchin & Tate,

2000; Clark, 1997), but the contested nature of this source must also be touched upon here. Researchers must be aware that the availability of secondary data is highly politicised. Sources must be seen as cultural products (Clark, 1997). The inclusion of a source in an archive collection is a human choice; a choice made against a backdrop of intended purpose and perceived importance. Therefore, the archives and sources uncovered in the various research settings mentioned above are merely the survivors of previous choices, and may not be a true representation of past geographies (Bryman, 2008). These same sources are once again subject to the interpretation of importance, of 'usefulness', by researchers eager to uncover evidence to answer specific questions (Baker, 1997). Throughout the life of a manuscript, or a newspaper article, its meanings and significances will be interpreted, flaunted as positive evidence of a researcher's idea. There is no guarantee or indeed way of knowing how many different, and possibly contrasting, arguments the same source has been utilised to prove. This malleability of secondary data is an important point to remember in the present research. The Season presented in these findings may have been a slightly different period in the eyes of another researcher presented with the same, or similar, data.

The fluidity in the meanings of the sources utilised in this research can be offset to a certain extent, however, by combining each with other sources to build a more comprehensive picture of the period. The use of supporting evidence has been a useful tool in this research project. Wherever possible, sources have been crosschecked with different data sources from the period, enabling validity to be checked as well as offering a deeper understanding of the context examined (Hoggart et al, 2002).

#### *The privileging of sources in this research*

The sources utilised in the present research have been touched upon in the above section regarding research questions and relevant source material for this investigation into the Season. There are, however, important differences in the way in which these sources have been approached and consumed. The sources themselves were identified through branching literature searches, as well as source specific guides such as Creaton's *Unpublished London Diaries* (2003) and *The Wellesley Index of Victorian Periodicals*. Armed with a mountain of potential material, each source deployed in this research was investigated, the opportunities each offered to answer specific questions noted and the potential links between

them pondered. This process of ruling sources and lines of enquiry in or out of the research has been advocated by Ogborn (2003). It was during this period of 'source testing' that three sources came to the fore as particularly insightful given the particular research questions posed. These were newspapers, diaries/ autobiographies and court directories. In this research on the Season, therefore, these three sources are privileged over others. The other sources investigated were not discarded, but instead were used to 'fill in the gaps' repeatedly left by the sources most regularly utilised. The importance of newspapers, diaries and court directories will be discussed further in this chapter; but the following example provides an illustration of the 'privilege/gap' approach to the material.

In Chapter 7, the performance potential of the ballroom is discussed. This section was constructed by combining many contrasting sources. The significance of performance is prevalent in the biographical material uncovered. The women's feelings and accounts of dance partners, the clothing worn and the skilled dancing on display were initially used to understand the mobility of this setting. Diaries were combined with another main source, newspapers, which provided quantitative data regarding the number of attendees at balls and their chaperones. Whilst this data was useful, and in many cases illuminating, there were still large gaps in the research; the practices of the ballroom were missing. It was here that the sources used less frequently were mobilised. Etiquette books (for example *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private*, 1871) told of the correct behaviour in a ballroom; literature from the period (in particular Stanhope's *Almack's: A Novel* (1826) and Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1848)) described the setting; dance manuals such as *The Drawing Room Dances* (1847) were consulted to understand the intricacy of dance steps; and *Burke's Peerage* was checked to shed light on the hostesses of the balls in question.

This approach of privileging certain sources, backed up by a wealth of sources used only sparingly and when needed, is advocated by Hoggart et al (2002) who call for a more innovative approach to source material. The triangulation of sources discussed in this section will be covered in more detail later in the chapter, however it is important to notice that privileging certain sources over others foregrounds a certain set of views, and therefore has significant impact upon the outcome of this research (Jones, 2004).

## **Biographical Material**

Seven published diaries form the basis of the biographical material used in this research, sources which are supplemented by many other autobiographies, biographies and letters which were used less frequently and more specifically. The main diaries used are listed in Table 1. These sources were identified through searches of library catalogues, along with pointers from existing literature and Creaton's *Unpublished London Diaries* (2003) and Handley's *An Annotated Bibliography of Diaries Printed in English* (1997). The material contained in each was reviewed in the light of the research questions, selecting only those which gave insights into the areas of the Season researched in this thesis. Biographical material, and in particular the seven diaries selected for detailed use in this research were chosen for their depth of detail in relation to their regular meetings, dance partners and opinions regarding the events of the Season. Studies such as the networks analysis in Appendix 2 (especially Figures 22 to 25) required accounts which contained specific details regarding the success of a connection, the number of times networking occurred between the diarist and a contact and the locations in which these networking moments occurred. A total of forty seven diaries were initially selected using branching searches and the two guides mentioned above. These were then assessed for their usefulness in terms of the specific research questions posed, with thirty eight partially or completely rejected. In some circumstances this was a reflection of a lack of participation in the Season, for example Florence Essery, whose lower-middle class upbringing prohibited her participation in the Season whilst in London. Other diaries lacked the necessary detail required for an analysis of networks and performance as required by the research questions. Julia Cartwright, for example, summarised her participation in the Season of 1870 in only three pages.

<u>Diarist</u>	<u>Date of participation in Season</u>
Clarissa Trant	1815-1831
Louisa Smythe	1827-1831
Georgina Smythe	1832
Lucy Lyttelton	1858-1864
Kate Stanley	1859-1864
John Russell	1863-1864
Mary Gladstone	1865-1880

*Table 1: The principle seven diarists used in this research*

It is important to note that the seven diaries were selected because of the comprehensive nature of the material included within and not because their experiences are significantly different from the 'norm'. The diaries are approached in a uniform manner, where their networks and experiences are analysed to provide a micro-scale interpretation of the Season in Appendix 1. Two additional diaries, those of Adelaide Seymour and Louisa Bowater, were selected specifically for the information they contained regarding specific research questions. Adelaide Seymour recorded her experiences of performance during the Season in detail, noting the number of balls she attended and every one of her dance partners. This detail is used in Chapter 6 in relation to research question 2. Louisa Bowater recorded the fashions worn by both herself and others during the Season in similar detail. Her diary is, therefore, primarily utilised to satisfy research question 3 where the specific details regarding garments found in her accounts are required to complete a material analysis. Whilst Louisa's diary may have been rich in detail regarding fashion, it is sparsely populated with regards to the connections she made during a Season, and is therefore unsuitable for use in Appendix 1 alongside the rest of the biographical material consulted.

Selecting material in this way allows for the source to be utilised most successfully to answer the specific research questions posed. Material was not cherry-picked to offer 'sensational' experiences, but analysed in relation to its usefulness in the context of this particular thesis.

### Diaries as Material Objects

It is important to identify the diary as a highly powerful material object, irrespective of the content of the source. In a study of diaries written during the East India Company's voyages, Ogborn (2002) argued that by understanding that diaries are material objects, we can begin to understand and focus on their production in the specific relationships and settings in which they were written. Essentially he suggested that materiality is a method through which the context and influences of the diary can be considered. Also under the umbrella of materiality, Thomas has examined the diaries of Lady Curzon, using the text to 'configure a material and embodied biography of the clothes and clothing' (Thomas, 2007 p. 370). Contrasting with Ogborn, Thomas uses the diary to create a material embodiment stemming from the text, rather than viewing the text as the material object itself.

In the present research, any such discussion of materiality should also consider the role of fashionable trends taking place during the period. The art of diary writing became a fashionable pastime amongst the upper classes and aristocracy during the nineteenth century, and as such, ownership of a diary became embedded in issues of fashion and materiality. Keeping a diary, being seen writing in a diary, was an important tool in constructing images of aristocratic pastimes. In this way, the diaries used in this research must be seen as powerful material objects from the period.

### The importance of biographical material to historical research

Scholars embracing biographical material are strong proponents of the use of this source in their research. White (2004) for example, has indicated that by using personal histories we are able to tell an alternative version of history. Whilst this may appear a rather grand claim upon first reading, diaries were rarely if ever written in order to purposefully support a reading of history, and hence they give their own account of life during a specific period. Using this individual perspective, scholars have analysed the way in which personal documents construct pictures of social reality (Corti, 1993). This is a potentially useful line of enquiry for research into the Season; however it must be made clear that such social realities constructed will be highly individual in nature, and should therefore remain as such, avoiding any temptation to use these sources to make more general assertions. Creaton (2003) has suggested that this individuality should be embraced, arguing that these detailed snapshots of life found in biographical material offer a genuine

flavour of life which cannot be gleaned so easily from other sources. This view has been supported by scholars such as Thomas (2004) who has declared that such material provides an intimate engagement with an historical period. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) make a similar point that diaries by their very nature are littered with personal opinions and feelings, contrasting sharply with much archival material, prompting Royle to suggest that such documents 'offer the opportunity to put the flesh and bones [on] the story' (Royle, 1998 p. 60).

Perhaps an even stronger proponent of biographical material is Hall (1982) who suggested that a diary is not only the best substitute for a personal interview, but is 'paradoxically more valuable than [an interview] insofar as it is not moulded by the researcher's own ideas' (Hall, 1982 p. 275). This is an important point. By using biographical material, we are in some way transported back to the period, living the life of the individual through their own words, and it is hoped that by using this source, the greatest possible understanding of the Season can be achieved.

#### *Issues and problems surrounding the use of diaries as a major source in research*

Despite the many and significant benefits of using biographical material in research, this source does not come without limitations, the most obvious of these being the physical limitation of restricted access to archives. Biographical material may have been destroyed or damaged through age, or may be located in libraries far away from the research site. Other diaries may still survive in private hands, and therefore would not be available. Problems in obtaining relevant and useful data led Pooley and Whyte to the conclusion that carrying out historical geography is 'a little like trying to do an unfamiliar jigsaw in the dark' (Pooley and Whyte, 1991 p. 4). Precisely because of the archival nature of the diaries, the source is also inflexible; it must be accepted in the form in which it was originally written, and cannot be presented or planned in any other way. Research is also limited by the fact that the diarists used in this research are now deceased, so no 'facts' can be checked, no accounts can be discussed or re-lived. There is also no guide to using the diary, no forward by the diarist discussing their life or qualifying their entries, so 'we must turn detective' to find answers (Clark, 1997).

Using biographical data immediately raises issues of accuracy (Short, 2004). There is no way of knowing to what extent 'selective memory' was used in the writing of the daily accounts, and how truth may have been side-stepped, intentionally or not,

in favour of writing which made for a more suitable account of a situation. The dividing line between fact and fiction is naturally blurred in biographical material, indeed Denzin (1989) has suggested that all biographical material is in fact narrative storytelling of one type or another. Pooley and Turnbull (1997) have argued that the issue of accuracy can in some part be negated by cross-referencing key events with other sources to confirm whether dates and facts were similar, or ideally identical, between two sources. This technique has been adopted in the present research. For more personal entries into the diary, however, there is no official record, and so checking the accuracy of these entries is largely impossible. Sartre (in Denzin 1989) examines this in his research, suggesting that it is of little significance whether biographical material is accurate or not, because if the author thinks, hopes or believes something is significant, the effects of this are real.

In a similar vein to accuracy, the issue of positionality is also an important one. A diary is a personal account, and therefore, the events described in it are a reflection of the views of the diarist. It would be entirely conceivable that their feelings towards others mentioned in the diary may not be an accurate representation of the person in question's character. This is an important point to consider because biographical material is being used in this research to follow personal networking experiences (Short, 2004). It is also necessary to be aware of the authorship of the material, why an individual would write a diary or autobiography. Some dairies written in the nineteenth century may have been intended for publication, and the content of these sources will have been designed for public view. Other diaries may have been written for personal consumption only, again changing the content of the document. Similarly, with relation to diaries published posthumously by the author's family, the diary may have been altered to preserve reputations. For example, the wife of a Reverend Kilvert is rumoured to have destroyed large sections of her husband's diary which focussed on their courtship (Scott, 1990), presumably to avoid her own embarrassment and maintain the public image of the late vicar! The deliberate sabotage of manuscript diaries has played a particularly irritating role in this research. In more than half of these manuscripts consulted, the latter stages of networking culminating in marriage were either physically removed from the source, or redacted. This recurrent disappointment led to the exploration of published diaries, whose courtships and marriages were still on full display.

Related to the doctoring of manuscript diaries are issues surrounding deliberate omission from biographical material and the possibility that a diary contains a partial

account. This is the hardest of all the issues to attempt to limit, because by their very nature, detailed omissions are virtually impossible to notice. Davidoff (1979), however, has argued that large scale omissions are as revealing as inclusions. Writing with regard to the diary of Arthur Munby, Davidoff indicates that the omission of details regarding working-class men is significant in understanding how Munby himself wished to be defined.

### *Diaries and the Season*

Despite the limitations of using biographical material in historical research, the source provides opportunities to uncover new insights regarding the Season. As Heller (2009) discussed in relation to leisure in eighteenth century London, diaries provide an opportunity to understand daily routines, allowing us to see how the period manifested itself in everyday life. There are of course no truly representative diaries of the Season, no one diary or even combination of diaries can ever be paraded as demonstrating a 'typical' Season. Indeed, each of the diaries used in this research vary greatly in their experiences of the same phenomenon. Whilst issues of representation are important to consider (Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Clark, 1997), the differences between diaries illuminate much about the Season. It is through the use of agency based sources such as diaries that it is possible to move beyond studies of the Season in which standard or 'normal' practices are uncritically portrayed, to a more individualised study which examines the significance of differentiated experience.

### **Newspapers**

Newspapers and magazines published during the nineteenth century provide a significant body of incredibly varied information, presenting both a background to the Season through coverage of current affairs and political decisions of the period, and a more direct link in the form of fashion pages and events reportage. Of particular relevance to this research was the publishing of ball attendance lists in newspapers, giving the researcher a detailed window into the ballrooms of the nineteenth century.

### *Relevant Newspapers*

Utilising newspapers in this research on the Season involved much preparation. Browsing the collections at the British Library Newspapers in Colindale, alongside

consulting the *Wellesley Index of Victorian Periodicals* and *The Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals 1800-1900* allowed a list of all the newspapers published in London during the nineteenth century to be compiled, of which 67 were then selected for further analysis based on their date range of publication and news focus (publications which specialised in an area of news or comment which was not relevant to the Season were at this stage eliminated). Following an audit of these remaining 67 newspapers and periodicals, a further selection was undertaken, choosing the publications which offered insight into the areas of the Season investigated by the specific research questions of this thesis. This was particularly relevant regarding ball attendance lists, where all the newspapers which included the names of those attending balls were checked against one another for both the number of balls reported and the number of names included in each report. Although there were still issues regarding the comprehensive nature of these attendance lists, *The Morning Post* was chosen as the most useful newspaper for this purpose.

The use of different newspapers and magazines in terms of comments and articles were also compared, with *The Queen* selected as the most regularly insightful, containing as it did fashion pages, regular accounts of the happenings along Rotten Row in Hyde Park, and coverage of major Society weddings. Selecting articles which were useful in providing background to the period was undertaken by reading the 67 newspapers identified for the months of May to July (the central months of the Season) for each year up until 1900. Articles which discussed an aspect of the Season investigated in this research were then selected for use in the relevant section of the thesis.

*The Queen* and *The Morning Post* were the most significant newspapers for this research. *The Queen* was first published in 1861, ceasing production 20 years ago in 1990. It was designed as a high class newspaper for women, providing “a weekly record and journal which ladies can read and profit by; one in which their understandings and judgments will not be insulted by a collection of mere trivialities, but which will be to them a help in their daily lives” (*The Queen*, 1861). Regular features included the ‘The upper ten thousand’, a page dedicated to the comings and goings of the upper classes, as well as fashions, balls, charity, concerts, pastimes, Society weddings and etiquette (Young, 2007). *The Queen* pioneered what Beetham (1996) describes as the ‘ladies’ illustrated newspaper’, bringing about the concepts of the lady, techniques of illustration and news into a relationship with

one another. Above all, *The Queen* was successful because it served two main purposes. Firstly, it was a guide for the upper classes: the events of the Season were reported, documented and illustrated, be that through reports of royal marriages, balls, court presentations, fashions of the week or rules of conduct. Secondly, *The Queen* was also read by those aspiring to enter this glamorous Society circle, acting as a window to the lives of the upper classes (Beetham, 1996).

*The Queen* typifies a genre of publication which has proven very useful in this research. Defining their readership as ladies, and concentrating on the activities of the elite, *The Queen* encompassed many of the networking practices of the Season. In such publications, 'home' was not the site of domesticity but instead an illustration of taste and status. *The Queen* and numerous other newspapers regularly featured tours of mansions and London townhouses, as well as guides to material possessions which would define their social circle. The importance of *The Queen* and less frequently the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *Forget-Me-Not* in providing a snapshot of life in aristocratic London during the period cannot be overstated.

Although operationalised for a different purpose in this research, *The Morning Post* was similarly upper class in its provision and outlook. First published in 1772 and printed throughout the length of the timeframe of this research, *The Morning Post* had a page dedicated to the events of the aristocracy during the Season. In 1846, Mitchell (in Hindle, 1937) declared that this was the paper for the 'beau monde', the daily journal of the fashionable world for whom in every respect it was calculated. This statement of purpose is supported by Blumenfeld (in Hindle, 1937) who stated that it was "snobbish, with information about duchesses and advertisements about butlers" before later concluding that the newspaper was very much the organ of the 'leisured classes' (Hindle, 1937, p. 5). *The Queen* and *The Morning Post* were newspapers created for those participating in the Season, and are therefore useful for this research.

It is important to note that at every stage of the development of newspapers in the nineteenth century, corresponding periodicals and magazines also evolved. From the politically-charged *John Bull* in the 1820s, through to the family periodicals of the 1850s and the gossip magazines of the 1880s and 1890s, periodicals echoed the trends and changes witnessed through the newspaper press. Both periodicals and newspapers have been approached in the same way throughout this research.

### Benefits of using Newspapers in Research

Using newspapers and periodicals for a study of the Season was beneficial in several different ways. Firstly, for giving further insights into the events of the Season through an individual perspective (in the form of editorials and letters), supporting the role played by diaries, but secondly through the inclusion of timetables of the Season's events and the names of those attending. The ballroom was given context by the newspapers containing this data because each ball could be understood to a greater depth by the inclusion of information regarding those who attended it. These names could be given a spatial dimension when correlated to Boyle's Court Directory (see next section of this chapter) resulting in conclusions being drawn surrounding network nodes and the influence the Season held over the West End of London during the nineteenth century (see Figures: 13, 15-30 for examples).

Newspapers have become popular sources for historical geography; scholars have already relied heavily upon the source. Philo (1987) used the *Asylum Journal* to inform his work on the historical geography of nineteenth century provision for mental health. He carried out a detailed reading of the first forty issues of the journal, using these as the main source in informing his research. Justifying his use of one periodical and the insight this source brought to his research, Philo argued: "that a careful scouring of one particular regular publication can reveal important subtleties of viewpoint and argument which tend otherwise to be submerged in the writing of what Foucault refers to as 'total histories'"(1987, p. 401). This focus upon a single publication informed the decision taken to adopt a similar approach, choosing *The Queen* as the main publication drawn upon to find articles and opinions regarding the Season, especially in Chapter 7 regarding fashionable trends in clothing. Domosh's work (2001, 1998, 1989) is also informed by use of newspapers as a research source, this time through her linking of newspapers to other sources. In discussing the moral concerns regarding consumption by upper class women in New York during the nineteenth century, Domosh combines articles in *The New York Times*, with social commentaries written during the period. She used these different sources in parallel with one another, cross checking the opinions found in the newspaper with the writings of non-journalists working at the same time. The success that this method brought Domosh informed the present

research; newspaper articles have been used throughout but in combination with other sources such as novels, etiquette books and diaries to form a more conclusive picture of the Season.

### Constructing a Record of Ball Attendance

Figure 13 cited frequently throughout the later chapters of this thesis was constructed using the data regarding ball attendance contained within the pages of *The Morning Post* newspaper. A brief explanation of the method by which this map was constructed is required to provide the necessary context to its formation. As mentioned previously, an audit of London newspapers published during the nineteenth century was conducted, resulting in the consultation of 67 publications. Of these, *The Morning Post* contained the most comprehensive coverage regarding ball reportage, and was, therefore, selected to provide this data. The day after a ball was held during the Season, *The Morning Post* published a list of all those who had been in attendance, listed in order of rank. Whilst accuracy is an important factor in the consideration of the map constructed in Figure 13, it is useful for the trends displayed. Reassurance as to the use of this source material was found in the form of Sheppard's (1977) *Survey of London: The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair (volume 39)*, in which data found in *The Morning Post* is heavily employed to illustrate the fluid nature of the West End during the Season.

Every ball attendance list published between May and July 1862<sup>5</sup> (the central months of the Season, Evans & Evans, 1976) was collected, and each incident of an individual's attendance collated. The number of times an individual attended a ball during this Season was then totalled. *Boyle's Court Directory* (discussed later in this chapter) was then consulted to find the London addresses of all those appearing in the ball attendance lists. Attendees were then grouped together by street. This decision allowed for the networking totals of each street to be calculated, by adding together the total attendance figures for all those residing on each particular street.

Whilst this method successfully illustrated the differences in networking occurring from the particular streets in the West End, it raises one obvious query. The ball attendance data for each street was not altered to negate the issue of size. The number of houses on streets in the West End varies significantly. Smaller streets with fewer residences were less likely to achieve a high total in ball attendance

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<sup>5</sup> A discussion regarding the choice of 1862 as a model year can be found in the introduction to this thesis.

emanating from the street, owing to the small number of residents located there. This can be compared with a larger street, where networking totals could have been higher purely due to the increased number of possible attendees residing there. Whilst this is a limitation, in the context of the Season, it is an important distinction and one that should not have been negated by a manipulation of the raw attendance data. As will be discussed in Chapter 8 in relation to the concept of 'spatial capital', larger streets in the West End were more desirable residences to those participating in the Season than smaller streets. A higher total of ball attendance recorded for these larger streets can be attributed to the fact that more participants in the Season wanted to locate there. In the context of the Season, therefore, lower attendance figures emanating from smaller streets is a perfectly normal 'anomaly', owing to the lack of popularity for these residences. To alter the data so that streets in the West End were analysed equally would mask the unequal nature of spatial association of the West End by those participating in the Season. It is for this reason that the raw data regarding ball attendance was used to represent networking during the Season.

#### Limitations of the source

Despite the benefits experienced by the scholars above in utilizing newspapers in their research, the source is not without limitation. The role of the editor in journalism has always been, and continues to be, of crucial importance to the nature of the publication. The viewpoints, opinions and information contained in the newspaper or periodical are greatly affected by the particular beliefs and goals of the editor at the time. The editor of a nineteenth century publication was a powerful figure, with the ability to influence the opinions of those who read it. Taking this into account, it must be noted that articles in *The Queen* are not necessarily 'truthful' representations of events that occurred, and as such cannot be taken as ultimate proof of the experiences of the Season.

Linking to this targeting of audiences by editors, the intended and actual readership of newspapers and periodicals must be addressed. Ballaster et al (1991) raised the concept of the 'implied reader', the societal group the owner and editor are designing the publication for, in the case of the publications in this research, the upper classes. The prospect that different texts will therefore have different implied readers is significant, and this should be taken into account. Implied readerships are particularly significant in gendered publications such as *The Queen*, leading

Fraser et al (2003) to suggest that gender and desired audiences are written into and 'discursively wrapped up' in the pages of newspapers and periodicals. In terms of readership, we also need to be aware that each reading of a publication takes on a different meaning based on the circumstances and conditions under which it is read (Corrigan and Gillespie, 1978). For example, an article concerning securing a husband will have been read and interpreted very differently by different women, dependant on their contrasting situations.

There are also some issues regarding the validity of the data published by *The Morning Post*. Not every ball may have been subject to the publication of attendance lists, and not every name will have been included in them. The first limitation can be cross-checked against other newspapers to ensure that all the events advertised across the London papers covering the Season are reported in *The Morning Post*. There will have been private events, however, which would have received no media coverage, and by its very nature, this is impossible to take any further. The second issue regarding the comprehensive nature of the attendance lists is less easily cross-checked. It can be concluded, however, that in comparison with other newspapers publishing ball reports such as *The Court Circular*, *The Morning Post* is the most comprehensive, containing the most number of names on the lists. Whilst they may not have been complete, these lists are a good enough representation of the events occurring in the ballroom to warrant investigation. The trends uncovered repeatedly through investigating these attendance lists are unlikely to be transformed if the data set were doubled.

Using newspapers in this research project uncovered a further limitation. As testified by the note at the start of this thesis, the initial intention was to study ball attendance lists in the newspaper for years in three separate decades; 1830, 1860 and 1890, based around the years which corresponded to diary or autobiographical material. The process of collecting this detailed data from newspapers which were housed on microfilm in often damaged typeface, took many more months than had been anticipated. As such, the process of research could not be replicated for 1830 and 1890 in the time frame available.

## Directories

The court directory was a form of street directory, an alphabetical list of private residents in a given area (Atkins, 1990). There were many different court directories published during the nineteenth century<sup>6</sup>, such as *Post Office London Directory* and *Webster's Royal Red Book*, and an audit of these was carried out at the Guildhall Library, London. This concluded that *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* was the most useful in this research. Boyle started printing his directory in 1792, and it was particularly useful because it focussed on a narrowly defined area of the 'West End of London', the area in which most participants of the Season rented accommodation whilst in London, or aspired to do so. When first published, and reflecting the elite nature of the Season, the directory comprised only the names of those able to move in the court circles surrounding royalty. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, inclusion had spread to the upper and middle classes in the West End more generally.

The court directory was used by those participating in the Season as a networking tool. Listing virtually every member of the upper classes living in this area of London during the Season, it enabled the practices of network formation to be undertaken. The leaving of cards and the paying of calls required the daily travel to different private residences in this sector of the capital, addresses of which were found in the pages of court directories. Atkins (1989) described the directories as 'essential instruments of everyday life' during the nineteenth century. Because of the temporal and fluid nature of the Season, the guides were published twice annually, once in January and then again in April, with the later version being the most up to date and including any last minute changes occupants of the houses before the commencement of the Season in May. The changes found in the pages of the two directories are testament to the continually fluid state of the period.

Whilst immensely useful resources for understanding the spatial dimensions of the Season directories are not without weakness. The contents of directories, both the names included and the streets chosen to be classified, were subject to the discretion of individual publishers. The comprehensiveness of the source can therefore be questioned. Atkins (1989) compared the estimated number of

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<sup>6</sup> Shaw & Tipper (1989) estimated that there were 69 different titles of Court Directory published between 1850 and 1950.

aristocratic elite in Beckett's work, to the number of names included in the *Fashionable Court Guide*, concluding that whilst Beckett had identified 4,900 names in 1900, Boyle's had included 21,700 people in the directory. Clearly, the category of upper class elite was subject to different interpretation, and Atkins (1989) suggested that the *Fashionable Court Guide* was including large numbers of middle class 'socially ambitious' residents as well. This inclusion is not crucial to this research because it does not analyse the source itself, merely using the information contained in it to inform newspapers. The question of inconsistency was faced in this research regarding directories. As Atkins (1988) suggested, error in spelling surnames or misprinting of initials would have a large effect on a source which was utilised through the searching of a name. In searching for the addresses of ball attendees, certain titled families were not found in the directory, despite the fact other sources pointed to their presence in London. This may have been due to a misspelling in the directory, rendering their surname effectively invisible in the guide. Shaw (1982) suggested that these limitations have led to many historical researchers avoiding the source due to the 'commonly held view' that directories are unreliable. This conclusion is rejected by Shaw who argued that since no systematic assessment has ever been carried out as to the potential unreliability of the source, much of this anxiety regarding it is unfounded.

Moving beyond the criticisms and limitations of the source, using the *Fashionable Court Guide* in this research is significant because it adds a spatial dimension to the analysis. Once the ball attendance lists in *The Morning Post* were processed, leaving a list of all those participating in the 1862 Season, court directories were interrogated for the participant's addresses. Whilst some names were missing, possibly due to the fact they were staying in Hotels, or had not been counted, the vast majority were present<sup>7</sup>. Armed with this spatial connection, it was possible to plot on a map of the West End the location of all the ball attendees, coding the number of times each attended a ball. Not only did this allow for a portrayal of the spatial concentration of those attending, but also those areas which were acting as networking hubs, where groups of prolific ball goers resided. This spatial, yet individualised, dimension of the Season allowed for the micro-geographies of the period to be uncovered. Relying heavily on the court directory as a source in historical research follows the lead of Atkins (1990), who used the source to understand the changing spatial fashions of the area during the Season. Emanating

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<sup>7</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of the way in which *Boyle's Court Directories* were compiled, see Atkins (1989).

from a centrally fashionable core, certain areas such as Bloomsbury were shown to have become less popular, with the centre of fashion shifting west towards Baker Street and Marylebone in the later half of the nineteenth century. This spatial analysis of the *Fashionable Court Guide* allowed Atkins to identify the spatially concentrated nature of the period, understanding the residential behaviour of its participants throughout the nineteenth century.

### **Less Prominent Sources**

Earlier in this chapter the privileging of certain sources was discussed. Those which provided the most insight into the research questions were relied upon most often, supported by less frequently consulted sources to 'fill in the gaps'. The contention is not that these sources are less useful for research in general, merely that they provided less comprehensive evidence in the light of specific research questions. A brief discussion of these sources will occur below with reference to the themes of the research for which they were consulted.

Discussions regarding space during this research have relied heavily upon this additional source material. Whilst diaries provided evidence of where individuals travelled, and newspapers and court directories were used to construct the ball report attendance maps and spatial distribution, they needed to be placed in a spatial context. Estate maps were consulted which detailed the spatial extent of the landowning estates in the West End which had great influence over the character of the area (Olsen, 1976). Similarly, land-use maps were consulted to understand the way in which the demands of the Season influenced the residential specifications of buildings (Bradbury, 2008), confirmed through the use of building plans detailing the layout of the property in question (Aspinall & Whitehand, 1980). The census provided another crucial element of the spatial debate. Once a highly significant source for historical geography owing to the richness of data it provides (Lumas, 1993; Mills & Pearce, 1989), it has been somewhat sidelined in recent decades in favour of the agency-centred approach. Nonetheless, in understanding the time-space geographies of the West End, the census is the most useful tool. Census records for streets in the West End, collected in April 1861 before the start of the Season, revealed the extent to which the properties lay empty during the months outside the Season, supporting Atkins' (1990) claim that the area was a 'part-time place'. The final significant addition to the source material in relation to space is that of rate books, which were used to provide an understanding of why certain streets in the ball attendance map (Figure 13), were more popular with participants in the

Season than others. Rate books were the most appropriate source in this respect owing to the fact they offer a reasonably accurate record of the value (and therefore the size) of a property. A rate was a local charge or tax usually levied on the occupants of the building; the amount required to be paid based on sporadic valuations of the property (Thom, 2005). As the occupant of the property is also recorded each year in the rate books, this source also enabled data found in *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* to be cross-checked.

Elements of this research concerned with performance and network theories were also heavily supplemented by additional source material. Court presentation records were consulted for the year 1861 which recorded every debutante presented to the Queen and the relative chosen to accompany her. An engagement with this source illustrated the practices of networking which occurred during the Season and took inspiration from the work of Ellenberger who used the source to examine the expansion of Society during the latter stages of the nineteenth century (Ellenberger, 1990). In Chapter 7, dance manuals from the period such as *The Drawing Room Dances* (1847) allowed an understanding of the dances mentioned in diaries to be reached, whilst novels provided insight into the ballroom setting through fictional representations. The use of novels in discussions of performance was influenced by the work of Wilson (2009), who drew upon novels by Thackeray, Austen and Trollope, amongst others, to understand the extent to which dance provided a social commentary in the literature of the period. The use of novels was also inspired by the work of mobilities scholar Löfgren (2008) who utilised the source in understanding the emotion of railway travel in the nineteenth century. Instances of diarists mentioning inappropriate behaviour in the ballroom were cross-referenced with etiquette books published during the nineteenth century, such as *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* (1871), to give context to the behaviours expected in social settings. The emotional responses of diarists to events during the Season were explained through the use of these etiquette books; the use of the source during the period confirmed by the reactions of diarists to wayward behaviour.

In terms of materiality and fashion in the Season, this area of research also required the adoption of extra source material. Diarists pointed to the transportation of flowers during the Season, but failed to provide significant information regarding this. Existing research around the period also failed to explain this floral mobility. It was at this point that gardening handbooks from the period were employed to offer insight (such as Burbidge's *Domestic Floriculture* (1874)), along with a series of

recollections from head gardeners. This use of handbooks from the period was also adopted in relation to carriages and movement in London, where social commentaries from the period (e.g. *The Horse World of London* (Gordon, 1893)) filled in the gaps of knowledge left open by individual accounts. Fashion too required the utilisation of a range of different source material. In addition to the use of diaries detailing the specific garments worn and newspaper columns, which pointed to the fashionable trends of the week, sources such as etiquette books were used to contextualise the importance of adhering to the changing fashions of the period. Secondary sources detailing the specific trends in dress in different years such as Cunnington's *English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century* (1937) were consulted alongside evidence collected from viewing gowns from the period at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bath Fashion Museum. Utilising a range of sources to analyse the importance of these material objects to the Season was the approach taken by Thomas (2007) in relation to the clothing of Mary Curzon, Vicereine of India. By adopting the same approach in this research, a comprehensive understanding of the importance of specific garments in the lives of those participating in the Season can be fully understood.

### **The Triangulation of Sources**

At several points throughout this chapter, references to the use of a multi-source approach have been made. As has been illustrated earlier, this triangulation of sources has enabled the present research to offer different perspectives with a greater degree of detail than would have been possible with the use of a single source (Limb & Dwyer, 2001; Silverman, 2009).

Israel has adopted the metaphor of a kaleidoscope to explore this method: "For the historian...no such return to the 'real' is possible; there is no chance to step into the past and see it whole, nor to perceive the 'real' shape and structure of a life outside of representation. Rather, we are faced with writing inside the kaleidoscope, of attempting both to discern and describe the images beyond the glass and multiple images caught in the mirrors" (Israel, 1990 p. 40). This triangulation of sources has been advocated by several academics in the field of historical geography research. Lorimer (2003), for example, has suggested that by creating this fragmented archive we are able to witness geography as it happened, whilst also acknowledging that by doing so we are deliberately attempting to recreate and assemble something of a past landscape. Whilst such representational designs are partnered by significant

research complications and theoretical issues, these are largely negated by an awareness of their existence in the research process. Baker (1997) advocated this multi-source approach, describing research based around a single source as 'precariously perched'. Baker's thoughts regarding this triangulation encouraged the adoption of the method in this research. He stated that: "optimally, one should not only establish an inventory of the full range of sources which might conceivably have a bearing upon the investigation, but one should also consult them all" (p. 234). This approach was adopted by Rendell, in her research on Almack's Assembly Rooms (2002). In her paper, the picture of Almack's is built not by one source supplemented by others, but a partnership between sources written through the work. Rendell combines memoirs with journal articles and novels, illustrated by images and advertisements. It is this combination of sources which creates a full picture of life within the walls of Almack's, and one which is emulated in this research.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter the changes which have taken place in historical geography in recent decades have been discussed with a centring of the role of agency in research, as well as the study of historical subjects through a more theoretical lens. Both of these modern approaches to scholarship in the discipline have been adopted in this research, investigating the Season through the perspective of mobilities theory which was informed through a range of material including biographical sources. This approach was undertaken to allow for a comprehensive engagement with the research questions posed.

## **Chapter 5: The Importance of Being Mobile**



As discussed in Chapter 2, previous literature regarding the Season has failed to explore the movement and potential mobility of those participating. Some scholars such as Davidoff (1973) do mention that movement was frequent and an important part of the Season; attending as many events as possible was viewed by Davidoff as essential for forging alliances, however others writing about the period fail to consider movement at all. The absence of this enquiry will be redressed in this chapter which focuses on the importance of movement at a variety of scales using mobilities literature identified in Chapter 3. To do this, Cresswell's (2010) concept of the constellations of mobility will be employed, analysing several interlinking themes of movement<sup>8</sup>. The historical context of mobility will be discussed, before the movements which occurred on a variety of scales during the Season will be analysed in light of these discussions. The chapter then moves on to discuss the range of restrictions placed on the mobility of those participating: socially, economically, physically, and through gender. The use of this movement for the purposes of display during the Season is then highlighted, adding this further dimension to the importance of being mobile to those taking part. The chapter concludes by suggesting that mobility enabled the Season to exist in the form witnessed, and was a significant tool used by participants to secure or advance their position in Society.

### **The Historical Context of Mobility**

In order to fully appreciate the significance of movement during the Season, the context in which this occurred must be understood. Whilst the growth of the British Empire signalled extensive transnational movements for some (see Magee & Thompson, 2010), mobility for the majority during the early stages of the nineteenth century was limited to the local area. Much travel was completed on foot, and it was only with the advent of the horse-drawn tram in 1870 that travel became affordable

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<sup>8</sup> It is important to add that this chapter focuses predominantly on the importance of carriages to the mobility of those participating in the Season. This mode of transport remained the significant means by which the mobility of those participating in the Season occurred throughout the nineteenth century (Davidoff, 1973; Huggett, 1979, Margetson, 1980), despite the advent of the railways (Kellett, 1979) and bicycles (Mackintosh & Norcliffe, 2006), and as such remains the focus for this enquiry into the importance of mobility during the Season.

for the vast majority of citizens (Pooley & Turnbull, 1997; Jackson, 2004). Within this context of immobility, the daily distances and movements of those participating in the Season were significant and uncharacteristic of society as a whole. Within this elite group, however, movement on the scale witnessed during the Season was treated as the norm. Diaries throughout the period make little comment of the distances travelled to reach events and gatherings, newspapers and articles are also largely silent on the matter. This may be because movement was not regarded as anything other than a means to network, a tool readily available and without limitation. The ability to be mobile, therefore, became incredibly important, even if it was largely unnoticed by those for whom it was never a concern.

The significance of the mobility witnessed during the Season is twofold. First, the atypical nature of movement sets those participating in the Season apart from the rest of society, whose mobility was far more confined. It provides further evidence of the elite nature of the Season, a powerful, wealthy and mobile group set apart from the rest of the country during the nineteenth century in part by these mobile characteristics. Second, this high level of mobility is significant because of what it facilitated. The Season could not have occurred in the form witnessed if it were not possible for elite families to both travel to London, often from significant distances, and to travel in London at a frenetic pace when they arrived. Building on the work of Urry (2006) who suggested that movements enabled social relations to be performed and maintained, it can be understood that the mobile lifestyle of those participating impacted significantly on the nature of the Season. For those who possessed carriages and horses, mobility was an expected state during the period (Rajé, 2007). This relationship with mobility has been omitted from previous research on the Season and is significant, because it illustrates the importance of, and reliance upon, movement to the elite in Society. This suggestion supports claims by Cresswell (2001, 2006a, 2010) and Pooley et al (2006) that historical situations have also exhibited significant mobility moments.

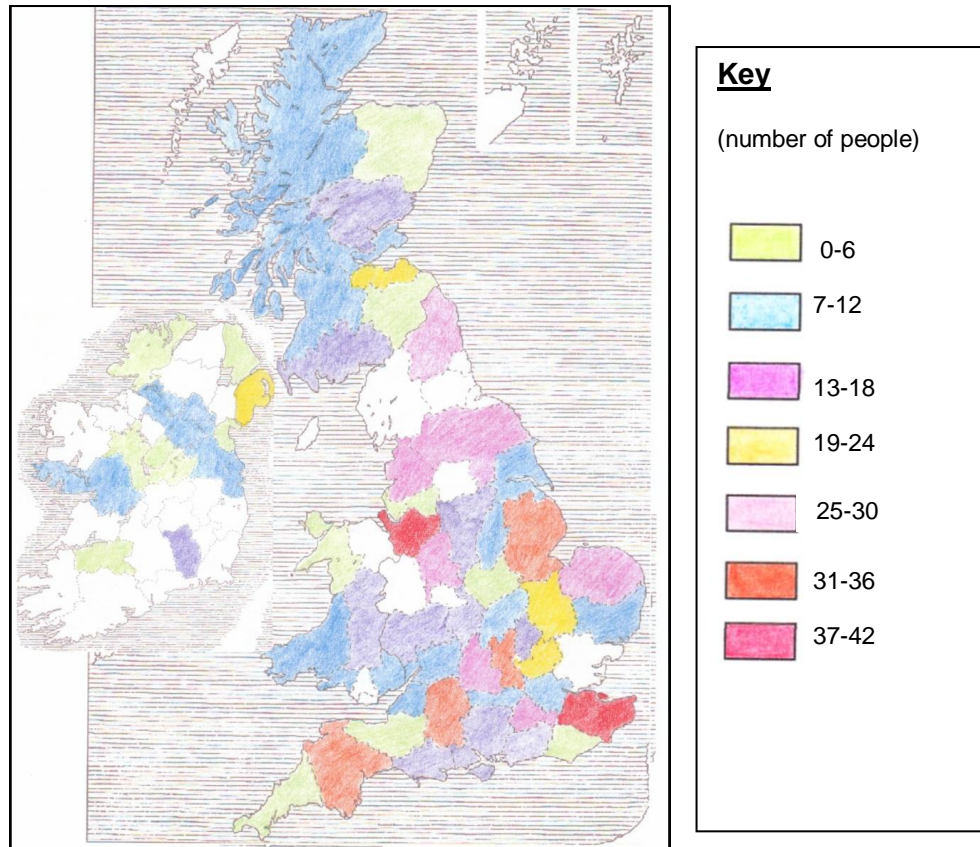
### **Movements and Flows**

In this section, evidence of this hyper-mobility (as termed by Preston et al, 2006) will be presented, illustrating the significance of movement. The extent of these movements can be understood at a variety of scales, from long distance movements to London to participate in the Season, through to the daily mobility displayed by those attending the events of the Season once they had arrived in the capital.

### *The Disregard for Distance*

The initial and longest display of movement witnessed during the Season was the thousands of journeys undertaken by participants of the Season in temporarily migrating to London in April or May from their country estates spread across the country or, in some cases, abroad (Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). This movement is in many ways the most surprising, owing to the distances travelled and the technology available to do so.

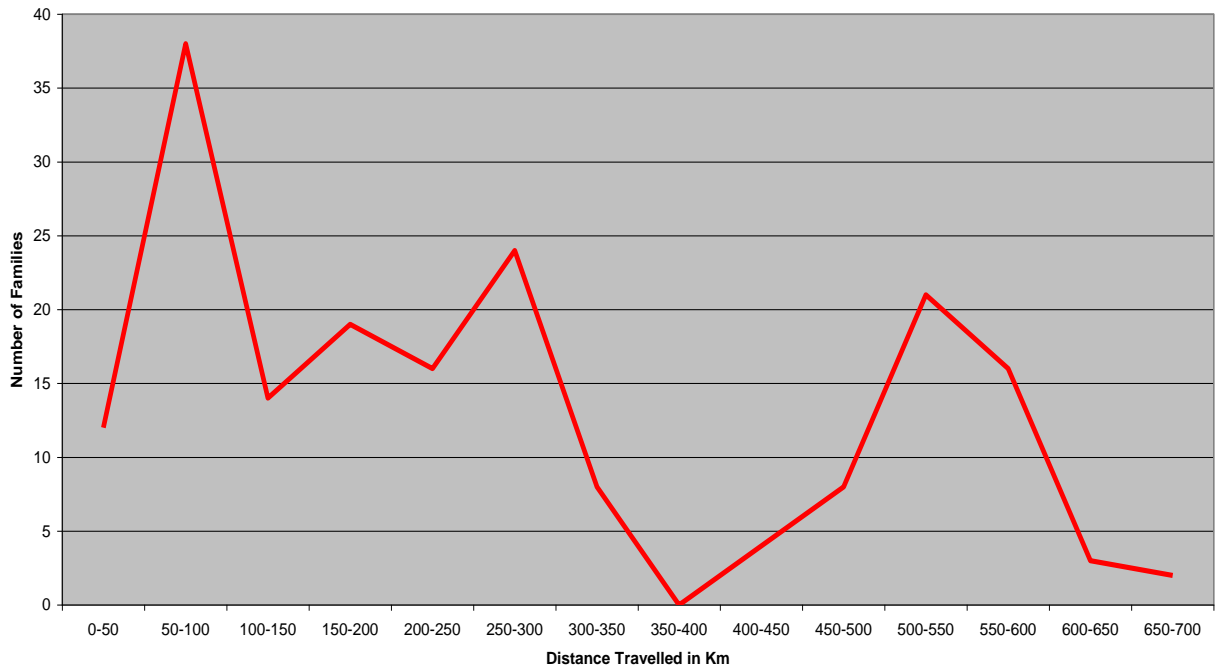
Biographical accounts of this mobility provide useful evidence of these experiences. The Marchioness of Bath documented that when her family moved to their house in Berkeley Square for the Season, it was usual for them to require eleven horses to transport them, together with the help of seventeen servants (Thynne, 1951). This migration required a great deal of planning, with the family reliant upon staff to facilitate the move. Davidoff (1973) noted that in many cases, head servants were sent on ahead of the family group to make arrangements prior to travel, and to assist in the mechanics of moving. Lady Carrington's diary supports this assertion; there is no hint of the effort involved, suggesting the ease with which movement occurred: "the servants started for London by an early train and we followed" (11th May 1878). The task of migrating an entire family and staff from one region of the country to another must have been a significant one despite the calm recollections of Lady Carrington and the Marchioness of Bath. A distance decay analysis illustrates the dismissal of distance as a limiting factor to the movements of those participating in the Season. Where possible, using *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* for 1862 and ball attendance lists published in *The Morning Post*, the locations of the country houses of all those attending the first ball of the 1862 Season were found and the total number of these houses in each county was calculated. The distance to London (as the crow flies) from the centre of each of the counties was then calculated. Following these calculations it is possible to see whether distance played any part in the migration of families to the Season. The map below (Figure 3) was constructed accordingly. Red and pink indicated the highest number of people; green and blue indicating the least number of migrations made to the Season from a county.



*Figure 3: The distances travelled from counties in Great Britain and Ireland by those attending a ball in London on 1st May 1862 (base map reproduced with permission from Tarquin Publications).*

As the map illustrates, Kent, a county bordering London, was equalled by Cheshire (roughly 250 miles from London) as the most prolific counties represented at the first ball. Similarly, East Sussex (87 miles) was represented as few times as Donegal (589 miles). Lothian in Scotland (523 miles) had triple the number of migrants attending the Season as Berkshire, a county on average 462 miles closer to the West End.

A typical distance decay model predicts (Tobler, 1970) that the further travelled, the smaller the number of people who will be travelling. As witnessed in Figure 4, however, the graph showing migrations to the Season does not reflect this trend.



*Figure 4: The distances travelled from country estates in Great Britain and Ireland by those attending the first ball of the 1862 Season.*

Instead of one peak towards the left hand side of the graph (as is usual for a distance decay model), there are in fact three peaks almost equidistant from one another along the distance axis. The fact that the graph records no overall trend is significant because it illustrates that distance, for this group of migrants, did not affect the decision to move. This correlates with the map of movement flows discussed later (Figure 5), mobility was not only a necessity to engage in networking practices during the Season (Urry, 2006), it was a barrier easily overcome by many of the thousands of people who travelled to, and during, the Season each year. It is this unquestioned mobility which enabled the Season to exist in the form witnessed.

#### Material Mobility

It was not just participating families who moved to London for the Season, however. Throughout the summer of London residence, material goods, in particular flowers, were sent to the capital from the families' country estates. In some cases, daily supplies of fresh flowers, used to adorn clothes, ballrooms and tables throughout the period, were cut and sent by head gardeners in accordance with the instructions sent from London. This constant movement of material objects during the Season

was another important facet of the mobility of those participating. Not only were they mobile themselves, but they also ensured the mobility of the objects they required. Head gardener Harry Dodson told the stories of his uncle who worked for the Earl of Selborne during the mid-nineteenth century, recollecting that if hampers were put on to a goods wagon at 9am, they could be opened by the footman of the London House by 12pm the same day (Davies, 1991). This shuttle service between country and town houses was significant because not only does it display apparently limitless resources for mobility, but it occurred during a historical period in which frequent and swift movement of goods was not typically accessible to many sectors in society (Dodgshon & Butlin, 1978). Accounts from the period are testament to the prevalence of this movement amongst those participating in the Season, however. In *Domestic Floriculture* (a Victorian gardening handbook published in 1874), Burbidge declared that during the Season, flowers could be 'easily obtained' from the country house, suggesting that the daily movement of these material goods posed no difficulty whatsoever to those requiring them in London. Both Sophia Murphy and Mary Gladstone record the arrival of flowers to London homes. In recording the day of the Duchess of Devonshire's Ball in 1897, Sophia found evidence to suggest that "early in the morning vast quantities of plants and flowers, accompanied by several gardeners arrived by train from Chatsworth" (1984, p. 72). Mary Gladstone simply noted that on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1872 "Cowslips arrived by millions, quite a nightmare of them" (Masterman, 1930, p. 78). What is clear from these accounts is that this movement was not uncommon; it was simply a slight irritation to Mary that 'millions' of cowslips had somehow arrived at her home in London from Hawarden House in Cheshire, 181 miles away.

It is clear from the single example of the transport of flowers that there was a continual flow of movement across the country between a townhouse in London and its corresponding estate in the country. This is a significant aspect of the Season, because it reveals the extent to which mobility featured in the lives of those participating beyond the confines of the West End. The physical and material movements displayed during the Season were only part of the mobility connected with these participating families, echoing Cresswell's (2010) call for an appreciation of the 'constellations' of mobility through which historical situations can be more fully understood.

### Daily Flows of Mobility

Whilst the long distance mobility of both people and material objects is a significant indicator of the importance, and level of mobility during the Season, the daily movements which occurred when participants reached London provides evidence of the mobile flows in which these people engaged. With the aim of the Season to participate in social events to secure advantageous networks (Davidoff, 1973), the ability to travel to these gatherings was essential. It is confirmation of the importance of attending that the levels of daily mobility were so high during the Season.

The daily flows of movements across West London can be shown clearly by plotting this mobility on a map of the area. Using ball and event attendance lists published in the London newspaper *The Morning Post* regarding the events taking place on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1862, the precise flows of individuals on this particular day can be displayed, as shown in Figure 5. Events represented on the map include every known gathering taking place during the day, published on events lists in *The Morning Post*, yet there may also have been many private, unreported events also attended<sup>9</sup>. Despite lacking in total comprehensiveness, the map demonstrates very clearly the fluid nature of the West End during the Season, illustrating Jensen's call for an understanding of mobile places as engaged in 'regimes of flow' (Jensen, 2006). As will be discussed later in this chapter, this mobility will have been completed using a carriage pulled by horses. Evidence of the frequent use of this technology can be found in Gordon's *The Horse World of London* (1893), where he estimated that the animals travelled roughly 50 miles each day during the months of the Season. From the beginning of the first ride of the day in Hyde Park (estimated by Evans and Evans (1976) to have commenced at 9am) through to the arrival outside ballrooms at roughly 10pm, Hyde Park and the streets comprising this small corner of London were constantly fluid, filled with horses and carriages containing debutantes and their families travelling between the various events of the day (Forbes, 1922).

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<sup>9</sup> Whilst the map in Figure 5 is as comprehensive a portrayal of the movements that occurred during 28th May 1862 as is possible, there were other movements occurring during the day of which no record exists. Private movements travelling to leave cards or pay calls, both frequent networking moments during the Season, were not recorded and as such are missing from this representation.



Figure 5: Daily movements made by those attending events on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1862  
(reproduced with permission from Anthony Craig)

The lack of this temporal dimension to the flow map (Figure 5) is significant. At every time throughout the day, the tempo of these flows will have remained virtually constant. Table 2 below clearly illustrates that mobility was exercised from day break to the early hours of the morning.

8 a.m.	Get up, if planning to go riding. Light breakfast.
9 a.m.	Ride in Park; or, if not riding, get up.
10 a.m.	Return from ride. Breakfast. Correspondence, business, planning of day's activities, future engagements etc.
11 a.m.	Breakfast party. Shopping. Instructions to servants etc.
12 p.m.	Riding or driving in the Park. Shopping. Calls on intimate friends. Visits to art galleries and exhibitions.
2 p.m.	Lunch
3.30 p.m.	Afternoon concert. Outing to Hurlingham, Richmond etc. Formal calls.
4 p.m.	Garden Party. Tea party at home. Charity bazaar. Afternoon calls. Men at club.
5 p.m.	Drive, ride or stroll in Park. Informal calls.
7 p.m.	Dinner, if going to the theatre.
8 p.m.	Dinner-party. Theatre or opera.
10 p.m.	Receptions, soirées.
11 p.m.	Balls, dances.
11.30 p.m.	Supper after theatre or opera.
1 a.m.	Supper at balls and dances
3 a.m.	Balls usually end.

*Table 2: Daily events of the Season (informed by Evans & Evans, 1976)*

The flow map (Figure 5) also highlights the distances travelled during a typical day in the Season. One participant travelled three miles from Gore Road in South Kensington to St James's Square in Westminster, a significant distance when travelling without motorised technology. The blue, red and green lines on the map represent evening balls taking place on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1862. This data supports that of the distance decay model, albeit on a smaller scale, that distance did not influence the attendance at evening events. Attendance lines to the three balls do not fall neatly into neighbourhood areas, participants did not attend their 'local' ball, but often travelled significant distances to ballrooms much further from their residences. Whilst this attendance is limited by the receipt of an invitation, it is reasonable to assume that Lady Colthurst in Wilton Crescent did not solely invite guests located in Mayfair, ignoring those living more closely proximate to her in Belgravia, thus negating the influence of invitations in this trend.

The map in Figure 5 is significant in two respects. Firstly, it illustrates the number of people moving to events each day, and the number of events to which participants

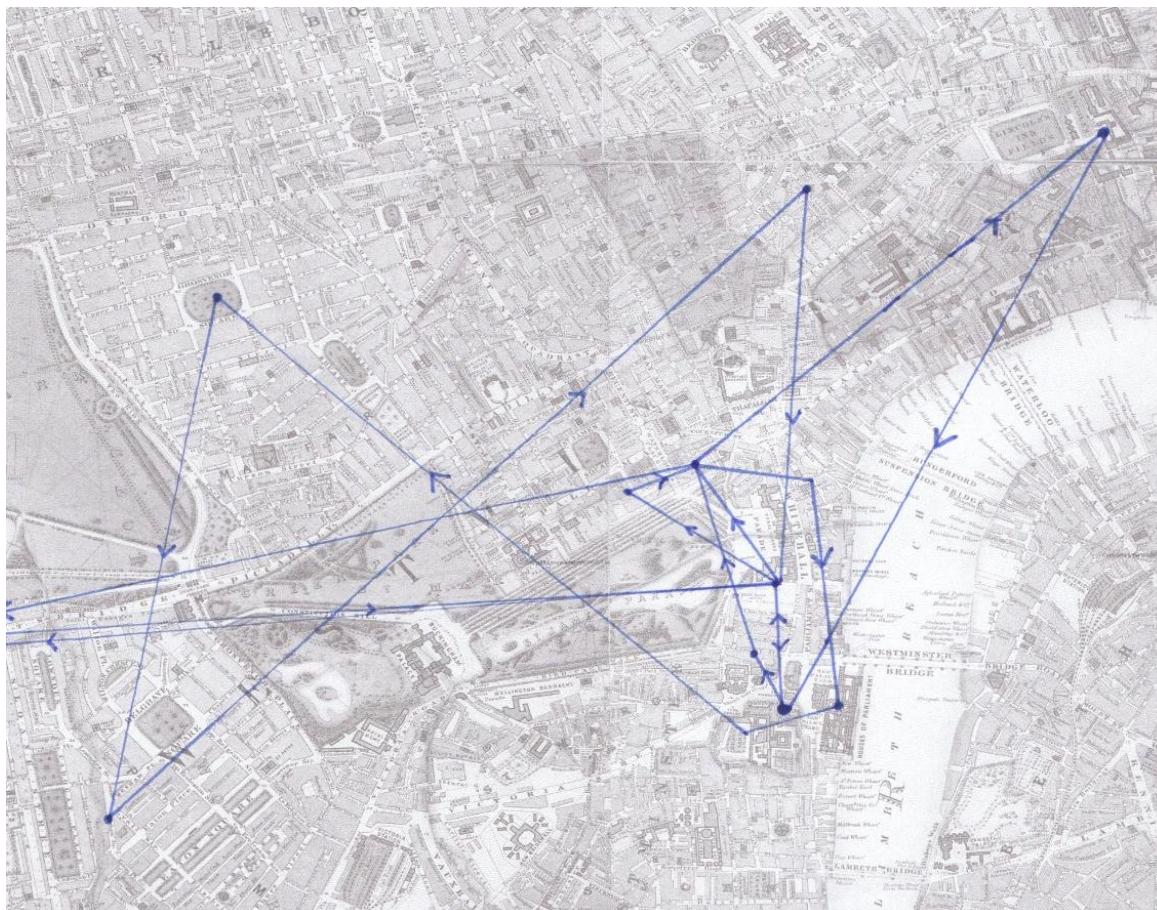
travelled. This provides an example of the fluidity of the area, one which was characterised by continual movement in every corner of this area of West London. Secondly, the map supports the conclusions made regarding migration to the capital using distance decay modelling. Once again, distance was not a limiting factor in attending events during the Season, just as it was not a deterrent in travelling to the Season initially. This is an important point, because it demonstrates that those participating in the Season both relied upon movement and had the ability to be extensively mobile. This ability to move throughout the Season was a powerful tool (Adey, 2006; Redshaw, 2007), allowing the desire to network to be realised. In a historical period defined by its general immobility, the decision by debutantes and their families to travel to a ball three miles away when they could have attended one 300 metres away is testament to this conclusion.

*Being mobile: a day in the life of a mobile debutante*

To illustrate the trends witnessed in the flow map of Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1862 in more detail, biographical material which documented the individual movements of one person during one day of the Season has been consulted. A diary entry which corresponded with the date of the flow map (Figure 5) could not be found but both this map and Figure 6 (below) are illustrative of typical days during the Season, and therefore their trends can be compared. The daily movements made on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1883<sup>10</sup> by Miss Mary Gladstone and recorded in her diary have been used to provide this illustration, shown below in Figure 6. The decision to map individual movements takes inspiration from the work of Bissell (2009) who mapped the individual movements of passengers at Newcastle Central Station to gain a deeper understanding of mobile spaces.

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<sup>10</sup> Note that by 1883, the expansion of the Season (discussed in Chapter 2) had led to the stretching of the period. The events of the Season were already underway by the 14<sup>th</sup> March.



*Figure 6: The movements made by Miss Mary Gladstone on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1883 (base map reproduced with permission from Anthony Craig).*

As Figure 6 illustrates, Mary Gladstone made sixteen separate journeys on 14th March 1883. Whilst several of her journeys were between her home in Downing Street and Parliament Square, or to visit her family living in either Great George Street or Carlton House Terrace, both close by, many other movements were stretched over greater distances. She paid a call in Grosvenor Square, visited a friend in Portugal Street (off The Strand), another in Belgravia, and attended a concert in the Royal Albert Hall in South Kensington (off the map). Whilst it is clear that not all the movements made by Mary were directly linked to the Season (in particular her visits to members of family), the vast majority of movements made represented the renewal of connections for which the Season was initially designed (Evans & Evans, 1976; Horn, 1992; see Chapter 6 for a mobilities perspective regarding these interactions). What is also clear is that the journeys made by Mary Gladstone were purposeful, undertaken for a specific reason: to see a friend who had recently become widowed, to attend a concert with her brother recently returned from India, to pay a call to an influential political hostess, to visit her father in

parliament in her capacity as his private secretary, to worship at her local church. This purposeful mobility contradicts the work of Binnie et al (2007) and Edensor (2007) who have suggested that travelled routes become an unquestioned habit, 'banal mobilities' which are undertaken unreflexively. Mary Gladstone's movements represent those occurring throughout the Season. Far from examples of 'banal mobilities' these often repeated journeys (as illustrated by Mary's multiple visits to both Westminster Abbey and Carlton House Terrace) were undertaken with specific aims in mind. As such, this analysis of the daily movements made during the Season in combination with biographical detail reveals that these movements cannot be generalised, and instead must be understood through the individual contexts in which they occurred. Mary's extensive movements also allowed her to fulfil specific roles: friend, sister, member of the aristocracy, private secretary to the Prime Minister, as well as fulfilling her own desire to attend church services (Mary was deeply religious, see Fletcher, 2008). As such, being mobile allowed Mary to be a member of Society participating in the political and social life of the Season. Movement facilitated Mary's experiences of the Season, illustrating the importance of mobility to the lives of those taking part.

### **Restrictive Mobility**

So far in this chapter, the extensive and frequent movements made by those participating in the Season have been documented as freely experienced mobility, fluid transitions through space. Whilst the concept of fluidity is useful in understanding the scale and intensity of the travel undertaken by members of Society, it does not fully reflect the nature of this movement. In discussing the need to move beyond fluidity, Lash (2005) instead called for an engagement with the 'bumpy' nature of mobility. During the Season, despite possessing the tools for fluid movements, restrictions occurred in a variety of forms; each of which was important to explore for a deeper understanding of the Season. This engagement with meanings and contexts of movement (synonymous with the mobilities approach identified by Blunt in 2007) allows for a wider understanding of society at the time, building on prior research in which movement was stated without being considered (Sproule, 1978; Huggett, 1979; Horn, 1992).

## Acceptable Methods of Moving

During the nineteenth century, Society dictated that the acceptable form of mobile technology was the private carriage, pulled by horses. Even as technological developments signalled the rise of public transport, in the form of the extension of omnibus routes, the horse tram and the underground railway which opened up travel for a larger sector of society, those participating in the Season maintained a reliance upon the horse and carriage (Taylor, 2001). Wildeblood (1965) in a discussion of clothing declared that: “the lady’s visiting-dress was synonymous with her carriage-dress, for no lady would entertain the notion of walking” (1965, p. 172). The ability to travel privately and independently was a marker of wealth and status during the Season, as illustrated by Nicholson’s (1988) interpretation of the diaries of Marion Sambourne: “Owning a carriage was a definite step up in the social scale and Marion made a point of using it when she went to her grand dressmaker” (1988, p. 73-4). Constance Battersea recollects a similar use for the carriage, describing the drive to Court presentation as having taken place in the family’s ‘grand chariot’ (Battersea, 1922, p. 108-9). This use of a carriage as a marker of status can also be witnessed through the character of George Osborne in *Vanity Fair*, who remarked: “My father’s a gentleman, and keeps his carriage” (Thackeray, 1848, p.25). Those participating in the Season were not merely expected to be mobile, they were expected to be mobile through the use of a particular technology.

In the case of many of the more wealthy families during the period, however, this level of mobility may have been viewed more as a way of life than a restriction. This is highlighted by an analysis of biographical sources during the period, where barely any mention of either horses or carriages has been found, indicating that the possession of this mode of transport was taken for granted. The rare cases where a carriage is mentioned are usually in conjunction with a mishap, for example in the diary of Lucy Lyttelton where she notes on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1859 that a journey in the carriage had been particularly unpleasant: “after a most smutty journey for we travelled in the open Britschka [a long, four wheeled carriage], we arrived prosperously in London...with the complexion of a stoker”. It is illustrative of the wealth and expectation of the elite in Society that views regarding this restriction on, and acceptable technologies of, mobility were largely undocumented. As Huggett (1979) suggested: “A carriage ... was not so much a means of transport but far more a way of life” (p. 12). During the Season, for many of its more wealthy participants, it was a way of life to be mobile.

## Economic Restrictions

Moving by private horse and carriage did not come without substantial cost, however, and for many wishing to participate in the Season this provided a further restriction to movement. The ownership of private carriages and their accompanying horses was very expensive, another explanation as to why mobility of this kind during the nineteenth century was restricted to this elite group in society. Sidney (1873) estimated that a Brougham carriage, one of the most common during the period, cost between £120 and £190, depending on specification. By 1891, the number of carriage licences issued in the Administrative County of London had totalled 22,204, with an estimated 40,000 horses housed in London mews to pull them (Gordon, 1893). The estimated total cost of these technologies of mobility totalled over £5,000,000 (Gordon, 1893). In today's monetary terms this was roughly the equivalent of £299,000,000 (National Archive Currency Converter). The figure puts into perspective the importance placed upon mobility by those participating in the Season, the cost alone is an indicator of the level of investment made by elite families in their own mobility.

For those with access to these private modes of travel and the money to pay for it, the ability to participate in the Season was fully realised. For those without the means to use a carriage limitlessly, participation became more difficult, creating a hierarchy of mobility empowerments during the period. This term is taken from the work of mobilities theorists. Cresswell (2010) discussed hierarchies of mobility in relation to speed of movement, describing those with the ability to access fast transport technologies as positioned at the top of this hierarchy, with those restricted to slower technologies lower down this scale. This concept can be adopted in work relating to the Season in which those with a high degree of motility (Kaufmann, 2002) in appropriate technologies (the carriage) were at the top of the mobility hierarchy of the Season. For those without access to private carriages, barriers to mobility were created by a Society which dictated the importance of limitless movement through the use of this technology. This dualism between relative mobility and immobility forges the link between mobility and power. This is because those with the ability to move and to conform to the demands of society hold power over those people who are without the resources to do so (Hubbard & Lilley, 2004; Adey 2006; Redshaw, 2007). In terms of the Season, those without the money to buy and maintain a carriage would have found the technology to be not only a

barrier to their movement, but to their social life in general. Those with the ability to conform to the norms of Society were deemed more socially acceptable and therefore more likely to secure advantageous networks, as discussed in etiquette books published throughout the nineteenth century<sup>11</sup>.

Testament to the importance of owning a carriage during the Season is the well documented use of services provided by the jobmaster. The jobmaster was essentially a lettings agent, renting out horses fully trained for the demands of the Season, carriages, harnesses and even coachmen to those without the means to buy and employ them outright. Families could rent for any length of time, from just a few hours (perhaps to attend an event at which they particularly wanted to impress) to the whole Season (Huggett, 1979). The minutes of the London General Omnibus Company for 1875 reveal the extent of horse ownership by jobmasters. Newman & Co owned 200 horses available for lease, Thomas Tilling owned 700 horses and George Goodchild a further 100 animals (Turvey, 2005). The total number of horses owned by these three largest jobmaster companies in London reaches 900 animals, a significant figure to be stabled in the capital, and illustrative of the scale of the jobmasters role in Victorian London. As the Season underwent expansion opening up to include families without the immense wealth of traditional participants, the jobmasters role became even more significant. In 1893, Gordon estimated that 80% of the horses used to pull carriages for the Queen's drawing room were on hire from the jobmaster, a reflection of the expansion of Society and the increased use of the railways to travel to London for the Season (Turvey, 2005). Whilst the jobmaster provided a lifeline for those on the fringes of Society, its use did not come without restriction. Many jobmasters limited the distance their horses were allowed to travel; contracts often stated that the animals could not travel further than a seven mile radius from Charing Cross (Turvey, 2005). These limitations were significant, because pinnacle events in the social calendar of the Season such as Henley Royal Regatta and the Eton v Harrow cricket match, took place outside of the restricted radius imposed by the jobmaster (Davidoff, 1973). Those renting their mobility from these organisations would, therefore, have been contractually obliged to miss out on these social networking opportunities. This restriction further highlights the power afforded to those in the Season who owned their transport technologies over those who lacked the ability to be privately mobile, and supports Massey's (1993)

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<sup>11</sup> Etiquette books such as *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* (1871), *Etiquette of Love, Courtship and Marriage* (1859) and *Manners and Tone of Good Society* (1879) contain frequent references to the importance of conforming to socially appropriate behaviour.

identification of the different 'mobility empowerments' existing in society. The difference between those renting from the jobmaster and those owning their own horses is illustrated through the characters of Dr Grantly, whose wealth was explained through his ownership of horses in contrast to the less wealthy Mrs Proudie, in Anthony Trollope's *Barchester Towers*: "[Dr Grantly] kept a separate pair of horses for the exclusive use of his wife since the day of his marriage, whereas Mrs Proudie had hitherto been jobbed about the streets of London at so much a month during the Season; and at other times had managed to walk, or hire a smart fly from the livery stables" (Trollope, 1857, p. 30). Trollope's use of the contrast between the jobmaster and ownership of horses as a means by which to illustrate class reveals the extent to which owning private modes of mobility were regarded in the early-mid nineteenth century as a marker of increased social status.

#### Physical restrictions of movement

The mobility witnessed during the Season was not without restriction, however. Technologies are constrained by the environment in which they operate, and nineteenth century London was no exception (Pooley et al, 2006). The road network in West London was not designed for the influx of many thousands of carriages requiring access to them on a daily basis during the Season. Traffic jams were a regular incident, evidence of the level of movement occurring. Dowager Lady Leconfield recalled the difficulties of movement during the late nineteenth century in *The Times*: "Let no one suppose that our progress through the streets was unimpeded. When I read in the papers now about the traffic problem I remember the half hours we often spent in trying to get round Hyde Park Corner" (25th October 1930). Despite possessing the tools for mobility, the number of people participating in this movement meant that mobility was regularly spatially constrained, as illustrated by Thomas Rowlandson in 1807 entitled "Miseries of London (Plate 1). This would have been limiting to those wishing to attend events, as was discussed by Louisa Bowater, a debutante whose family situation meant she was eager to attend as many networking events as possible to secure a match (Louisa's Season is the subject of further analysis in Chapter 7). On 16th May 1863, Louisa and her chaperone (Mrs Newdegate, an older cousin) were trapped in a large traffic jam: "Mrs Newdegate got into the carriage at one, thinking ourselves in capital time, but great was our horror on emerging into Piccadilly [from their home on Arlington Street, a road branching off Piccadilly] to find a string of carriages

extending the whole way to St George's Hospital [a distance of 1 km]<sup>12</sup>. We resigned ourselves to our fate, the fate proving to be to spend our time until 4.50pm in regaining the point from which we set out. Meanwhile the tide of starers [sic] flowed on, and Piccadilly was the fashionable promenade of the day" (16th May 1863). Whilst this comment is not entirely clear as to the precise details of the journey Louisa had wished to take, it is clear is that she was unable to complete it owing to the traffic jam along Piccadilly, illustrated by the fact she sat in the carriage for three hours and fifty minutes waiting to arrive back at 'the point she set out' in Arlington Street, having presumably made the decision to abort the trip due to the traffic.



*Plate 1: 'The Miseries of London' by Thomas Rowlandson (1807) (reproduced with permission from Collage, London Metropolitan Archives).*

Sproule (1978), in a rare discussion of travel, commented that debutantes needed to possess patience and stamina, not only for the events they were attending, but for the travel to and from them; clearly a character trait which would have been required by Louisa Bowater in the above example. Such was the desire to arrive in the socially acceptable carriage that families would wait in the vehicle for hours, even when their desired location was just metres away, as illustrated by the following record from the diary of a footman, William Tayler, who rode aboard a carriage: "went this evening to see the illumination but the streets was so crowded with

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<sup>12</sup> Distances calculated using Google Maps Distance Calculator: <http://www.daftlogic.com/projects-google-maps-distance-calculator.htm> (accessed 23.05.09)

people and carriages that it was impossible to move. The throng was so great that I got to a lamp post [sic] and there I was oblig [sic] to hang for half an hour before the road was clear that I could get on [back on to the carriage]. Women was plentiful [sic], come screaming murder, others calling police, some fainting. There was such a kick up as I never saw in my life before. I went out at nine o'clock and got back at eleven. In that time I did not get more than half a mile" (24th May, 1837).

When the roads were clear for movement, however, it was carriage riders that possessed the right of way on the public streets of London. Carriages were legally allowed to wait (the equivalent of parking) wherever they chose, and for as long as they wanted (Huggett, 1979). Not only were participants of the Season in possession of private modes of transport, but their mobility was legally privileged over other forms of transport. This provides another indication of the power afforded to those people with the ability to be mobile. The laws which existed during the period permitted the 'mobility empowerments' (described by Massey, 1993) discussed earlier to be reproduced along the route-ways of the West End. As Cresswell indicated: "the way in which people are enabled or constrained in terms of their mobile practices differs markedly according to their position in social hierarchies" (2005, p. 448). This statement is clearly demonstrated by the laws of the country during the nineteenth century, privileging the mobility of those who could afford private means of movement at the expense of those who could not.

### Gendered Mobility Restrictions

The restrictions placed upon participants of the Season in terms of acceptable modes of transport have so far been considered in this chapter in a uniform matter, assuming that all those in Society would have experienced this mobility in the same way. This assumption of a uniform experience can be deconstructed. Work by Skeggs (2004) examined the relational politics of mobility, suggesting that it is important to read mobility and power in the context of gender. The historically gendered nature of mobility experience is also highlighted in the work of Bieri and Gerodetti (2007) in analysing the production of gender practices in nineteenth century train stations. By discussing the concept of the male flâneur as a figure engaging freely with space, the contrast is drawn between this freedom and the confinement of women to the domestic sphere during the period (see also Domosh, 2001). In the realms of the Season these differentiated mobility experiences are

important, and must be identified not only in terms of gender, but also age and social situation. For a married woman, or spinster lady of advanced years, there was a relatively high level of freedom in terms of mobility; so long as it was carried out in a carriage. This can be contrasted sharply with the experiences of unmarried young women, for whom mobility was limited, controlled and highly scripted.

Etiquette books written during the period illustrate the constraints placed upon these women by expected societal behaviour during the period. *Etiquette for Women* (1902) warned that unmarried ladies should not be seen travelling anywhere unaccompanied, their mobility was therefore totally reliant upon others. Presumably these chaperones would also have dictated where the unmarried woman could travel to, further limiting freedom of movement. Some etiquette books go further in describing this crippling of mobility. *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* detailed the way in which a woman should be expected to sit whilst moving: “If you are going to sit with your face to the horses, and there is one step to the carriage, put your left foot on it, or, if there are two steps, put your right foot on first and your left foot on last, so as to enter the carriage with your right foot, and sink easily into your seat...The seat facing the horses is the place of honour, and should be given to the eldest ladies or first in rank” (p. 30, 1871). The extract illustrates that every aspect of a young, unmarried woman’s mobility was constrained by the code of behaviour dictated by Society at the time. Even in the same capsule of transport, mobility experiences will have been relational. The eldest lady in the ‘place of honour’ will have been experiencing travel differently to the chaperoned unmarried woman, resigned to the unimportant, presumably less comfortable seat opposite her, often moving in a direction and speed dictated by her more senior companion. Using passenger position as a way of understanding the politics of mobility is utilised in mobilities literature in relation to car travel (see Laurier et al 2008). Whilst contextually different, the benefit of understanding the internal ordering of mobile spaces is as significant in relation to the carriage, providing an illustration of Society at the time of the Season.

This approach by Laurier et al (2008) draws heavily on the work of Massey (1993) in this respect, useful in this context of relational experiences of travel. Massey (1993) recognised that two people’s experiences of the same mobility moment had the potential to be extremely different, as echoed in the work of Creswell (2010) and Adey and Bissell (2010), and these differences were witnessed clearly in relation to debutantes during the Season. In an environment in which limitless mobility was an

expected norm and a fundamental characteristic of the period, large swathes of those participating in Society experienced the exact opposite; movement which was constrained, controlled and highly dependent upon others. This contrast in mobility experience illustrates an argument proposed by Cresswell (2005) in which he stated that “contemporary society and culture should be understood through its modes of mobility as much as by its spaces and places” (p. 448). Whilst Cresswell’s theory resides firmly in the present day experiences of mobility, the point is an important one for research discussing the Season. In understanding the nature of the Season and Society, a consideration for the differential mobility empowerments witnessed during the period is essential. Mobility does not merely describe the levels of movement that occurred, it illuminates the expectations and behaviours of Society during the Season as well. According to Adey (2006) it is these relational differences between the experiences of movement that allow for an understanding of society through mobility.

### **Facilitating Mobility**

The motility (Kaufmann, 2002) experienced by those participating in the Season and analysed throughout this chapter could not have occurred without facilitation, namely that of the coachman who drove the carriage, and the footman who accompanied the family whilst engaged in acts of movement. Rather than a single mobility experienced by all, movement is instead dependant on the relationships within which it occurs. In the case of the Season, whilst servants were engaging in the mobility of their employers, facilitating their mobility, they themselves were experiencing a different form of mobility. The importance of the facilitation of movement in the Season is discussed below in the context of Adey’s (2010) relational mobilities. At this stage it must be noted that the coachmen and footmen were by no means the only servants employed in facilitating the Seasons of their employees. In this research, however, these two roles will be addressed in particular, owing to their direct involvement in facilitating the mobility of those participating<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> For a detailed analysis of the role played by servants in the Season, see Horn (1975), May (2008) and Fernandez (2010).

### The role of the servant

Recognising the crucial role played by servants in making the Season possible is important, the coachman and the footmen were in many respects the engine behind a family's networking campaign during a Season. Huggett (1979) examined the role of the coachman: receiving the orders of the day from the Lady of the House, grooming the carriage horses (each horse would take 1½ hours to groom in preparation for a day working during the Season, see Horn, 1975), inspecting the carriage for dirt or scratches and then driving it for as many daytime hours as was ordered. Whilst driving, the coachman's first duty was to create smooth movement, a difficult task given the technology, tight corners of London's streets and the succession of stops required. The quality of the mobility experience was a mark of a successful coachman (Sidney, 1873). Night driving duties were undertaken by the under coachman; under the cover of darkness the skill of driving and the appearance of the coach and horses was less important. At night, movement became less about display, and more about moving from place to place in the frenetic whirl of ball attendance (*Servants Practical Guide - A Handbook of Duties and Rules*, 1880).

These facilitators of movement were consequently very mobile themselves, also travelling great distances every day, the only difference being that this was not limitless, but controlled by their employers. This mandatory mobility resonates with the work of Frello (2008) who suggested that on the spectrum of differential mobility empowerments, there are some people who are obliged to move in the context of their lives, rather than having control over their own mobility. This mirrors the work of mobilities scholars in linking movement with power, as discussed previously in relation to the jobmaster. Massey stated that "it does seem that mobility, and control over mobility both reflects and reinforces power" (1993, p. 62). During the Season, mobility systems (Urry, 2007) were only available to participants because their mobility was enabled by servants who facilitated it. In the moving carriages of the Season, therefore, whilst both the family and the coachman were travelling along the same movement pathway, their relationship to this movement was completely different. The family displayed ultimate mobility, the freedom to choose the duration and route of travel. The coachman meanwhile facilitated this mobility through his own personal immobility, servicing the movement of the family and enabling the technology of the mobility system (the carriage) to function. An understanding of the relationship between the mobilities of the coachman and the elite family is supported

by the recent work of Cresswell (2010) and Urry (2010) who both called for an understanding of the importance of the politics of mobile practice. In this argument Cresswell (2010) highlighted a similar experience to that of the coachman, stating that the experiences of a line of mobility linking A to B will be differently experienced, depending on the power relations exhibited by those moving. Cresswell utilises the description of a late nineteenth century train journey in America published in the *Chicago News* to illustrate this point: “The world respects the rich man who turned to be a globe-trotter and uses first class cabins and Pullman cars, but has inclination to look over his shoulder at the hobo who, to satisfy this so strong impulse, is compelled to use box-cars, slip the board under the Pullman or in other ways whistle on the safety of his life” (Ernest Burgess archives of the University of Chicago, cited in Cresswell, 2010, p. 22). In summarising the above quote, Cresswell stated that “here we have exactly the same act of moving from A to B but completely different practices of mobility and sets of represented meanings associated with them” (2010, p.22). The relational mobility of elite families and the servants who facilitated this mobility during the Season can be understood in this capacity, satisfying Cresswell’s call for a delineation of the politics of mobility.

### **The Display of Mobility**

Whilst the above sections have detailed the importance of acceptable movement during the Season, this was not the only use of being mobile by those taking part. Movement and accompanying mobility systems (Urry, 2007) were also used as a tool for display.

#### **The display potential of a carriage**

The carriages used during the Season were ordered by families to specific and individual specifications, many of which were constructed in the big coach-building firms in London. *The Post Office Directory* catalogued over a hundred of these workshops in London in 1872. According to Nockolds (1977), N & F Thorn, one of the most well renowned coach builders, never had less than 300 carriages in its workshops on Great Portland Street. This significantly large number can be explained in part by the lifespan of a carriage, which Huggett (1979) estimated to be an average of five years. Whilst the carriage itself may have been functional for many more years, its outward appearance after five years of use would have been such that it was no longer deemed acceptable. The ‘look’ of the carriage was as

important to families as its mobile capacity. Riding in the vehicle was one of the few occasions outside a specific social function where a family would be seen in London, and therefore riding in the latest model of carriage, demarcated with the family crest was an essential part of advertising those inside during the Season. The display potential of mobile technology has been studied by Löfgren (2008) in relation to nineteenth century railway travel; research which echoes the material significance of the carriage. Löfgren (2008) related display to the concept of class demarcation in rail carriages, suggesting that class divisions were expressed through the differences in the textures of the upholstery in every class of carriage. First class travel was designed to exude 'voluptuousness', through the inclusion of 'tassels' and 'drapes' (2008, p. 344). Whilst the context of Löfgren's study may be different from that of the private carriage, the display potential afforded to mobile technologies in demarcating status offers a relevant lens through which to understand the exhibitiv role of the carriage in the Season.

There were a number of different models of carriage witnessed during the nineteenth century Season, some of the most common being the Landau, Barouche, Brougham, Victoria and Phaeton and each of these was designed with various specifications in mind (Jackson, 2004). Named after the Queen, the Victoria was designed for use by the lady of the house. It was door less, creating enough space to allow for the rigid crinoline frames of dresses fashionable during the period, whereas the Brougham was a much larger carriage for all round family use. Despite this, however, the windows of the Brougham were 'hung on the line' so as to present a "fair face at the very best point of view for admiration and for conversation" (Sidney, 1873, p. 523). The mechanics and technical detail of the various models will not be included in this discussion, however, the significant point remains that such was the importance of using these modes of transport as a method of display, they were specifically modified to enhance the display potential of the vehicle. The tailoring of technology to this niche market of mobility is illustrative of the demand and necessity for carriages and the extent to which display was considered in the design process of this mode of transport. This appreciation of the display potential of carriages mirrors the work of scholars engaged in the material geographies of mobility. Scholars such as Moran (2005) and Highmore (2002) have called for an appreciation of the way in which everyday objects sustained urban worlds. In the context of the Season, the everyday object of the carriage was relied upon not only as a means in which to move, but as a tool used to demarcate status. This dual purpose enables the significance of the carriage to be appreciated, contrasting with

the work of Sproule (1978), Davidoff (1973) and many other scholars of the Season who failed to engage in the significance of the carriage in the lives of those travelling in them.

### *The display potential of horses*

It was not just the appearance of the carriage which was important; the horses pulling it were also subject to similar scrutiny. This can be clearly witnessed in the advertisements sections of newspapers from the period. The initial and bold text in every advert was reserved for a description of the appearance of the horse: 'a handsome chestnut mare', 'a pair of pretty, well-matched, long-tailed brown ponies' (*The Morning Post*, May 4<sup>th</sup> 1830). The details of the age, breed and condition of the horses are found in smaller text further into the advert. It is clear from these sales notices that the most important qualities necessary for a horse during the Season were appearance based. Horses during the Season were as important as the carriage in enabling mobility, as well as facilitating the portrayal of the desired image of a family. Gordon suggested that certain breeds of horses were chosen for their display potential and favoured during the Season because of this: "a large number of these showy carriage horses are Cleveland bays ... at one time the Cleveland mare was almost the only mother of our best carriage horses" (1893, p. 62-3). The horses were representing the family during the Season, and as such they were required to look handsome, to be high-stepping animals and to be one half of a perfectly matching pair, should a larger carriage be used (Sidney, 1873). Colour was also an important consideration; according to Huggett (1979) one grey haired lady who favoured grey clothing requested a horse of the exact same grey as the colour of her hair, so that not only would she match the horse, but any hairs blown back on to her whilst the animal was moving would blend in with her appearance unnoticed. This level of intricacy regarding the appearance of the horse illustrates the display potential of these animals, again reinforcing the importance of the display of movement, rather than the movement itself to those facilitated by it. The importance of the display potential of these animals was reflected in economic terms. A standard carriage horse may have cost up to £100 in 1891, however the desire for a perfectly matching pair, as discussed above, inflated the price of these animals to between £500 and £1000 (Huggett, 1979). Although difficult to estimate exactly, according to the National Archives Currency Converter this roughly equates to between £30,000 and £60,000 in today's monetary terms.

The display potential of the footmen

Footmen, in particular, were central to the performance of movement. They would ride on the carriage throughout the day, working as a pair in unison to knock on the doors of callers, open the carriage door and let down the step. Their hours were long; footmen were required in the carriages bound for the ballrooms at 10 or 11pm, often waiting to collect their passengers into the early hours of the morning. Louisa Smythe recalled in 1827 that she was kept up dancing until 5 o'clock, whilst William Tayler, a footman working at Great Cumberland Place in 1837 recollected waiting in the cold until 2.30am for his elderly employer to leave a ball (Wise, 1962).



*Plate 2: Livery buttons displaying family crests (source: Huggett, 1979)  
(reproduced with permission from Lutterworth Press).*

Not only did footmen facilitate movement, they were also central to the display of status and wealth performed by their employers. Footmen would be dressed in uniforms designed by the family; their coat buttons adorned with the family livery (as witnessed in Plate 2). Not only did the carriage serve as an advertising board for the family's wealth and status, but their servants did too. Their physical appearance was therefore important: like the carriage, every elite family desired a good model. Such was the importance of a tall footman that their wages varied in accordance with their height. According to Weightman and Humphries (1983) a footman over 6 ft tall could expect to be paid £12 more than his shorter co-workers. Footmen with thin calves were given shapely 'falsies' to add bulk (*Servants Practical Guide - A*

*Handbook of Duties and Rules*, 1880) and some were even expected to dye their hair. Frederick John Gorst recollected the first time he worked as Lady Howard's travelling footman:

“The next morning I had my first lesson in powdering my hair. It began with a shampoo and when I had soaped my hair thoroughly, instead of rinsing the soap away, I felt it on my scalp and parted my hair neatly on the side. Then Trowbridge took a big, thick, powder puff and doused my head with the ‘violet powder’ until it formed a pasty coating. After it had dried, my head seemed to be covered in a white wig. I found it a bit of a shock to look at myself in the glass and see how I had aged in ten minutes! Of course the purpose of this headdress was to have all the footmen look as much alike as possible and to create a picture of uniformity when we served together” (Gorst with Andrews, 1956 p. 88).

To employ a pair of near identical footmen with the ability to work in unison, mirroring one another's movements, was a status symbol for families in the Season, proving once again that just like carriages, the display function of the footmen was as important as their role in facilitating the movement itself.

### **The Performance of Movement: Embodied Travel**

The use of mobility for more than mere movement resonates with the work of mobilities scholars such as Lyons & Urry (2005), Urry (2006) and Watts (2008) who have researched ‘time travel usage’, particularly in relation to railways. Whilst the context may be rather different, the concept is a useful one for understanding the use of carriages, horses and footmen during the period. In introducing the new mobilities paradigm, Sheller and Urry (2006) called for an understanding of travel time as not merely ‘dead’ but rather as sociable dwelling in motion. Viewing travel as embodied in this way is useful because it allows for an analysis of what occurs during travel time. Symes (2007) working on commuter trains in Sydney takes this concept further, suggesting that containers of travel such as carriages should be viewed as places themselves, such that travelling time must also be viewed as activity time (Kesselring, 2006). This notion of activity time is particularly relevant during the Season, where riding served this dual purpose of travel and display. Performing movement in this way, using the movement as a social tool in space is a crucial element of mobility. Once again, those without the ability to participate in

limitless movement, without access to mobility systems, were also those unable to perform their mobility; they could not display their status as easily.

This performance of mobility was witnessed in greatest concentration during the Season along Rotten Row in Hyde Park. The three times daily spectacle which occurred there was a display of power, wealth and social posturing on an unprecedented scale (Worsley-Gough, 1952). Although the timings of display in Hyde Park varied throughout the nineteenth century, in accordance with the changing fashions of the period, Evans & Evans (1976) predicted that in the middle of the century, the park was the scene of three separate fashionable meetings each day. Between 9 am and 10 am participants would ride horses along the Row, 12 pm to 2pm saw both riding and driving of carriages occurring, and 5pm to 7pm where driving or strolling was the norm, congregating along the southern edge of the park. This was not just movement; it was the clearest example from the period of using movement as a social tool. Bissell (2009) has engaged in this debate in relation to railway travel, suggesting that understanding embodied movement allows an attendance to the way in which space “is negotiated and used in a variety of ways” (2009, p. 175). In terms of the display of movement in Hyde Park, the concept of negotiated space is particularly useful. The art of movement was used by those participating to form a social dance, a scripted routine performed by all those present in the hope of meeting the gaze of a potential contact.

The Countess of Warwick indicated that by the late nineteenth century there were two periods of fashion in the park. The first was a couple of hours before lunch, where horses would be ridden along the Row in ‘the greatest horse show in the world’, and the second comprised a late afternoon carriage ride along the Drive, parallel to the Row (Warwick, 1931). The display potential of these movements in the park can be witnessed in this recollection by Percy Colson:

“In the afternoon it was de rigueur to drive on the Knightsbridge side of the Park. There the carriageway would present an almost solid phalanx of victorias, barouches and landaus, all with coachmen and footmen, many of them powdered. In them sat elaborately dressed and coiffured women and their daughters, les jeunes filles á marier. Up and down they drove for the regulation number of turns, bowing to their friends and trying to look as if they were enjoying themselves. Women not quite in the swim trying to look

as if they were; in the seventh heaven if someone belonging to the inner circle gave them a careless half-bow” (Colson, 1945, p. 22).

The experiences of the inner circle mentioned by Colson during this time are best understood by the notes of the Countess of Warwick, who suggested that her horses were so well known in the park that ‘they always made a stir’ when spotted (Warwick, 1931). At the centre of the display and networking described in the above accounts lies a core of mobility, crucial to the entire performance. Without access to mobility systems and the means to engage with them, the flow of movements, this embodied travel, could not have occurred (Kesselring, 2006; Wong, 2006; Urry, 2007). Movement did not merely facilitate networking during the Season, it was a fundamental constituent part, without which networking could not have occurred.

The significance of Hyde Park during the Season is best analysed through the work of Urry (2007) who suggested that acquiring network capital, the ultimate aim of displaying in Hyde Park, depends on two occasions of meeting: specific encounters (typified by the ballroom in the Season) and spaces where ‘generalized others’ are met. These generalised spaces were, according to Urry, dependant upon places which were “good for encountering sets of weak ties without knowing exactly who will be present” (Urry, 2007, p. 239). The situation described by Urry mirrors exactly the conditions to which Hyde Park operated during the Season, and hence, enables an understanding of the popularity of this networking space during the Season. This popularity is explained by Urry, who stated that: “this co-presence [that occurred in generalised spaces such as Hyde Park] often involves ‘showing one’s face’ within such places and that face then is reported to others” (Urry, 2007, p. 239). Whilst Urry may have based this notion of generalised spaces on festivals, sporting occasions, and protest camps, the situation described by this theory is exactly the situation which occurred during the Season. The significance of moving in Hyde Park lay in its potential as a generalised networking space, in which families displayed their mobility in the hope of ‘being seen’, and ultimately gaining in network capital. Utilising Urry’s theory in this context not only confirms the greater understanding of the Season generated through adopting a mobilities perspective, but also mirrors the work of Cresswell (2010) who called for an appreciation of the historical significance of mobility, as illustrated through the example of Hyde Park during the Season.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the role of movement in the Season has been highlighted, adding to the body of work on the period which has largely failed to consider the importance of mobility to the workings of the Season. In so doing, the physical movement undertaken by those participating was analysed, alongside an appreciation of the immobility experienced by those facilitating these mobile lifestyles. The importance of mobility in terms of display was understood through the concept of embodied travel, further adding to an understanding of the importance of being mobile to those participating in the Season. This multi-faceted approach to movement echoed the work of Cresswell (2010) who called for the use of the term 'constellations of mobility' through which to understand historical situations. In recognising these historical constellations of movement Cresswell argues that the implications and politics of mobility can be best understood, aiding our understanding of movement at a range of scales and time periods. Whilst Cresswell utilised the mobility of a medieval vagrant to highlight links to contemporary mobility, the prominence of movement during the Season can be used in a similar vein. In this chapter, the frenetic mobile nature of those participating in the Season has been aligned with the work of scholars such as Cresswell, and Pooley et al (2006) to highlight that the contemporary mobility investigated by much mobilities literature is not new, that historical periods and groups of people experienced mobile lifestyles as significant as those occurring in the present day. By utilising this approach, the importance and significance of movement during the Season was foregrounded; unlike previous research in the field, this chapter considered the importance of understanding movement to understanding the period as a whole.



The previous chapter illustrated that movement was of such importance during the Season because it enabled participation in the events which formed the backbone of the social calendar. As was discussed in Chapter 2, the origins of the Season lay in the social meetings between elite families, the coming together of the aristocracy to forge and cement networks with one another. This desire to network was the primary fuel of the Season, the possibility and hope for new alliances which would be advantageous to the family in terms of status or wealth, was the driving force behind it. Analysing these connections between participants of the Season as ‘networks’ moves away from historical geographers who utilised the term to simply describe the links between individuals without context (for example Abbott (1993) who studied the networks existing between extended families; D’Cruze (1995) in relation to support networks of domestic servants; Morris (2005) in documenting the extended networks of households in Leeds). Instead the use of the term in this research takes inspiration from the new mobilities literature, in which networks are linked closely with movement as a crucial element of ‘mobility’. The importance of ‘meetings’ in mobilities literature has been recently highlighted by Urry (in Adey & Bissell, 2010) who suggested that an understanding of why meetings between individuals occur should be an important element of mobilities research; contextualising the desire to be mobile.

In this chapter, the scale of networking which occurred during the Season will be highlighted, alongside an understanding of the importance of forging particular ‘appropriate networks’ at these events. This discussion in part details the way in which these ‘appropriate networks’ lacked definition, leading to blurred boundaries of social interaction between different circles of Society. The concept of network capital is then introduced to allow for an analysis of the reasons behind attendance at the events of the Season. The strict regulation placed upon networking during the Season is then discussed through the contrasting roles of the Society hostess and the chaperone, leading to the drawing of several key conclusions at the end of the chapter.

## The Scale of Networking Events Held

Despite the practices of 'paying calls' (discussed in Chapter 2) and driving along Rotten Row in Hyde Park, the official social events of the Season (termed 'status theatres' by Horn, 1991) were the primary locations for networking during the period. These events were wide ranging in type, from full balls, to concerts, exhibitions, small dinners and breakfasts<sup>14</sup>, largely following the same pattern every year. So much so that Sproule (1978) speculated that members of the aristocracy could predict the patterns of their lives during the Season before they had even arrived in London. An analysis of the 'Fashionable arrangements for the Week' column published in the pages of *The Morning Post* throughout the nineteenth century gives some indication of the number of events which may have been attended. Obviously subject to the receipt of an invitation, the engagements advertised in the newspaper were those most highly anticipated, often the largest, and therefore the events which provided the most chance of forging a connection. These events lists should only be a guide, however, because there would have been many hundreds of smaller gatherings taking place which would not have been published in this way. For the week beginning 7<sup>th</sup> June 1830, for instance, there were advertised two Fete's (an outdoor party), five balls, two parties, one afternoon party, one assembly and two concerts. This intensity of social events remained unwavering throughout the century. The week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> June 1860 saw four balls (one of which was held at Almack's, a highlight of the social calendar), six concerts, one assembly and one day at the Ascot races. Fast forward thirty years and the week beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1890 was relatively similar: two balls, one afternoon party, two concerts, four dances, two evening parties and one grand fancy bazaar. Each event would have operated to a different format, requiring different dress, etiquette, routine behaviours and involving different numbers of people. An afternoon party or musical evening might have involved less than one hundred people, fewer opportunities to meet new networks yet a more intimate setting in which to secure one. Contrast this with the ballroom at Almack's which had a 17,000 person capacity; the opportunities to network here were endless, yet time to impress each potential alliance was limited (Chancellor, 1922).

## The Scale of Networking Occurring

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<sup>14</sup> Evans & Evans (1976) describe a 'breakfast party' as a formal meal occurring in the morning, which was especially popular amongst men in politics during the nineteenth century.

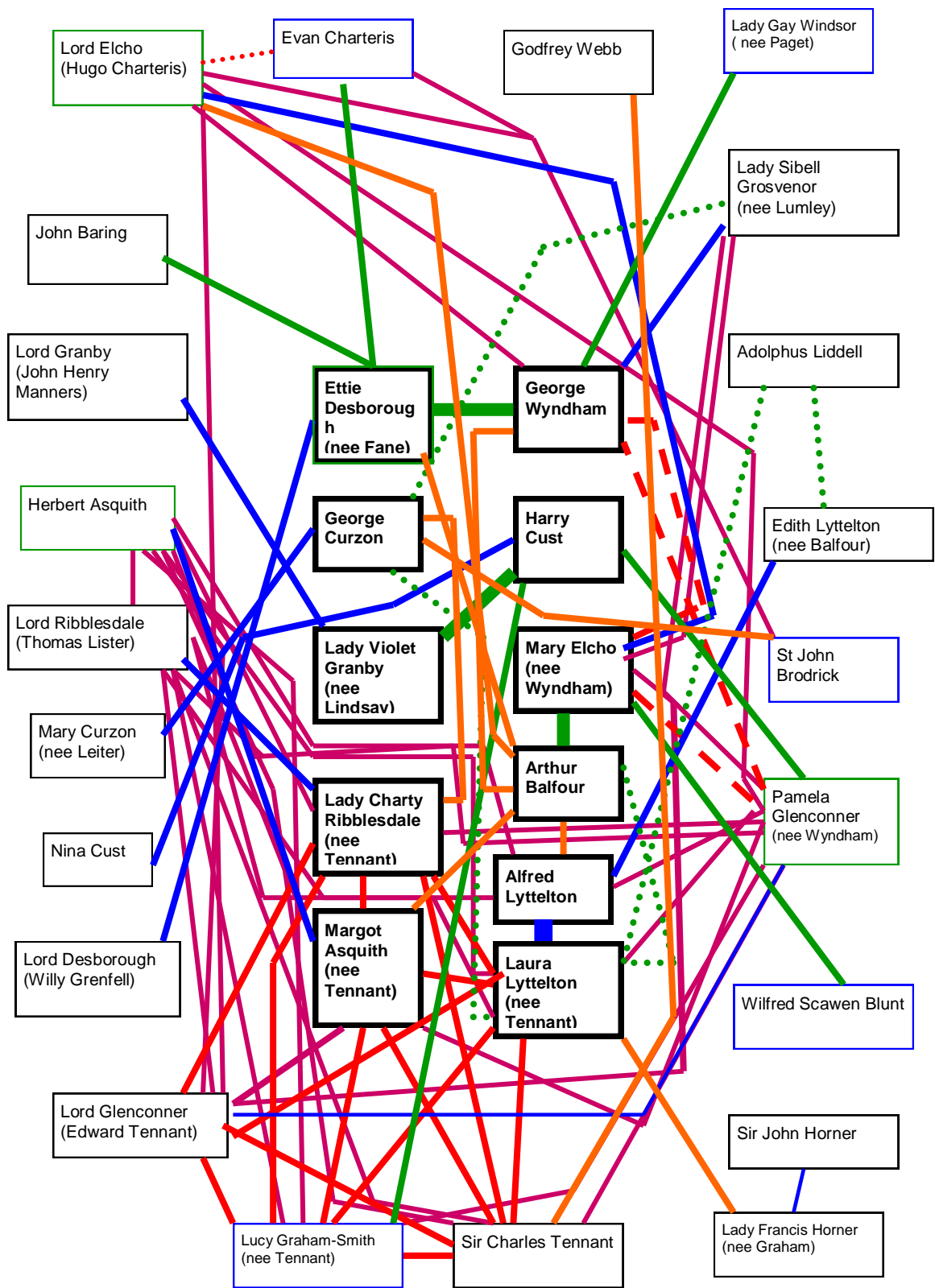
The events of the Season provided the locations and opportunities for frequent networking to occur, making this level of connection a possibility. Evidence that these spaces were utilised by those participating in the Season can be found in a variety of sources, including ball attendance lists which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, as well as biographical sources. The future Duchess of Marlborough was so exhausted by the level of social engagements completed during her first Season, that upon leaving London in August she slept for twenty four hours without waking (Balsan, 1953). A further example that networking occurred during the Season can be found in an analysis of 'The Souls'. The Souls were a late Victorian, aristocratic clique who participated in the Season alongside one another. Members of this group ranged in age and marital status, with many members stemming from the connections forged between eleven close friends who formed what Lambert referred to as the 'inner souls' (represented in the centre of diagram (Figure 7))(Lambert, 1984; Jalland, 1986). Whilst the Souls participated in the events of the Season, the beliefs held by many in this elite circle contrasted with societal norms of the time. Gender distinctions were rejected by the group, as were the strict codes of etiquette which governed Society at the time (Asquith, 1920). Despite the somewhat atypical nature of these participants in the Season, the networking which existed between them is illustrative of the level of connection which existed between members of all the elite participating in the Season. These extensive connections are demonstrated in Figure 7.

The differing colours assigned to these connections reflect the differing nature of the networks which occurred between them: familial ties, marriages between members, relations through these marriages, documented affairs and close friendships<sup>15</sup>. What the network map reveals is the number of dense networks of reciprocal connections which occur between these participants in the Season, providing evidence that the social interaction which the Season was designed to enable did occur during the period. Figure 7 also reveals the differing networks which were forged. It is important to note that in a discussion of 'networks' or 'connections' these terms refer to the overarching process of securing and maintaining a contact. Within these terms exists a wide variety of different types of relationships, all equally as significant in shaping an individual's experiences of the Season in a variety of different ways. This appreciation for the differences between networks echoes the

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<sup>15</sup> Dashed and dotted lines in Figure 7 denote different family groupings (red lines) and suspected affairs (green dotted lines).

work of Law (2006) and Conradson & Latham (2007) who suggested that connections must not be viewed as single bounded entities, but instead as multiple flows co-existing between the same group of individuals. The example of the Souls provides a clear historical example for the contemporary networking described by these mobilities scholars and serves to highlight the different types of networks which were forged during the Season.



**Key**

- Family connections
- Known affairs
- Friendships
- Marriages
- Relations through marriage

Figure 7: The documented connections existing between the Souls (source: Lambert, 1984; Jalland, 1986; Perkin, 1989).

## The context of networking during the Season

The importance of networks during the Season should not be understated. The forging of alliances, as discussed in Chapter 2, allowed for the strengthening of power and wealth by elite families in Society, enabling their status to be concentrated, elevated or secured. For aristocratic families, networking would occur to either secure or search for an appropriate marriage partner for their children, in particular their daughters, as well as for political purposes and job security; many also held positions in Parliament and government. For those wishing to enter Society, or garner a surer or wealthier footing in it, networking provided the opportunity to be seen, to meet with influential people in upper circles and to secure further invitations to future events. Mary Cornwallis-West summarised this opportunity succinctly in her recollections: “I was never told that I must marry rank and money, but I think it must always have been an understood thing that I should do so, because, for our position and the scale on which we lived, we were poor” (Chapman-Huston, 1950, p. 14). The necessity to forge desirable connections, as described above, was particularly pressured for the families of many debutantes, as marriage was an expected path for females in Society. This expectation is best illustrated by Victorian fiction, in which unmarried women are stereotyped and ridiculed as social failures. The loneliness of spinsterhood is characterised by Julia in Thackeray’s *The Newcomes* in which Julia: “being always at home, and under her mother’s eyes...was the typical old lady’s victim, her pin cushion” (1855, p. 65). Likewise, Mr Osborne in *Vanity Fair* taunted his middle-aged spinster daughter, who eventually resigned herself to her status as a “lonely, miserable, persecuted, old maid” (1848, p. 305).

The importance of a suitable marriage for those in Society, particularly during the first half of the nineteenth century, made the quality of the connection important. A potential contact needed to have status, to be relatively wealthy and healthy and, most importantly, needed to belong to a family (ideally aristocratic) with connections and standing in the Season without tarnished reputation (Jalland, 1986). Once a person of this calibre had been identified, and initial contacts made through the processes of introductions and calling (a ritual discussed in greater detail in chapter 2), the social events of the Season provided a platform upon which the connection was maintained. The annual coming together of society allowed for networks made in previous Seasons and subsequently maintained at a distance throughout the rest

of the year, to be reaffirmed or rejected if no longer appropriate, enabled by the mobility discussed in Chapter 5.

### Blurred Boundaries of Social Interaction

Chapter 2 examined the value Society placed on aristocratic status, wealth and power during the nineteenth century. These qualities were representative, therefore, of the most acceptable networks forged during the Season. As a result, a tiered system was created. Those who possessed the above qualities to the greatest extent were those most desired in terms of network formation. These individuals formed an upper tier, around which groups of participants formed, based on their slowly diminishing levels of networking quality. This expression of the Season as a series of tiers underpins much existing literature regarding the Season (Turner, 1954; Sproule, 1978; Inwood, 1998), scholarship which is supported by the etiquette books of the period. *Manners and Tone of Good Society* (1879) contains a chapter on the pronunciation of certain surnames, so that those in lower social tiers would be certain of the correct pronunciation of the names of those in the highest tier of Society. The guide declared that: “the mispronunciation of certain surnames falls unpleasantly upon the educated ear and agues unfavourably the social position of the offender”, before advising that ‘Cowper’, the surname of a powerful Almack’s hostess, should be pronounced ‘Cou-per’ (Anon, 1879, p. 172-3). *The Ladies Pocket Book of Etiquette* (1840) similarly reveals the tiered nature of Society at the time of its publication in advising arrival at events: “The hours for the arrival of guests at an evening party varies in different circles, from 9-12 are the most fashionable, in this you will be guided by the custom of the circle in which you move” (p. 57). This tiered system of the social elite, and the rituals and processes which were in place to sustain these divisions, meant that in effect the Season operated in several different spheres (Davidoff, 1973; Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). At the core of the Season, often geographically located in the centre of Mayfair between Oxford Street and Piccadilly, the most powerful in Society participated in advantageous and elite events. They engaged in interaction with one another, preserving their status at the top of the social ladder. Further down the ladder, those people with less status, participating in the Season in the hope of joining the elite tier, would network with one another at balls of less significance, hosted by less prominent Society ladies. These tiers of Society represented themselves in the circles of the Season, emanating from the core in Mayfair and the heart of the social elite.

Whilst the tiered model depicted in existing literature and in etiquette books from the period is useful in understanding both the importance of networking to those participating, and in illustrating the segregated nature of society at the time, the model masks the blurred interactions between these tiers which occurred throughout the Season. The blurred nature of networking in general has been discussed by Sheller (2004) who called for a description of these connections between individuals as a 'gel', suggesting that this better reflected the blurred boundaries of social interaction. In this messy gel, different actors are in touch with many different people, in different ways, and at varying levels of intensity. Not all networks are the same, some occur fleetingly, whereas some remain constant. Some are important for the entire duration of life; others fluctuate in their significance over time. Sheller's appreciation of the differing nature of networks is a concept which can also be applied to the networks studied in this thesis. The existence of the this tiered system of the Season must be combined with the metaphor of a gel to appreciate that the boundaries between these tiers were blurred, crossovers occurred and interaction amongst all participants of the Season would have occurred in the public spaces of the West End, in the park and on the street.

The differentiated networking of members of the Season can be examined in Figure 8. Using the ball attendance lists discussed in Chapter 4, the attendees of two balls occurring during the same evening (May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1862) were recorded, and their addresses in London located using *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* for 1862. The first ball was held by the Ladies Cornwallis, longstanding society hostesses, at their home in Charles Street, off Berkeley Square at the heart of the West End. The second ball was held by Mrs Ram, an untitled lady who resided at 26, Prince's Gate in Kensington, some distance from the heart of the Season.

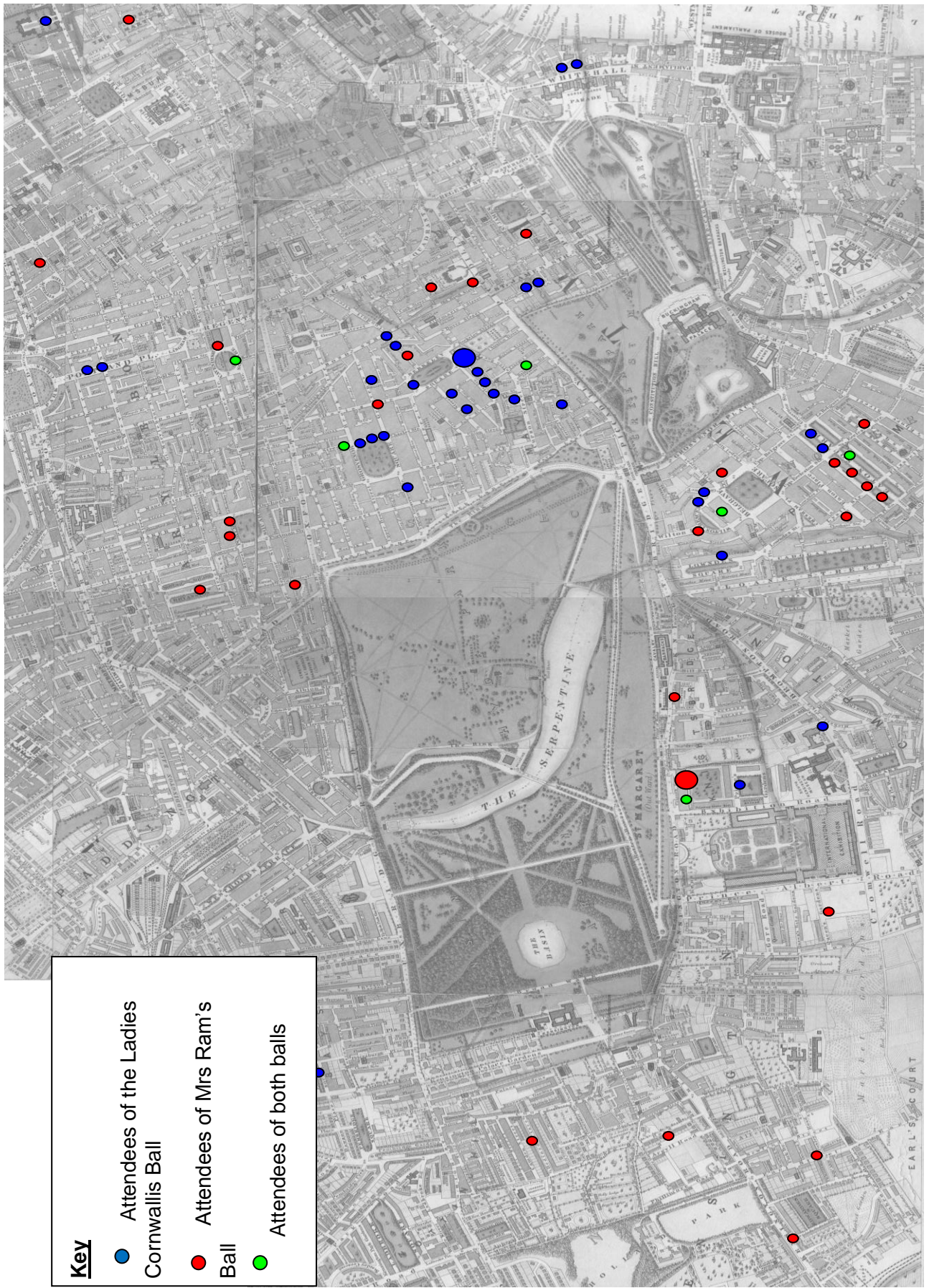


Figure 8: Map depicting the home addresses of all those recorded as having attended a ball on 23rd May 1862 (base map reproduced with permission from Anthony Craig)

The home addresses of all those included in *The Morning Post* as having attended the ball in Charles Street were plotted in blue dots, and those listed as having attended Mrs Ram's ball plotted in red dots<sup>16</sup>. Any individuals or families attending both balls, representing these blurred social interactions discussed by Sheller (2004) are indicated by a green dot. The map shows that the ball held by the Ladies Cornwallis was generally attended by people living in much closer proximity to the hostess than the attendees of Mrs Ram's ball. Due to the location of the Ladies Cornwallis in Charles Street at the heart of Mayfair, most of those attending their ball were also located at the heart of the Season in a closed core of interaction. Those attending Mrs Ram's ball were generally located on the edges of the West End, in less fashionable areas (Atkins, 1990), and travelled longer distances to reach the ball. In the model of the spheres of societal interaction, those attending Mrs Ram's ball clearly form a wider sphere on the edges of Society, supporting the evidence found in the etiquette books from the period. Sheller's messy social spaces theory comes into play in this analysis, however, because six individuals or families attended both balls. To attend both balls meant that an invitation was received for both the more elite gathering, and the one given towards the fringes of the Society. The number of people who attended both, several of whom from the heart of Mayfair, bears witness to the messy nature of these social interactions.

Whilst it could have been predicted that the social spheres witnessed in Figure 8 occurred (the tiered system of society at the time is widely documented in the literature (Margetson, 1980; Beckett, 1986; Lieven, 1992)), the blurred nature of these boundaries is significant. The Season was not simply a case of conforming to the boundary into which one fell. Figure 8 illustrates that mixing between these 'boundaries' occurred, leading to a Season full of messy, non-standard interactions between different people in Society.

### **The concept of Network Capital**

Sheller's (2004) concept of messy social spaces was used above to analyse the blurred boundaries of social interaction occurring during the Season, however, this is not the only mobilities scholarship which is useful in explaining the practices of

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<sup>16</sup> As discussed in Chapter 4, it is clear that ball attendance lists published in *The Morning Post* newspaper did not provide a complete list of all those attending. Whilst this data still represents the larger trends occurring during the Season, it should be noted that the numbers of people portrayed as attending balls on 23rd May 1862 are far lower than the actual number of people who would typically be present at a ball.

networking which occurred. The practice of forging and reaffirming connections, the primary activity of the Season, can be explained through the ideas of scholars such as Granovetter, whose work has been adopted by more contemporary mobilities scholars. Granovetter (1973, 1983) proposed the theory of 'weak ties' to explain the connections between individuals. Granovetter's concept of 'weak ties' has been used in this research because not only has it been identified as a useful concept by many scholars engaging in contemporary networks, but it is highly applicable to the coming together of networks which existed during the Season. Granovetter suggested that social networks involve many 'weak ties' between different people, generating what mobilities scholars have termed 'small worlds' (Urry, 2004). He carried out this research in relation to job hunting and concluded that those unemployed with more 'weak ties' of acquaintance were more successful in finding work. Mobilities scholars have adopted this principle (see Urry, 2007 for a clear example), to suggest that people who actively network to collect and maintain these 'weak ties', as seen during the events of the Season, will be the most successful socially, have the most contacts to call upon and have social power over those people who have fewer networks.

Urry (2007) used Granovetter's concept to introduce the idea of 'network capital', a principle defined as: "the capacity to engender and sustain social relations with those people who are not necessarily proximate and which generates emotional, financial and practical benefit" (Urry, 2007, p. 197). The concept of network capital is key to the Season because it summarises both the period's ultimate goal and internal structure. Those with the most network capital, people who were the most connected, were likely to also be those with the most power to control the events of the Season, the most likely to be able to host balls, and the most able to acquire new advantageous contacts through their already wide web of connections. Those with a lower level of network capital, people with fewer connections to other participants, would have received fewer invitations to events, making it more difficult to forge new connections of any kind, let alone advantageous ones. Acquiring this network capital discussed by Urry was therefore the primary goal of the Season, and hence why understanding the networking practices of the period is important for an analysis of the phenomenon as a whole.

Viewing the Season in relation to network capital marks a departure away from previous research on the period in two main respects. Firstly, it prompts an explanation of the behaviour of those participating, foregrounding the need to

understand specific acts of connection. This level of consideration regarding the forging of individual connections is largely missing from past research. Through engaging more specifically in the process of network formation, it is possible to account for the prominence and importance of the Season in the lives of the upper classes. Secondly, using network capital as a concept illustrates the significance of these acts of networking in the nineteenth century. The theory of network capital, devised as a result of contemporary situations, can be applied successfully to a period occurring 200 years previously, testament to the uncharacteristic mobility and connected nature of this elite group in society. This also provides evidence for Pooley et al's (2006) call for an appreciation of the historical moments of mobility. Those participating in the Season displayed the same characteristics as the most mobile and connected members of today's society, yet set against the backdrop of Victorian Britain in which the vast majority of the population were confined to their immediate local community.

### Co-presence

Using the concept of network capital also allows an application of the concept of 'co-presence', the act of refreshing this network capital. The coming together of participants in the ballrooms of the Season is illustrative of this concept of co-presence, that interacting physically with others is fundamental to network capital. Whilst Boden and Molotch's (1994) theory may be grounded in the present, in a time when the alternative to co-presence is the virtual travel provided by the internet, their theory has relevance to the Season. Boden & Molotch (1994) draw on the work of Simmel introduced, in Chapter 3, to suggest that despite the contemporary reliance upon communications technology, co-present interaction remains the fundamental mode of human intercourse. In their work, co-presence is understood as 'thick' with information, both in terms of speech and bodily action. Taken up by scholars such as Larsen et al (2006) in a discussion of mobilities, this co-presence is seen as fundamental to the maintenance of networks. Connections, they argued, could not function over long distances without occasionally being 'activated' through co-present meetings. This art of coming together, of engaging in co-present interaction, explains the most fundamental reason for the existence of the Season. Spread throughout the country for the majority of the year, the annual migration to London for several months allowed for this co-present refreshing of contacts to occur, reaffirming power and social status. The sustaining of network capital through co-present interaction was the primary reason the Season existed at all, and

why it was so important to so many people in Society throughout the nineteenth century.

### The Ballroom, through the eyes of Network Capital

In order to illustrate the capabilities of the concept of network capital for understanding the Season, networking during the period has been analysed through this theoretical lens. The ultimate setting for co-present network formation during the Season was the ballroom. A ball lasted for many hours, there was a substantial number of potential contacts owing to the large numbers of participants invited and the networking practices of the ballroom, such as performing dances and adhering to practices of etiquette, were designed to aid the goal of networking.



Plate 3: A section of The Morning Post newspaper on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1862 illustrating the ball attendance lists published daily.

In order to understand more fully the actual amount of networking which occurred during a Season, ball attendance during the Season of 1862 has been analysed. This revealed that, according to *The Morning Post*, 2044 people attended the 82 balls that were recorded as having taken place during the 1862 Season<sup>17</sup>. It is important to note at this stage that these figures do not record the number of times a participant would have wished to attend a ball, this figure in some cases would have been much higher, but only the number of times an invitation was given and subsequently accepted. It is also important to note that those attending most frequently are not only those most keen to network, but also those who were invited most often. There may of course have been others invited with the same frequency who declined invitations. This analysis of attendance in the ballroom was undertaken to enable an understanding of why networking took place. Much of the existing literature regarding the Season barely mentions the formation of connections between participants in great detail, treating all such alliances as uniform in type and purpose. Instead, an analysis of these connections follows the practices of mobilities scholars, where networks are interrogated in research carried out. Rather than assuming the nature of networks, mobilities theory questions the significance, role and motive behind the forging of connections (Urry, 2007; Larsen et al, 2006).

An analysis of these ball attendance figures compiled for 1862 reveals that 56 people and families attended over 20 balls during this Season<sup>18</sup>. Of these, the top networker was Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury<sup>19</sup>, who attended 41 balls, the equivalent of attending a ball every two days throughout the Season. To understand the context behind these frequent acts of connecting, it is necessary to investigate the reasons why individuals may have required network capital. Scholars (such as Kesselring (2006) in relation to commuting, Ellegård & Vilhelmson (2004) in relation to household movement and Larsen et al (2006) in terms of friendship connections), have utilised the concept of network capital in this way. Of the 56 families or

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<sup>17</sup> *The Morning Post* was chosen to complete this analysis following an audit of all the newspapers and periodicals published in London during the 1860s. Those which document events taking place during the Season were compared with one another, and the comprehensive nature of this coverage was analysed. *The Morning Post* provided the most comprehensive coverage of events taking place during the Season, and it for this reason that this publication has been relied upon heavily as a source for this research project.

<sup>18</sup> Twenty ball attendances in a single Season has been used to represent a high degree of networking because this figure correlates with the top fifty families or individuals networking in the 1862 Season. The fifty most frequent networkers all participated in at least twenty balls, and hence why this figure has been used as a marker of this high level of attendance.

<sup>19</sup> Note: as created with this spelling of 'Ailesbury' in 1821 (*Vacher's Parliamentary Companion*, No. 1086, June 1997).

individuals in this group, 17 families were accompanying at least one debutante daughter, 8 were single men of varying ages, 11 families had political connections in the Season, and 4 participants appeared to attend for purely social reasons. This categorisation is significant, because much literature refers to the Season as simply a 'marriage market' (MacColl & Wallace, 1989; Perkin, 1989; Inwood, 1998). Delving into the lives of those attending events most frequently reveals that this is not the case.

### *Networking for companionship*

The differing categorisations of those most frequently networking can be explained by understanding their social situations, their reasons for acquiring network capital. Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury was a widow, aged 53 in 1862. She did not chaperone any family members or friends during the Season, attending alone each of the 41 balls whose invitations she accepted. Her only son Charles had married well two years previously and she had no obvious link to politics. Her son and daughter in law, Augusta Seymour, attended 6 balls during the 1862 Season. No extant information points to a particular necessity behind her frequent networking, other than an opportunity to see her family and, presumably, her friends. In the 1861 census she is recorded as living alone at her property on Hertford Street, in central Mayfair. From this combination of information, it is possible to conclude that the Marchioness of Ailesbury took part in the Season with such frenetic energy for a purely social benefit. This view is supported by biographical sources. Lady Forbes (1922) described her as a Lady who "went everywhere and knew everything" (p. 40), confirming her attendance at events during the Season by stating that "it was rare indeed for her to lunch or dine in her own home" (p. 40). This desire to network for companionship may in part be explained by the recollections of Lady Georgiana Peel, who revealed that: "she [Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury] had lived in complete seclusion at Ham House. The story was that she was never known to venture beyond the gardens or park. When she married, came a complete change; she bounded, all at once, unto a social whirl of society and gaiety. No party was complete without her commanding presence and great deep voice, which might be mistaken for that of a man" (Peel, 1920, p. 188-9). Piecing this biographical material together enables a conclusion to be drawn, that the Season was not necessarily used for a specific purpose, but instead served a purely social function. This contrasts sharply with the portrayal of the period in the work of scholars such as

Inwood (1998) and Paterson (2008) who depicted the Season as a 'marriage market' with no alternative function.

### *Networking to marry*

This rather serene participation in the Season can be contrasted with the potentially desperate experiences of the Countess Dowager of Lichfield and her daughter Lady Gwendolena Anson who attended 23 balls together. The countess was a widow, her husband and Gwendolena's father having died in 1854 (*Burke's Peerage*). Of all her seven children, Gwendolena was the second eldest, aged at least 40 and the only one unmarried in 1862. This would no doubt have caused anxiety for a 'typical' family: Mary Paley Marshall noted that "the notion was common that if a girl did not marry or at any rate become engaged by twenty she was not likely to marry at all" (Marshall, 1947, p. 10). The Countess Dowager of Lichfield's widowed status (which in many cases led to financial difficulty) and advancing age (she was at least in her early 60s) suggest that she attended so regularly in an attempt to find her remaining unmarried daughter a husband as quickly as possible. She was relatively successful; Gwendolena married Nicholas O'Shee in April 1865.

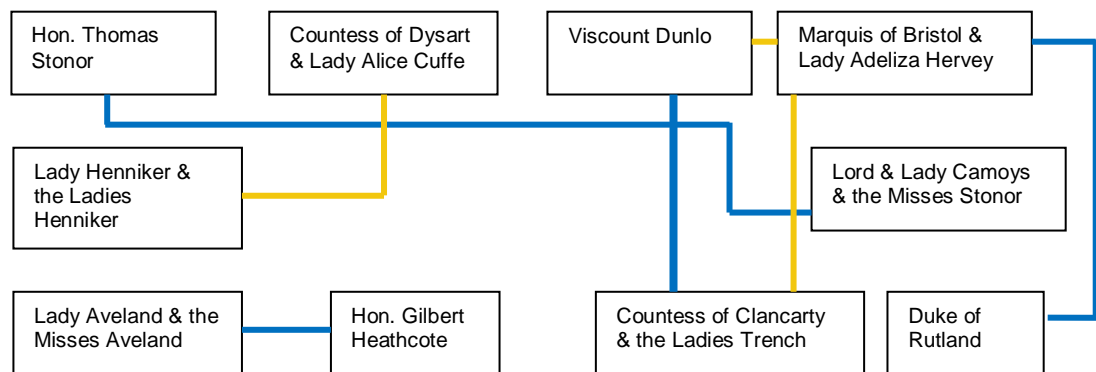
### *Networking for political gain*

Political links to the Season amongst the men networking most frequently are also identifiable. The Hon. Vesey Dawson, who attended 23 times, was 20 in 1862. This was generally considered to be too young an age for a gentleman to be seriously considering marriage (Perkin, 1989)( a statement supported by his eventual marriage at the age of 40 to Julia Wombwell, daughter of Sir George Orby Wombwell, a regular attendee of the 1862 Season). Clues to his attendance can be found in the records of his election as the M.P. for Monaghan, Ireland in 1865 (*Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide*). Ballrooms were political hothouses as well as marriage markets, and, as discussed in Chapter 2, many careers were furthered in the ballroom; the Hon. Vesey Dawson may well have been capitalising upon this with frequent networking during the Season.

### *The significance of family during networking events*

In analysing those attending balls most frequently during the 1862 Season, previously unseen connections between these participants emerge. The familial ties

between many of those attending frequently are complex, and can be illustrated using information regarding these top attendees (as illustrated by the blue lines in Figure 9). As the diagram below shows, several of the top attendees were eventually linked by marriage (indicated by yellow lines in Figure 9).



*Figure 9: The familial connections existing between the most frequent ball attendees of the 1862 Season.*

The Countess of Dysart's daughter Lady Alice Cuffe married Lady Henniker's son Richard, whilst the Countess of Clancarty's son married Lady Adeliza Hervey, the daughter of the Marquis of Bristol in 1864. The diagram also reveals that there were many familial connections present amongst the top attendees. Uncles, brothers, husbands, sons, cousins and step-daughters are relations all represented amongst top attendees. The number of familial ties witnessed in the ballrooms of the Season is significant, because, not only do such familial links offer networking opportunities and support in the ballroom in terms of making connections, they also have the potential to influence the networking fortunes of others. Extended familial ties present in the ballroom had exclusionary potential, whether intended or otherwise. Debutantes without the means to access a ready-made network of familial connections would have been excluded from these powerful reciprocal support systems. The importance of familial ties is investigated in more detail in Appendix 1, in which biographical material is used to highlight the affect different family circumstance had on experiences of the Season.

Investigating the reasons behind the desire for attendance in terms of network capital is significant because it reveals that the Season was used by participants for a range of purposes, from marriage to political manoeuvring. The forging and maintaining of contacts was about more than merely finding a marriage, as much of the literature about the Season would suggest (Sproule, 1978; Perkin, 1989; Inwood, 1998; Rendell, 2002). Throughout the lives of those participating in the Season, at every age and life stage, it provided them with opportunities; from political connections to social gatherings. The only uniting factor throughout a lifespan of engagement with the Season was that these opportunities all involved forging or maintaining connections. The youngest top attendee, Lady Adeliza Hervey aged 19 and the oldest, Sir Roderick Murchison aged 70, may have been at very different stages in their lives, yet both were networking at roughly the same rate, in the same social spaces. The findings in this research mirror the work of Bender (2006) who suggested that “the same place at the same moment will be experienced differently by different people” (p. 303). These people may have had different aims when entering these spaces, yet by attending, all displayed the same desire for network capital through moments of co-present interaction. Despite different social circumstances and ages, the desire to network remained throughout the lives of those participating. This point marks a significant departure away from previous interpretations of the Season, in which multiple uses of the Season are absent from discussions.

### **Regulating Network Formation: The Society Hostess**

So far in this chapter, the acquisition of network capital through acts of co-present interaction has been depicted as a largely unregulated and free process. Co-present meetings during the Season were far from open events, however. In order to ensure that the networking opportunities present at events were of the calibre required by Society (as discussed earlier in this chapter), these co-present situations were subject to strict regulation. Strict societal gates were put in place to ensure this regulation was upheld, a process which defined the Season. The gatekeepers of this operation took the form of the host or more commonly hostess<sup>20</sup>, who ensured this regulation through the system of invitations. As highlighted in Chapter

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<sup>20</sup> Whilst there were some hosts of events during the Season, particularly in diplomatic circles and gatherings, the vast majority of events were organised by hostesses. For this reason, in general discussion these gatekeepers of events will be referred to as hostesses rather than hosts.

2, balls could not be attended without the receipt of an invitation from the hostess of the ball in question. Notices published in the newspapers of the time alerted participants of the Season to the dispatch date of these invitations. If an invitation failed to arrive on the day, it was clear that their connection was not sought by the hostess. This gave Society hostesses enormous power to influence the experiences of a Season, the fortunes of many hundreds of participants rested in the hands of these few influential women.

Hostesses were women who had the money to participate in the Season, who possessed a big enough ballroom to host a ball and who had enough connections and status to ensure that people would accept their invitations (*Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* (1871)). Through their reputation alone, they needed to guarantee that attendance would be worthwhile, that the ball was not only enjoyable but fruitful in terms of networking potential (*Manners and Rules of Good Society*, 1887)). The power afforded to women during the Season is significant because it occurred at a time when women were still unequal to men legally. Without the right to vote or own property and having unequal rights to divorce, the lives of women in general during the century were highly constrained (Picard, 2005). This lack of power can be contrasted with the social power exercised by hostesses during the Season. The Season brought together some of the world's wealthiest and most influential people, all attempting to forge connections with one another to sustain and multiply this power and wealth. Yet those at the helm of this power-making machine were women; it was the Society Hostesses who held the key to the successes of those wealthy and powerful people wishing to participate in the Season (Davidoff, 1973; Jalland, 1986; Horn, 1992). An appreciation for the powerful role some women played in the Season mirrors the work of scholars such as Domosh (1996, 1998a, 1998b, 2001) and Thomas (2004, 2007) whose research has worked towards negating the historical view of women as subordinated during the nineteenth century. Therefore, this research on the Season and the important role hostesses played in the practices of the period aligns itself with the work of these scholars in displaying a contrasting view of gender roles during the nineteenth century.

Not only did a ball hostess perform an important role for Society in acting as a gate-keeper, maintaining the quality of the contacts available in the ballroom, but she also acted as a political agent. As illustrated in the previous section of this chapter, many used the Season for political gain. The result of this connection between the

Season and politics meant that many hostesses were also the wives of significant political figures, whose balls also served as arenas for political manoeuvring. Being married to a leading Society lady was a bonus for politicians during the period. Working together, they could control which other political figures were invited to their balls, therefore controlling the discussions and political alliances which could occur under the guise of a social gathering (Jalland, 1986). They may not have sat on the front benches of the Houses of Parliament during the nineteenth century, but politics in Britain at the time was heavily influenced by the networking of these powerful women. Viscountess Palmerston was credited with ensuring her husband's political success, hosting glamorous parties most evenings at their residence in Piccadilly and inviting 'impressionable young men' (Ogilvy, 1922). Her success as a hostess was contrasted with the wife of Palmerston's main rival for the Liberal Party leadership during the 1860s, Lord John Russell (whose family is analysed in greater detail in Appendix 1). The Russell's did not enjoy large gatherings and instead lived away from Mayfair at Pembroke Lodge in Richmond Park, away from the politically influential socialising which occurred at the Palmerston's' (MacCarthy & Russell, 1910). Other figures did rival Lady Palmerston's influence, however. Such was Lady Londonderry's political involvement that Austen Chamberlain maintained he could judge the 'state of his own political fortunes' by the number of fingers, ranging from two to ten, which were extended to him by the hostess when he arrived (Horn, 1991).

#### *Hosting Almack's: The Hostess as a network hub*

The influence of the hostess over the capacity of participants to gain network capital was displayed most clearly at Almack's, which remained at the heart of the Season until the last decades of the nineteenth century<sup>21</sup>. This was the most anticipated (Wilson, 2009) ball of the Season, organised by the most revered of hostesses, who formed the 'government of Almack's', as termed by Lady Clementina Davies in 1872, and held at the Assembly Rooms in St James's. It was one of the largest and most rigorously policed networking events in the social calendar. Taking place every Wednesday night during the Season, attendance was by ticket only, known as 'vouchers of admission', which could be purchased from one of the ten Almack's hostesses, who then made a judgement about the suitability of the request before

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<sup>21</sup> The expansion of the Season discussed in Chapter 2 and witnessed during the latter stages of the nineteenth century rendered Almack's strict codes of entry based on aristocratic pedigree obsolete (see Wilson, 2009).

issuing (Moers, 1960). Moers declared that tickets to Almack's were "harder to secure than a peerage. You couldn't buy your way in, you had to be scrutinized dissected, genealogized and finally accepted by the Lady Patronesses whose word was law" (1960, p. 43). Such was the exclusivity exhibited by the organisers of Almack's that the weekly ball was known as "the seventh heaven of the fashionable world" (Moers, 1960, p. 43). To host Almack's was to have reached the pinnacle of Society; it was the networking event deemed most important and the one to which only the most elite attended (Rendell, 2002). The status of the women hosting Almack's is best illustrated by the dedication included at the beginning of Stanhope's *Almack's: A Novel* (1826):

To that most distinguished and despotic  
CONCLAVE  
Composed of their High Mightinesses  
The Lady Patronesses of the balls at  
ALMACK'S  
The rulers of fashion, the arbiters of Taste  
The leaders of ton, and makers of manners  
Whose sovereign sway over 'the world' of London has  
Long been established on the firmest basis,  
Whose decrees are laws, and from whose judgement there is no appeal....

The quote above signifies clearly the importance of these women in the lives of those participating in the Season. Viewing the connections of these women in terms of network capital (Urry, 2007), however, allows for the true influence of these hostesses to be revealed. Using notices published in *The Morning Post* which revealed the ten ladies at the helm of this ballroom in 1862, Table 3 has been constructed.

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Ball Attendance in 1862</u>
<b>Marchioness of Londonderry</b>	62	Widowed	37 Grosvenor Square	11
<b>Marchioness of Clanricarde</b>	58	Married	(not known)	4
<b>Countess of Derby</b>	57	Married	23 St James's Square	8
<b>Countess of Shaftesbury</b>	52	Married	24 Grosvenor Square	22
<b>Countess of Kinnoull</b>	58	Married	23 Rutland Gate	20
<b>Countess Dowager of Lichfield</b>	61	Widowed	25 Hill Street	23
<b>Viscountess Palmerston</b>	75	Married	94 Piccadilly	16
<b>Viscountess Combermere</b>	50	Married	28 Belgrave Square	4
<b>Lady Aveland</b>	53	Married	12 Belgrave Square	28
<b>Lady Egerton of Tatton</b>	51	Married	7 St James's Square	28

*Table 3: The Almack's Hostesses of the 1862 Season.*

Of the ten lady patronesses in 1862, all were over the age of 50 (Viscountess Palmerston was the oldest at 75), and all apart from two were married, the others being widowed. Of all their children, only two were unmarried daughters, signalling that for many of the hostesses their personal networking to ensure a daughters marriage had been completed some years previously (*Burke's Peerage*).

Significantly, seven out of the ten women had a direct link to the politics of the period, representing both political parties, several with connections to Prime Ministers. All the hostesses would have been joined in the 1862 Season by family members, many of whom appear in the ball attendance lists for the year; indeed Viscountess Palmerston's daughter, the Countess of Shaftesbury, was also an Almack's hostess. These patronesses were connected spatially: two lived in Grosvenor Square, two lived in St James's Square and two lived in Belgrave Square, all three locations at the geographical centre of Mayfair (and as demonstrated by Figure 13, all three centres of networking during the 1862 Season).

These women were powerful, to be rejected by the Almack's hostesses was a major dent in the networking chances of those participating, as the following lines of the

poem *Advice to Julia* by Henry Luttrell suggested: “If once to Almack’s you belong. Like monarchs, you can do no wrong; But banished thence on Wednesday night, By Jove, you can do nothing right” (Luttrell, 1820, p. 12). The significance of this group of ten women lay in their high level of network capital. All were well connected with many weak ties (Granovetter (1983); they knew a lot of people participating in the Season, and they also had a significant number of strong familial ties to those in the very uppermost tier of Society. Together, these women acted as root points in the Season, to which it was important to be connected to ensure co-present participation at Almack’s. This hierarchical model can be explained through the concept of ‘network hubs’. The use of this term takes inspiration from the work of Urry (2007) who constructed several contrasting models of networking, one of which he termed ‘hub networks’ “where important relationships move through a central hub or a very small number of hubs. In this case being near the hub is highly valued” (2007, p. 217). Other models of networking, the linear model, and the clustering model (in which all networks have equal significance) were rejected in favour of the concept of network hubs because this model is most significant in the context of the Almack’s hostesses. The concept allows the prominent position of these women, and the heightened significance of securing their contact, to be contextualised. Acting as the central point in a hub afforded these women power during the Season to manipulate the networking capital of those participating in networking events, significant because network capital was discussed earlier in this chapter as the primary fuel for the continued existence of the Season during the nineteenth century. Whilst Urry established his theory based on the trading floors of the London stock market, the theory is no less relevant in this historical setting, owing to the power relations which existed during the period.

The Season, therefore, was not merely formed by and run according to the rules of Society; it was facilitated by those at the very centre of it. The power contained at the centre of the network hub explains why these women were so successfully able to manipulate the Seasons of those participating. Using the work of Gladwell (2000) it can be seen that powerful connectors (those at the centre of a network hub) play a pivotal role in how systems ‘tip’ from one condition to another. In the context of the Season, Almack’s hostesses, owing to their powerful position and the importance of Almack’s to Society, were able to affect networking activities stretching far beyond their remit of simply hosting Almack’s. Urry (2007) has described this situation in more detail, through the use of Buchannan (2002) and Watts (2003): “the notion of...tipping points presuppose a small number of extremely powerful connectors

located at key points within certain networked relationships. Such connectors possess a disproportionate number of social ties. As a result of such connector concentration, systems suddenly tip” (Urry, 2007, p. 219). Using this theory it is possible to understand that because of the prominent place of the Almack’s hostesses in Society, and the amount of network capital each possessed, their rejection of a connection had far reaching consequences, not just for entry to Almack’s but to the Season in general, through their connections to the hostesses of other social events. By using these theories of mobility put forward by Urry and others, it is possible to understand the Season as not only comprised of many different networking associations, but as being held in place by a small number of highly connected and powerful women. The networking of the Season was not a random process, but instead one manipulated by a numerically insignificant number of influential women; the gatekeepers of Society.

### Hosting the Season

Aside from the power of the Almack’s hostesses, there were many other women, and some men, who hosted balls during the 1862 Season. Whilst these may not all have been on the scale of Almack’s, they none the less provided the participants of the Season with the spaces of co-presence needed for forging networks, and were an essential element of the Season. *Manners & Rules of Good Society* (1887) declared that ball-giving was ‘a science’, studied and calculated to achieve the ultimate success of hosting a well regarded ball. With this in mind, it is important to uncover the reasons why some families invested so much money and staked their social futures to host events. Examining the reports of balls printed in *The Morning Post* newspaper reveals that in 1862 there were 34 different ball hostesses, only four of whom also hosted Almack’s. This analysis revealed that these hosts and hostesses can be placed into four categories. The first contains foreign ambassadors, presumably hosting balls at their embassies for political links and international relations; a rare example of a male host leading events during the Season. Second, there were the political hostesses mentioned above, those women married to powerful politicians of the day (for example Viscountess Palmerston, married to the Prime Minister, Mrs William Gladstone married to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Countess of Derby married to the former Prime Minister (for a detailed discussion of the role political hostesses played in nineteenth century politics see Jalland, 1986; Frow and Frow, 1989; Perkin, 1989)). The third category of hostess contains the traditional ‘Society Leader’, titled women, many of

whom had family of marrying age. Hosting a ball would have benefited the daughter of the house immensely because etiquette of the period dictated that she should never be without a dance partner, guaranteeing access to many potential networks (*Modern Etiquette in Public and Private*, 1871). In 1862, this group included the Countess of Ashburnham, whose eldest daughter was the only one of her children left unmarried and with whom she attended 22 balls in the Season. A hostess with greater success was the Countess of Craven, whose hosting efforts may have gone some way to ensure the marriage of her daughter in 1862. The last group of hostesses comprised untitled ladies who failed to attend many balls other than their own. Hosting a successful ball (possibly through the use of a sponsor<sup>22</sup>), was used by individuals who wished to enter the inner circles of Society as a means to impress potentially influential connections. In 1862 this group was represented by ladies such as Mrs Ram, Mrs J Vivian and Mrs Washington Hibbert, who each hosted one ball at their residences away from the heart of Mayfair, and who do not feature in the pages of *Boyles Court Guide* or *Burke's Peerage*, and therefore were not members of the upper and titled elite of the Season.

The ability to categorise the hostesses in this way supports claims made earlier in this chapter that the reasons behind an individual's networking and participation in the Season cannot be generalised as has been the case in previous literature on the period. By looking more closely into the lives of the 1862 hostesses it is clear that their social situations, life stages and ambitions were very different from one another. Their hopes for their own balls will have altered accordingly and the networking opportunities at each of them will have been far from uniform as a consequence of this. It is impossible, therefore, to categorise the events of the Season in the same bracket as one another. Each event would have been a more advantageous networking opportunity for some than for others. This is an important point, because much literature regarding the Season fails to differentiate between events, insinuating that every one would have been the same. Whilst etiquette of the period dictated the format of events, thus rendering their structure similar (Davidoff, 1973, Sproule, 1978), the analysis of hostesses in 1862 reveals significant differences between them.

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<sup>22</sup> *Manners and Rules of Good Society* (1887) suggested that in some cases, Ladies who were new to Society, or who knew few people participating in the Season are aided by a friend or acquaintance of a 'higher social standing', who adds her name to that of the hostess and formulates an attendance list comprising her greater number of contacts.

The final important point revealed by ball attendance lists for 1862 is the number of times a hostess actually attended a ball other than her own. Out of the 56 families or individuals who attended more than 20 balls in the Season, only five were also hostesses. The rest of the hostesses were by no means frequent networkers, showing no desire to increase network capital as was expected during the Season. The Countess of Northumberland only attended four balls all Season, and the Countess of Derby only eight, six of which she hosted. The other two balls were both hosted by the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, a couple whose residence at Stafford House was one of the largest and most prestigious in London, and close to the Countess of Derby's home in St James's Square. Her attendance at the balls hosted by the Sutherland's may in part be a reflection of the couple's status, described by Worsley-Gough (1952) as the "leaders of the intellectual element in Society" (p. 17).

Many of these hostesses who attended other balls infrequently had daughters 'out' in Society and yet they failed to make the most of the Season as a networking tool. A lack of ball attendance can in some cases be explained by the lack of an invitation, however this theory cannot have applied to many of these hostesses, who were part of some of the oldest and most elite families in Britain, and who would have been sought-after guests at most balls. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that these women, and consequently, their families, did not go to balls frequently because they did not need to network, they did not need to increase their network capital. Such was their status in Society that contacts would either come to them, or their own connections would remember them without the need for continual co-present refreshment.

Returning to the concept of a network hub (Urry, 2004) is useful in understanding this phenomenon. Many of the network hubs, those people who were at Society's peak, who had the wealth and social status to influence many during the Season, were also the same people who attended very few social events. Thus we can conclude that the number of networks connected to them through their position in Society supported their own networking demands. Reaching a position of centrality and significance in the Season therefore reversed the experiences of the period. These people acting as network hubs were no longer required to attract connections, because people were required to be attracted to them through their position in Society. The overturning of the norms of networking during the Season displayed by these women can be explained by Urry (in an interview with Adey &

Bissell, 2010). Developing the idea of a network hub further, Urry stated that “sometimes [it is] those with more network capital who are the immobile, who can summon the mobile to wherever they are. We shouldn’t assume that it is those who are powerful who move” (Urry in Adey & Bissell, 2010, p. 7). This statement by Urry is pertinent in understanding the networking systems of the Season. Whilst previous research pointed to the importance of attending as many networking events as possible, facilitated by being frequently mobile, the most powerful people in the Season, the network hubs, displayed the opposite trend. Using Urry’s theory confirms theoretically the trends witnessed in the ball attendance lists from 1862. Hostesses experienced the Season from an entirely different position than is traditionally documented (Sproule, 1978; Pullar, 1978; Margetson, 1980), adding a further layer to the practices of networking occurring during the period. By analysing event attendance and combining an analysis of these figures with an engagement with mobilities theory, it is possible to conclude that during the Season not every connection forged and experience of networking was the same; the period was highly differentiated depending on social position.

### **Facilitating Networks: The role of the chaperone**

Regulating the networks forged during the Season was not simply carried out by the event hostesses, however. For unmarried girls in particular, Society placed further constraints upon their amassing of network capital. Whilst certain regulatory practices were applicable to all hopeful participants of the Season, the control of unmarried girls was particularly rigorous, highlighting the differentiated gendered mobility discussed by Skeggs (2002) in the previous chapter in relation to movement (*Modern Etiquette in Public and Private*, 1871). Whilst unmarried men may have been under the duress of their families to network appropriately, Society itself brought few constraints upon the connections they made<sup>23</sup>. However, unmarried girls were accompanied at all times by chaperones, whose role is discussed below. Owing to the gender differences which occurred in the Season in terms of chaperonage, it is important to note that the discussions below regarding network control through chaperonage only refer to female participants.

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<sup>23</sup> This distinction can be witnessed most clearly through an engagement with etiquette books from the period, in which female behaviour is instructed in detail. Male behaviour, by way of contrast, is largely omitted from these publications, illustrating the greater freedom of behaviour afforded to men during the nineteenth century (for examples see: *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* (1871) and *Manners & Rules of Good Society* (1887).

Like the hostess, the concept of a chaperone was key to the networking possibilities of the Season. The chaperone is depicted in literature as being a close female relation to the debutante, ideally a mother, aunt or older sister, or failing this a close family friend (Sproule, 1978). This person was required to be a member of Society and already well connected in the Season (Davidoff, 1973). An inspection of ball attendance lists in *The Morning Post* newspaper, however, reveals that in the absence of a female relation, fathers were also known to accompany their daughters to society events. In 1862, for example, the Marquis of Camden chaperoned the Ladies Pratt 17 times.

The role of the chaperone varied in clarity throughout differing social events, and throughout the course of the nineteenth century. Within the realm of Presentation at Court, the role was at its clearest, the act of a well established and connected Society Lady presenting a debutante to curtsey to the Queen to signal her 'coming out' into Society, effectively allowing her to network in the Season (Pullar, 1978; Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980; Ellenberger, 1990). The decorative and symbolic elements of the ceremony masked the process's role in the stratification of Society, particularly in the early decades of the century. MacCarthy explained this role simply, suggesting that: "the curtseyers were in, the non-curtseyers excluded from the myriad royal enclosures, member's tents and other well-defended spaces in which the well bred were separated from the riff-raff" (2006, p. 11-12). The importance of a well connected mother to perform this role, certainly before the Season expanded towards the latter stages of the century, is highlighted by an analysis of the first Drawing Room on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1861<sup>24</sup>. Of those names specified in the Lord Chamberlain's records, 39 presentations were made by the debutante's mother, one by a stepmother, two by a female cousin, four by an aunt and four by a married sister. The prevalence of mother and daughter partnerships during this Drawing Room illustrates clearly that in the regulation of networks by Societal codes of conduct, the social standing of the mother was the biggest barrier, or facilitator, to the success of a debutante's networking ambitions. Presentation at Court also occurred following marriage, presented by the bride's mother-in-law and wearing her wedding dress, this act of social facilitation was a means by which the families concerned advertised their 'triumph' of marriage, so called by MacCarthy (2006).

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<sup>24</sup> There were no court presentation ceremonies in 1862 owing to the death of Prince Albert. A detailed discussion regarding the use of 1862 as a 'case study' year can be found in Chapter 1.

Although presenting a girl to the monarch was an important role, the job of the chaperone and the influence one was able to exert intensified in the realms of the ballroom (Perkin, 1989; Horn, 1992). Society rules dictated that an unmarried girl, those people often most desiring network capital and the ultimate network connection of marriage, had to be accompanied to a ball by a chaperone. The debutante could only attend an event if her chaperone had also been invited (Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976). Exclusion on the part of Society's elite was therefore simple and swift. Those families without the necessary connections to be included and considered a suitable network for the Society elite were eliminated through the lack of an invitation. However, if a debutante secured a chaperone who was already established and well-liked in Society, deemed a suitable connection herself, this chaperone became the debutante's passport into this social world. The diary of Lady Charlotte Bury, a chaperone for her niece, reveals her desire to make herself appear younger and more beautiful, to increase her debutante's chances in the ballroom: "My pretty Sophy's partners will not admire her the less because her chaperon [sic] looks old" (17th June 1819). The more influential, popular and well connected the chaperone, the greater the chances of being invited to the most number of social events. In this way, chaperones during the Season must be viewed as social conductors, allowing a smooth passage through a Season. The role of a chaperone as facilitator mirrors the work of mobilities scholar Lassen (2006) who depicted hyper-mobile people as travelling along 'smooth corridors', where movement was an unimpeded, taken for granted action. This concept of 'smooth corridors' can be applied to the role of the chaperone. For a debutante accompanied by a well-connected, powerful and wealthy chaperone, her experience of the Season would reflect the smooth passage discussed by Lassen (2006).

The chaperonage options available to a family wishing to participate in the Season were therefore an essential concern. Unlike the Drawing Room, the nature of the relationship between debutante and chaperone was less formal in the ballroom, family friends were an acceptable and not unusual option. Davidoff (1973) suggested that god-parents became even more significant to the elite of Society during the nineteenth century. The god-parent was a 'kin by choice', a figure forever connected with a child. Should a family be able to secure an influential god-parent, in particular for a female child, their chances in the Season in later life were secured. The securitization of chaperones was another reason for the importance of networking in the Season. Families who planned in advance for their children's

release into Society by securing alliances and friendships with influential families, who were later obliged to chaperone their offspring, was another reason for acquiring network capital during the Season. Evidence from diarists during the period reveals that chaperonage often occurred through feelings of obligation. Louisa Smythe detailed how her mother felt she had little choice but to escort Miss Beauclerk to Almack's, a seeming nuisance to both Louisa and her mother: "The only drawback to our amusement was our having Miss Beauclerk to chaperone, who scarcely danced the night" (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1828). The concept of forging connections for later social advantage echoes the work of Massey (1993), who undertook research through the lens of the 'power geometrics of everyday life'. This enabled, according to Massey, the hierarchies of power which occur in terms of gender, age, race and class to be identified. In the context of the Season, this is a useful concept. Hierarchies of power in terms of status were documented in an earlier section of this chapter, revealing the extent to which the Season operated in a series of tiers. Linking Massey's notion of hierarchies to the tiered nature of the Season, it is possible to understand the significance of these well connected chaperones. These connections ensured that positions in the hierarchy of power during the Season were either maintained or advanced; and hence why the chaperone must be understood as a powerful figure during the Season.

#### *The Chaperone as a Facilitator of Network Regulation*

The human passport role was only one element of the chaperone's responsibilities in the Season. Once through the doors of an event, her role as facilitator shifted to that of regulator, yet another limit to the networking freedom of a debutante (resonating with Adey's (2006) 'relational mobility'). The chaperone's duty, particularly in the ballroom, was to control her charge's dance card, permitting only the most appropriate networks to dance with the girl in her care (Ellenberger, 1990). Should the girl become too familiar with one partner, the chaperone would intervene, ensuring her charge acted within the codes of etiquette, and danced with one suitor no more than twice (*Modern Etiquette in Public and Private*, 1871). The mother of Georgina Smythe was aware of this etiquette, scolding her daughter for talking too much to a potential suitor during a ball at his country estate (25<sup>th</sup> December 1832). Monitoring the activities of a debutante in a ballroom was aided by the possession of a bouquet holder. Primarily designed to contain the unsightly stems of the flowers carried by women during the ball, its secondary function aided the work of a

chaperone. Bouquet holders had a mirror on each side, which when held up reflected a 'receded' image showing the whole room behind the holder (Davies, 1991). This was a discreet, yet useful surveillance tool, the existence of which provides further evidence for the amount of regulation which occurred in the ballrooms of the Season.

The mirrors located on bouquet holders aided the chaperone in her duty as a guardian, enabling her to discreetly utilise her experience and knowledge of participants to protect the debutante from unsuitable connections, or from making social faux pas in front of more desired ones. Being the figurehead of a debutante's networking campaign was an important job for the chaperone (Horn, 1992). The vast majority of chaperones in the 1862 Season were connected to the family of the debutante in some way, and of these most were the debutante's mother. The success of her daughter's Season impacted a great deal upon her own future, as discussed in Chapter 2. A good marriage to a wealthy family with status amongst Society would mean the elevated, or continued, status of her own family, securing their place in the Season and maintaining their power (Davidoff, 1973). As such, many chaperones acting in the ballroom were doing so as much for themselves as for their debutantes. The importance of acquiring network capital (Urry, 2007) during such co-present meetings was therefore significant not just for the debutantes chaperoned, but for her entire family. This is highlighted by the experiences of Lucy Lyttelton, who following the death of her mother relied on other female relatives to accompany her to the events of the Season. Such was the desire of her family to support Lucy that she was frequently accompanied to events by not one but several chaperones (11th June 1859). This provides a further example of the importance of the Season for all those participating, irrespective of age and life stage.

In addition to the importance of ball attendance to the chaperone and her family, the experiences of Alice Miles in 1868 serve as a reminder that chaperonage should not be portrayed as fraught and difficult in every situation. Following a ball on July 7th Alice noted that "as our carriage rolled away, Father went to sleep in his corner, and Mother and I proceeded to compare notes of the evening we had equally enjoyed". Neither should it be assumed that every chaperone who attended a ball fulfilled their role in the traditionally appropriate manner. Turner (1954) indicated that ballrooms were also frequented by 'tyrannous' and 'conscienceless' chaperones who were either uninterested in the fortunes of the debutante in their care and did little to

support them, or who behaved inappropriately towards potential connections. Louisa and Georgina Smythe's mother (discussed in greater detail in Appendix 1) was famous for being drunk during events, to the detriment of her daughters' ability to make contacts. Once again, this example illustrates that whilst many chaperones will no doubt have adhered to the rules and behaviours dictated by Society at the time, this was not a uniform experience. There were evidently many other examples of chaperonage which failed, for a variety of reasons, to conform to the 'norms' of the period (as described by Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976; Horn, 1992).

### *A Case Study of Chaperonage in 1862*

To understand the role of the chaperone, an analysis of the ball attendance reports in *The Morning Post* during the 1862 Season has been carried out. Of those participating in the Season, 262 women acted as chaperones to at least one female and 61 men also undertook this role. Records of husbands and wives sharing the chaperonage duty total 141 pairs. Delving deeper into some of these records, the stories of the chaperonage becomes more complex, contradicting much existing literature discussing the role (Evans & Evans, 1976; Margetson, 1980). Countess Cowley was an influential Society lady, and a former Maid of Honour to Queen Adelaide. Her husband was the Ambassador to France in 1862. She chaperoned six different girls during the 1862 Season. Her status in Society meant she held the position of a significant social conductor during the period, perhaps explaining her busyness as a chaperone. She accompanied her eldest daughter Lady Feodorowna Wellesley the most frequently, followed closely by her second daughter, Lady Sophia Wellesley, who married before the following Season in February 1863. Countess Cowley obviously successfully manoeuvred her younger daughter through the Season, achieving the ultimate network connection of marriage. According to Mary Cornwallis-West "it was a big feather in a mother's cap if she could marry a daughter off during her first Season" (Chapman-Huston, 1950), illustrating the societal success of the Countess in this regard. Aside from her two daughters, the Countess Cowley also chaperoned the Ladies Cowley, the two daughters of her husband's brother, and the Misses Grosvenor, the daughters of her husband's sister. The wider Cowley family evidently regarded the Countess as a lady powerful enough to be entrusted with the Seasons of their daughters, her position as a Society Hostess desirable in facilitating the networking capabilities of her extended family.

In contrast, the Duchess of Manchester's chaperoning activities were rather less familial. Her own children were aged between ten and two, and she was not, therefore, attending the Season for the immediate requirement of networks for her offspring. Like the Countess Cowley, the Duchess of Manchester was at the epicentre of Society's elite; she would have been a well connected lady, and the ideal chaperone. In 1862, she chaperoned three different girls, none of whom she was related to, by birth or by marriage. Of these three, Lady Constance Grosvenor was already married to the Duke of Westminster, himself a well connected and influential man. It would be difficult to assume, therefore, that Lady Constance Grosvenor was in need of support from the Duchess of Manchester in making networks for reasons other than marriage because she was part of an already well connected family. It is more likely, therefore, that the newspaper either mistook the name of the girl chaperoned by the Duchess of Manchester, or that in fact these two newly married Society ladies were simply friends, attending a ball together rather than with their spouses. The attendance of these two women at balls together could have been an example of participation for social benefit only, as identified earlier in this chapter in the case of Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury. Aside from Lady Constance Grosvenor, the Duchess of Manchester was also linked to two less well known ladies during the Season, Miss Callendar and Mrs Peel. Neither names appear in *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* of 1862, or attend balls independent of the Duchess of Manchester according to the attendance lists in *The Morning Post*. Neither do they appear in *Burke's Peerage* during the period. From this fruitless search it is possible to conclude that the Duchess of Manchester occasionally chaperoned Society unknowns. The reasons for this are unclear, and the possibilities endless, although in agreeing to chaperone, the Duchess of Manchester took on some responsibility for these women, in effect increasing their network capital through association.

By delving into the individual stories of chaperonage during the 1862 Season it is possible to identify in detail both the power of social conductors to influence the experiences of the Season, but also the unpredictable nature of the system. Much literature portrays the chaperone/debutante relationship as simply a mother accompanying her daughter to a ball (Turner, 1954; Inwood, 1998). Analysis of the 1862 Season reveals that the process is a far more complicated and influential process in network formation than has previously been represented.

*The Importance of Networks: The American Experience*

The necessity of a well-connected social conductor cannot be witnessed more clearly than through the experiences of American debutantes, migrating to the capital for the Season in the hope of attracting a titled gentleman with their large fortunes. As described in chapter 2, the influx of American girls and their families into the London Season began in the 1870s (MacColl & Wallace, 1989) and escalated throughout the rest of the century. Three of the first families to migrate, the Stevenses, the Jeromes and the Yznagas arrived in London in 1869. Knowing only each other and a few distant connections, they worked together, sharing the few connections that they made (MacColl & Wallace, 1989). Their success, however, was aided by one influential sponsor, the Prince of Wales. Attracted by the American girls' clothing, beauty and open appreciation of fun (MacColl & Wallace, 1989; Jennings, 2007), the Prince of Wales asked them to dance and championed them amongst his friends in Society. He was an influential man and his acceptance of these American families signalled his desire for his close networks in London to follow suite. The Prince of Wales' support was significant at a time when much of English Society opposed the influx of untitled foreign girls negating the tiered system of Society at the time. Such was the dislike of American pioneers that Jennie Jerome remarked that they were: "looked upon as a strange and abnormal creature, with habits and manners something between a Red Indian and Gaiety Girl ... If she talked, dressed and conducted herself as any well-bred woman would, much astonishment was invariably evinced, and she was usually saluted with the tactful remark 'I should never have thought you were an American' - which was intended as a compliment" (Cornwallis-West, 1908 pp. 48-9). All three of these pioneering families became part of the Prince's Marlborough House Set, and in so doing, became part of one of the most influential groups in Society at the time (Lambert, 1984). In gaining the connection of the Prince of Wales, an unusual yet influential chaperone, these American girls were transported into the elite circle of the Season, irrespective of their lack of titles or social standing.

Some years later the Prince came to the aid of another struggling American, Mary Leiter (Nicolson, 1977). Mary was the daughter of a real-estate businessman, without the Society credentials to participate in the Season; in June 1890 she wrote "I think London wonderfully delightful, although I know so little of its people. Everything is in full swing, and we read long accounts of balls we don't go to!" (quoted in MacColl & Wallace, 1989 p. 81). Her fortune changed dramatically,

however, when she met the Prince of Wales at a luncheon organised by an acquaintance of her mother. Following this introduction she was invited to a ball given by one of his circle of friends, the Duchess of Westminster (Nicolson, 1977). It was at this ball that the Prince approached her, inviting her to dance the opening Quadrille of the night with him. From this moment, Mary was transported from a Society nobody to the very core of the Season, entirely facilitated by the Prince of Wales. The power of the Prince as a social conductor is significant, because it supports work in the mobilities literature which identifies the relative importance of different connections (Law, 2006; Conradson & Latham, 2007). The contact of the Prince of Wales was an example of this important connection, such was his position that he acted as a social passport for anyone with whom he forged an alliance (Larsen et al 2006).

Fast forward ten years and the pioneers of the transatlantic network had used the networks opened to them by the Prince of Wales to marry into some of the most elite families of Europe, giving them the social status they craved to accompany their wealth. Jennie Jerome had married Randolph Churchill, son of the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Marlborough in 1874, Consuelo Yzanga followed suit in May 1876 by marrying Viscount Mandeville, also the son of a Duke, and Minnie Stevens completed the set marrying Captain Paget in July 1878. The status these marriages afforded the Americans enabled them to become key figures in the Season (Kehoe, 2004a). Through their new positions, the women were now sought after networks in their own right, irrespective of the Prince of Wales. His chaperonage of them enabled them in later years to become influential chaperones themselves. This influence did not go unrecognised; he reportedly turned to Jennie Jerome's son, Winston Churchill, and remarked "you know, you wouldn't be here if it weren't for me" (MacColl & Wallace, 1989). The women each became key figures in the 'transatlantic pipeline' (MacColl & Wallace, 1989) facilitating the networking potential of future American debutantes in London. Minnie Paget was credited with arranging one of the most fashionable Anglo-American marriages in 1895, that of Consuelo Vanderbilt and the Duke of Marlborough. Minnie was well connected to the family, she had been a bridesmaid at the wedding of Consuelo's mother. Owing to her position in Society following marriage, she was also well acquainted with the Marlboroughs, and introduced the pair with the hope of facilitating Consuelo's entrance into Society, which ultimately led to marriage (Balsan, 1953; Jennings, 2007).

If an American debutante was unfortunate enough not to be related to, or friendly with, one of these American pioneers, there was always the option of paying for their services. Consuelo Manchester (née Yzanga) was one such chaperone in financial difficulty, her husband having been declared bankrupt. To fund her social networking she reportedly acted as a 'social godmother' for unconnected Americans, charging a fee to introduce the debutantes to her friends and connections (Brough, 1979). The association of these women with their own social conductor, the Prince of Wales, did not wane despite their successes in Society. Consuelo Yzanga's goddaughter, Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan was immediately supported by the Prince of Wales, so much so that she recalled him offering to be her first son's godfather in 1897 (Balsan, 1953). This continued link between the Prince of Wales and American families can be highlighted spatially during the period. During the Season he lived at Marlborough House off Pall Mall and the surrounding area was subsequently concentrated with his American connections. Not only were they connected to him through social networks, they were also connected to him physically, through the close proximity of their homes to his. Carlton House Terrace, "practically in Marlborough House's [the Prince's residence] back garden" (MacColl & Wallace, 1989, p. 361), was the most desirable residence for American heiresses during this period of the nineteenth century, with seven of the seventeen houses occupied by Americans during the final two decades of the nineteenth century (*Boyle's Court Guide 1880-1900*).

This support network between fellow Americans in London and the Prince of Wales enabled the transatlantic mixing which characterised the Season in the latter stages of the nineteenth century. In the face of a lack of family ties to act as chaperones, Americans relied upon their fellow countrymen to act as their social conductors. The importance of the Prince of Wales and of the early American brides such as Jennie Jerome cannot be underestimated because it changed the way in which the Season operated, opening up English Society (Turner, 1954; Pullar, 1978). The case of American debutantes in the London Season and the role of chaperonage is also significant in terms of understanding the practices of the period through the lens of a mobilities perspective. Whilst American participants lacked the traditional upper class, titled connections typical in aristocratic circles, their success in the Season was obtained through the network capital they accrued through their association with the Prince of Wales (Leslie, 1973). This illustrates the importance of understanding the Season through the connections forged during it. This resonates with the work of Sheller (2004) who discussed that in networking spaces there

existed many different kinds of resources, accessed through the facilitation of social connections. The ability to connect and to acquire network capital, as illustrated by the experience of American debutantes, was vital to participation in the Season.

### **Conclusion**

The desire for network capital (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007), and the regulatory systems put in place by Society to control the search for it, fundamentally influenced the way in which the Season operated. To understand these practices enables an understanding of the Season itself. By utilising the new mobilities literature and foregrounding the societal practices of network formation, it is possible to understand in greater detail the meetings of the Season which were enabled by the mobility discussed in Chapter 5.

A detailed analysis of the reasons behind ball attendance, chaperonage and hosting reveals that below the broad scale 'expected' practices of the Season present in much literature regarding the period there exists a far more varied and individual experience. There were many different reasons to network, regulate and facilitate during the Season dependant on social and familial circumstances. In the spaces of the Season, therefore, were a range of individuals with differing aspirations and goals, participating in the Season alongside one another yet experiencing the same networking opportunities differently. The concept of networking and network capital is significant for a discussion regarding the period because it brings to the forefront the intentions of those participating in the Season, whilst also illuminating the variety of different roles adopted by members of Society in controlling, facilitating or securing the acquisition of these connections.

## **Chapter 7: The Performance Practices of the Ballroom**



In previous chapters, the concept of networking was used to contextualise movements made during the Season and to understand the importance of meetings to those participating. In this chapter, these networking practices are understood at a smaller scale, through the concept of performance. During the Season, both dance and fashion were used by those participating to increase the potential to network effectively and forge connections. Whilst both these tools have been discussed in previous studies of the Season (Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976; Sproule, 1978) most scholars have failed to understand how either one was used by participants to actively manipulate the fortunes of their own Season.

In this chapter, scholars engaging in performance theory will be introduced in the context of the Season, both in terms of shaping collective identity and understanding the body 'as text'. Performance during the Season will then be understood through a variety of lenses, identifying the way in which performers in the Season behaved in a scripted and rehearsed way. Three dances will be discussed in detail before the performed nature of interaction is analysed as a whole. The chapter moves on to understanding the role fashion played in the ballroom, and in particular the way garments were used to aid performance. Fashion theorists and material geographers are employed to provide analysis of the trends identified, before four dresses are analysed at the micro-scale to illustrate the importance of fashion to the participants of the Season.

### **Performance in the context of the Season**

Chapter 6 argued that the forging of connections between individuals during the Season was subject to many layers of regulation, ensuring appropriate networks were maintained. This was not the only restriction to be placed upon networking, however. In the co-present meetings of the Season (Boden & Molotch, 1994), etiquette limited the amount of time two participants in a potential connection could interact with one another (*Manners and Rules of Good Society*, 1887). In this regulated environment, the ballroom provided the greatest opportunity for moments of interaction, through the medium of dance. Particularly in the case of potential marriage partners, dancing provided the two people with the only time in the Season

in which to converse with one another without the immediate presence of a chaperone or other family members (Wilson, 2009). As such, a successful dance, an accomplished performance, was one of the few chances a participant had to persuade an interested party that they were indeed an appropriate network (Aldrich, 1991). The moments on the dance floor with a partner were highly scripted set routines which were performed together alongside many other couples also acting out the same networking discussion through movement (Richardson, 1960). Given the significance of the performance, it was one loaded with meaning, each participant needing to convey their wealth, status, family approval and feelings regarding a potential match in the confines of dance steps. This performance occurred for every unmarried couple on the ballroom floor, at every ball during the Season. The spaces of the ballroom were therefore the sites of performative power (Cresswell, 1996b), the places during the Season in which networks were most easily attracted and secured, achieved through the medium of dance. In this way, as Engelhardt (2009) indicated, the ballroom also offered a site for potential and expectancy, likened to the 'clamouring of lions' by Mary Gladstone after a ball on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1870.

### *Shaping Collective Identity*

As Koritz (1996) contended, the ballroom was not merely a site for the construction of individual networks in the period; it was also a site for the shaping of the collective identity of the elite. Knowing how to dance the chosen dances of the ballroom, and understanding the etiquette displayed throughout the evening, was a marker of social status throughout the period. Those without such knowledge were hastily avoided in the ballroom, as described by Georgina Smythe, who upon noticing one such known unaccomplished performer "appeared not to seek him and gladly accepted Lord Kerry's arm" instead (p. 81). The cultural meaning of dance in the Season was one loaded with significance and power, existing in the confines of the social regulations of the period. To participate in the spectacle of the ballroom was to have reached the pinnacle of Society. This potential for dance to act as a marker of society has been suggested by contemporary scholars. Desmond understood such movement as an "important mode of distinction between social groups and is usually actively learned or passively absorbed in the home or community" (Desmond, 1994 p. 36). Whilst many of the performances witnessed during the Season were by no means passively learned but instead actively practised previously, the concept is a useful one. The importance of dance competence to

those participating in the Season can be understood clearly through the work of Malbon (1999). In participating correctly in the dance performances of the Season, debutantes and suitors engaged in practices of identification. Malbon's work is based in the contemporary performance practice of clubbing, but the theoretical implications of his work provide a useful summary. Malbon suggested that dance creates feelings of togetherness, by participating in the movements of dance, individuals within the collective dancing group can "slip between consciousness of self and consciousness of being part of something much larger" (1999, p. 74). In using Malbon's theory, it is possible to further understand the importance of performance to cementation of a collective elite identity during the co-present meetings of the Season. Dance competence was also utilised by those participating in the Season as a marker of social status, as illuminated by biographical information from the period. Those without the ability to dance were deemed less suitable than those who could (Buonaventura, 2003), thus in the ballroom it was possible to identify weaker networks through their performances. Georgina Smythe (17th July 1832) noted that her partner Edward Harris had failed to make progress in the art of dancing, whilst Adelaide Seymour declared her partner, the Prince of Weimer, 'very stupid' for his lack of technique (24th June 1845). Examples such as this, which demonstrate the importance of cultivating dance technique, demonstrate that performance during the period was far from non-discursive, upholding the arguments of Nash and Desmond who call for an appreciation of the cognitive nature of dance. This is particularly pertinent in historical research, where dance provides a window into past social associations.

### *Gendered Expectations of Performance*

Inside the ballroom, the gender distinctions witnessed contrasted widely with the unexpected power of the female hostess at the door (as discussed in Chapter 6). Etiquette dictated that it was men who controlled the experiences of women in these spaces, evidence for the work of Gregson & Rose (2000) who highlighted the relationship between performance and power relationships. Only men could approach women to request their partnership for a dance, and as indicated by *The Ladies Pocket Book of Etiquette* (1840) 'women were obliged to accept'. This must have been an immensely frustrating experience for young debutantes, leaving them to hope a desired network approached them, knowing that the only influence they had upon the network was to dance well with another partner in the hope that it would catch the eye of more appropriate and desired suitors. Catching the eye of a

potential suitor was recorded by William Tayler, a footman in 1837 who attended balls throughout the year with his elderly female employee: "It's amusing [sic] to see the young ladies, how they manover [sic] to make the gentlemen take notice of them. They will....drop their gloves, that the gents offer to find them" (9th November 1837). This task of attracting the attention of male suitors was made more difficult according to the recollections of Colson (1945) who suggested that towards the second half of the nineteenth century, it became unfashionable for a man to display a willingness to dance. This led hostesses to compile lists of eligible men who did still participate in dancing; these they exchanged to ensure dancing at their balls could still occur (Colson, 1945). The gendered restrictions imposed by Society, and the differential treatment of men and women in the ballroom, led to much frustration, and as illustrated by the behaviour of Laura Russell (as noted by Kate Stanley), were on occasion ignored: "Laura Russell got a scolding from her mother last night as she did not come back to her between the dances once; before she has been much out with her father but her mother seems much more strict and I think will keep her in order" (30<sup>th</sup> May 1860). The ability for men to control the bodily interaction between attendees contrasted with the power of the female hostesses in facilitating their initial attendance. This dualism between the power of men and women was symptomatic of the Season as a whole, and again a marker of the way in which dance, as discussed by scholars such as Desmond (1994), reflects the social conditions of society at the time, just as Adey (2006) discussed with regards to mobility potential.

### *Opportunities for connection*

As highlighted in Chapter 6, the main aim of the Season was the co-present meeting between Society members with the intention of forging appropriate and mutually beneficial networks which would bring wealth and power to the families concerned. On the ballroom floor, the central connection designed to occur was between a debutante and suitor, as dances were intended to be performed by a man and woman (Dils & Albright, 2001). As discussed above, during these dances, the interaction between performers was their chance to attract one another, to persuade each other that their network was appropriate and advantageous for their family as a whole. The ballroom can, therefore, be understood in terms of Kesselring's (2006) 'connectivity spaces', as discussed in Chapter 3, in which the ballroom can be seen through its use as a networking resource, and ultimately a resource of power formation and cementation. Adelaide Seymour declared at the end of her first

season that she had danced 375 times, but that she supposed she was getting old upon finding herself caring who she danced with: “Whereas when I first came out it was all the same who I danced with as long as I did dance”, suggesting that the choice of partner was important in securing a suitable network (2nd July 1845). As highlighted by Rendell (2002) it was also a chance for both families concerned to witness the two as a pair, and to judge their suitability accordingly. In this way, the dancing bodies were spectacularised, put on display to be viewed by interested parties on the sidelines (Wilson, 2009). This view from the sidelines was recorded by Georgina Smythe (whose Season is explored in detail in Appendix 1) in 1832, where her chaperone Aunt Haggerston was noted as having been disgusted yet delighted with a fellow debutante's ‘unrefined appearance’, stating that this provided an excellent ‘foil’ for her own niece to shine on the ballroom floor (5th August 1832).

### *The pressure of performance*

With the aim of the Season to forge networks, the ballroom was the occasion to do so and therefore a site of pressure for debutantes. Engelhardt (2009) suggested that unmarried girls will have felt a duty to their family to make a network, or at least go some way to doing so by being asked to dance. A girl left on the sides of the room, unasked, was in no way able to forge a network, and was therefore viewed as a disappointment to her family. The ‘Confessions of a wallflower’ column in the magazine *Forget-Me-Not* reveals these insecurities: “After being welcomed by our hostess, we find our way to a seat ranged along the wall. And now the fun, or rather the agony, begins. Black-coated gentlemen are hurrying hither and thither in search of partners, but, alas! none come near me” (*Forget-Me-Not*, Vol 1, No. 1, 1891). This pressure to perform can be understood through the concept of the ‘mobility burden’. Although previously adopted in relation to the movement of servants during the Season, the principle similarly foregrounds the demands placed upon some debutantes in the ballroom. Shove (2002) introduced the term ‘mobility burden’ to highlight the presence of obligational movement, adopted in this case as the obligational duty to dance. Shove’s research aimed to highlight the complex meanings of mobility, the reasons behind movement. In so doing, she argued that mobility cannot be treated as a uniform act, but instead involved a range of experiences and circumstances, as witnessed in the ballrooms of the Season (Massey, 1993; Cresswell, 2001).

As well as the pressure placed upon debutantes to be selected as a dancing partner, dance technique was also subject to scrutiny during the period. The inability to dance well was a social failing, as illustrated by Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice* through the character of Mr Collins: “awkward and solemn, apologising instead of attending, and often moving wrong without being aware of it, gave her all the shame and misery which a disagreeable partner for a couple of dances can give. The moment of her release from him was ecstasy” (Austen, 1813, p. 73). The lack of dance invitations also provided consternation; Constance Primrose was required to comfort her mother all the way home from a ballroom after she had only managed to dance three times (Horn, 1991). The upset of Constance’s mother can be understood by reviewing the wider context of network formation. The position of the entire family had the potential to be altered when a daughter married; it was the opportunity to better one's social status through the marriage of a child. With this in mind it is easy to understand why the performance of dances during a ball was so loaded with significance for those participating in the Season and why attendance at these events was so sought after.

### Rules of performance

Etiquette books from the period provide insight into the workings of the ballroom, enabling an understanding of the way in which a ball was conducted. *The Habits of Good Society* (1860) revealed the extent to which all movements in the ballroom were dictated by these guides. Walking, for example, was to be performed in a particular fashion: “the advancing leg should not be stiff, and there should be no effort to turn the foot out, as it will tend to throw the body awry, and give the person the appearance of being a professional dancer” (1860, p. 273). This latter point raises an important distinction, which can be related to the following section of this chapter regarding preparation. There was a fine balancing act to be adhered to during ballroom performances. Whilst the standard of dance exhibited by the debutante was expected to be high, signifying an aristocratic background, to appear proficient would fuel rumours of prior training from a dance master, thus revealing the lack of a sufficient aristocratic upbringing (Wildeblood, 1965).

The rules of the ballroom also spread to the organisation of performance. Dance cards were used by participants and their families and updated throughout the evening to make a note of which dances they were engaged and to whom. *Etiquette of Love, Courtship and Marriage* (1859) also suggested that any man

invited to a ball had a duty to dance with at least one of the daughters of the house, effectively rendering the daughters of a hostess partnered for the entire event. This may have been one of the reasons hostesses were keen to host, for it provided endless networking opportunities for their children. Men were also expected to dance with the daughters of ladies to whose ball they had lately been invited. Once again, the advantages of hosting become apparent through etiquette manuals<sup>25</sup>. These 'duty' dances (termed the 'mobility burden' by Shove (2002)) would therefore have left little time for dances of choice with potential networks, increasing the pressure placed upon girls to perform appropriately to attract a man for the few dances he was free. This time was limited further according to *The Ladies Pocket Book of Etiquette* (1840) which revealed that under no circumstances could two people dance more than twice with each other during a ball. The pressure placed upon a single, or at best two dances was, therefore, significant. The difficulties in engineering such partnerships can be illustrated most clearly through the extended account of Lucy Lyttelton and her attempts to secure a dance with the Comte de Paris:

"The Comte de Paris was there, and he engaged Susy Clinton for a Quadrille, and set off to find vis-à-vis [another pair of dancers to make up the four performers needed for a square dance]. He returned saying il n'y en a pas! Whereupon Auntie Pussy [Lucy's Aunt, Catherine Gladstone] grabbed Sir Charles Wood and sent him off to find one. In the interregnum, however, I, who wasn't dancing, flew at Willy [Lucy's cousin, William Gladstone] and dragged him up to act as a vis-à-vis ourselves, for which the Comte gave me two beautiful little bows of thanks. This was happiness enough; but after the Quadrille the Comte came up and thanked Auntie Pussy for getting him a vis-à-vis, thinking it was her doing, and she, with her wonted sagacity, told him what an honour I had felt it, and that I had great enthusiasm for France (rather a lie that; my enthusiasm is for the old Royalty, not for that fidgety country). Well, he didn't speak for a moment, as if he was pleased, and then asked if she thought we'd do him the honour of dancing with him, I didn't hear all this transaction, being out on the balcony airing myself. The next thing I saw was the Comte making a gracious bow to Meriel [Lucy's elder sister, Meriel Lyttelton) and she was most awestruck courtesy accepting him for the next Quadrille. The fact he had taken her for me! So I was made to

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<sup>25</sup> Etiquette books which are particularly detailed regarding performance practices include: *Etiquette for Women* (1902) and *Manners and Rules of Good Society* (1887)

take her place, and waiting in palpitating excitement. After the valse that was going on, it was the turn for a Lancers, but they had a quadrille instead. The Comte, however, being engaged for that dance, couldn't throw his partner over, though it wasn't the Lancers, and couldn't have me of course'.

The above excerpt reveals the complicated procedure undertaken in ballrooms throughout the Season. Complicated manoeuvres involving other friends and family beyond the debutante and the chaperone were required to secure a dance partner for Lucy in this case. This illustration serves as a reminder that the practices of performance in the ballroom should not be seen as smooth process, but instead a series of complicated manipulations. In the above example, these manipulations also clearly involved lying on the part of Catherine Gladstone, who pretended Lucy was enthusiastic about France, presumably a further attempt to secure the Comte de Paris as a partner. The fact that the very public figure of William Gladstone's wife, renowned for her moralistic and fair approach to politics (Gladstone, 1989), was prepared to lie and scheme to secure Lucy a dance partner demonstrates the lengths families would go to achieve success in these prime networking situations.

#### *Preparation for performance*

The importance of performance in the ballroom is not only illustrated by examples from the ballroom itself, but also in the amount of preparation which occurred beforehand. The evidence for this preparation discussed below supports the arguments proposed by Nash (2000) and Cresswell (2006a, 2006b) at the start of this chapter. Both scholars argued that performances must be seen as representational owing in part to the written engagements with performance manuals and dance tuition, evidence of which is included below in the context of the Season. In supporting the arguments of Nash and Cresswell, the preparations documented contradict the work of Edensor (2007) who suggested that acts of mobility were often unreflexive and habitual. Whilst preparation may have been lacking for some, (Engelhardt (2009) suggested that some debutantes were dropped into the ballroom and forced to sink or swim reliant solely upon their own resources) the majority were carefully groomed for the occasion from childhood (Horn, 1992).

An analysis of advertisements in the London newspaper *The Morning Post* reveals the number of dance teachers operating in London, for example: "Mr and Mrs Nicholas Henderson announce their morning and evening lessons and classes.

Adults (Ladies and Gentlemen) wholly unacquainted with Dancing taught in a few easy private lessons” (*The Morning Post*, 1<sup>st</sup> May 1890). The frequency of dance training is revealed in *Vanity Fair*, where it was recorded that that dance master had arrived at Mrs Pinkerton’s finishing school (Thackeray, 1848, p. 12). Stanhope’s *Almack’s: A Novel* also refers to this dance training; Mrs Birmingham announces her daughter’s tuition: “First she had Mélanie...then Guillet, quite as good as a master....; last year she had Anatole; and now I am thinking of Charles Vestris, to finish her” (Stanhope, 1826 p. 243). Scholars of the Season have also revealed that some families instigated a trial run through before the Season began to iron out any weaknesses in a debutante’s assault on the ballroom (Horn, 1992). Engelhardt (2009) suggested that some parents took their daughters to Europe to participate in the Seasons of Paris or Milan to practise their accomplishments before the more important Season began in London. The endeavour for perfection was not restricted to preparations for the event, however. *Modern Etiquette in Private and Public* revealed that dressing rooms would be set up during a ball, acting as safe havens for debutantes. Maids would be on hand to repair torn dresses, a symptom of crowded ballrooms, so that the appearance of a debutante and their chance of obtaining a partner would not be tarnished. This room would also be stocked with hair pins, looking glasses and pins, accessories ready should this support be needed (*Modern Etiquette for Public and Private*, 1871). Georgina Smythe recorded using this facility, writing on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1832: “My hair came down & I was obliged to go upstairs with Miss Farquhar”.

### **The Micro-geographies of Dance during the Season**

The dances undertaken in the ballroom varied with the changing fashions throughout the Season, ranging from the Quadrille in the early nineteenth century to the Waltz, finally accepted into the ballroom without controversy in the latter stages of the nineteenth century; the introduction of a new dance largely following the lead of Almack’s (Rendell, 2002). The precise nature of the dances will not be considered in great detail here, rather the opportunity these dances provided for networking will be considered. An analysis of biographical accounts from the period indicate the significance of the Quadrille, Lancers and Waltz, and these three dances will briefly be considered in terms of performance below, a way of understanding these bodily performances as social texts, suggested by Desmond (1994).

## The Quadrille



Plate 4: *The First Quadrille* (source: Evans & Evans, 1976)

According to *Manners and Tone of Good Society* (1879), a ball usually opened with a Quadrille (as shown in Plate 4), danced by the couples of the highest rank present; status was once again demonstrated in the ballroom. The Quadrille was a square dance, with each of the dancers positioned in the square, dictated according to the dance manuals of the time. These placements on the floor of the ballroom needed to be remembered and implemented in every different ballroom of the Season, different positions in the square were assumed each time it was danced. The Quadrille allowed opportunities for performance with a partner; much of the dancing was completed as a pair. The squared nature of the dance meant that interaction also occurred with the other three pairs in the square, maximising the networking potential of the dance. Dance manuals (such as *The Drawing Room Dances* (1847)) from the period reveal the number of steps comprising the Quadrille, largely involving movements around other couples in the square, and interaction between oneself and the gentleman in another pair of the same circle, yet always returning to the original partner known as the root. Unlike the English country dances which preceded it, in which standing stationary occurred, the quadrille involved constant movement for all couples, thus limiting the ability to connect with a partner for any length of time. An analysis of the steps reveals that out of the eleven

major figures of the dance, only five were conducted with the partner chosen for the dance (Cellarius, 1847). Presumably, with limited time available for connection between the pair, performing the dance to a high standard was the primary tool used to attract the network. Aldrich (1991) indicated that the level of skill required for the Quadrille was 'astonishingly high', as can be witnessed using dance manuals of the period. Alexander Strathy's *Elements of the Art of Dancing* (1822) illustrates in detail the number of steps which were required to be learnt by each of the participants. The instructions for the first figure of the dance are as follows:

"This figure is performed by making the Temps Levé and three Chassés connected by the Temps Levé as already described; then the Jeté and Assemblé. Two gentlemen opposite, with their Ladies, commence with the right foot, make the Temps Levé and Chassés and at the same time raise the right arm, in the manner directed for the arms, in order to receive that right hand of the opposite person; in making the second Chassé, with the left foot before, they turn a little to the right, quite the right hand of the ladies and give the left to their partners, turning a little to the left side, make the third Chassé with the right foot before, then the Jeté and Assemblé placing themselves on the left of their Ladies who at the same time perform the same steps. The two couples will now have exchanged places; this is called Demi Chaine Anglaise. To complete the figure, they perform the same over again to their original places. This figure requires 8 bars of music" (1822, p. 65-66).

As the quote illustrates, the performance of the Quadrille was detailed, technical and virtually impossible for those without prior preparation. It was therefore the ideal marker of network suitability.

### The Lancers

The Lancers evolved from the Quadrille (Richardson, 1960) and was another square dance but unlike its predecessor included some 'pretty' figures, designed to allow for the performance potential of dancing to be realised. The figures involved individual performance, including the prolonged curtseying of the women in the square to each other, in a move described by *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* as "no completer example of the subjugation of man" (p. 116). Dance elements which required more movement and graceful turns were also included in the Lancers

(Aldrich, 1991). This was a dance which required more ability, a skill held in great importance by Society, than the Quadrille, a mistake by one dancer in the square was likely to spoil the entire routine (Richardson, 1960). Unlike the Quadrille, interaction was more likely in each pair, eleven out of sixteen identifiable dance figures involved direct bodily connection between the couple, enhancing the ability of the participants to perform to one another (Richardson, 1960).

### The Waltz



*Plate 5: The Waltz by Henri Cellarius (1847).*

Both the Quadrille and the Lancers involved only the most restricted physical contact between partners, limited only to the touching of hands. This is in sharp contrast to the Waltz, a dance which first appeared in the ballrooms of London in 1812, but was not accepted as appropriate until the 1860s (Wilson, 2009).

Characterised by the close physical proximity it created between the couples, and bodily contact not previously witnessed in the ballroom, it was banned in some ballrooms as being unladylike (Aldrich, 1991). The author of the *Ladies Pocket Book* (1840) described the dance as 'polluting', and the *The Times* (1816) stated that "so long as this obscene display [that of the waltz] was confined to prostitutes and adulteresses we did not think it deserving of notice; but now that it is attempted to be forced on the respectable classes of society....we feel it a duty to warn every parent against exposing his daughter to so fatal a contagion" (*The Times*, 16th July 1816). The fashion of the crinoline in female dress towards the middle of the

nineteenth century brought further objections to the dance. The large hoops of the crinoline enabled freer movement of the lower half of the body (Ashelford, 1996), a characteristic rendered particularly revealing during the Waltz. The whirling characteristic steps of the Waltz caused the hoop of the crinoline to rise, revealing female legs considered by Society as suggestive and immoral (Buonaventura, 2003).

The condemnation of the Waltz by members of Society is significant, because according to Koritz (1996), dance mirrors the social conditions in which it is performed. Koritz suggested that social relations are produced by the body through dance; in the ballroom, these relations were controlled by Society through the control of acceptable dances. The close proximity and paired dancing style of the waltz was rejected by Society as dangerous, allowing connections to be made between participants without the limiting factors of square dances such as the Quadrille (Knowles, 2009). The co-present capability of the waltz was larger than other dances, however, this consequently made it more difficult for chaperones and Society as a whole to regulate the networking moment (Wilson, 2009). Indeed some families were still so fearful of the waltz during this period that they banned their children from learning to perform it, for example Lucy Lyttelton records several times being forced to refuse the Waltz, sitting out the dance completely and limiting her chances to network (21<sup>st</sup> June, 1859).

An analysis of the micro-geographies of dance in the ballrooms of the Season raises two important conclusions: that dance can be used to reflect Society at the time of the Season, and that the Season was characterised by scripted performance. Both conclusions will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

### **Dance as a Reflection of Society**

According to mobilities scholars and in particular Cresswell (2001, 2006a, 2006b), the performance movements of all the dances considered here are significant, because they reflect wider social contexts present during the period. Desmond (1994), working in relation to the Tango, suggested that the movements in this dance signified the wider social changes occurring at the time. The same can be said for the three dances mentioned above. At the start of the nineteenth century, the Quadrille was popular because its movements did not allow for bodily contact between participants. This served Society well, ensuring regulation of networks.

The Waltz, with the increased bodily contact in movement, was banned by many hostesses, gatekeepers of networks, for fear of a lack of suitability and the closeness between two potential networks. It was only with the advent of the last decades of the nineteenth century that the Waltz was widely adopted, reflecting the widening of Society as a whole and the lowering of the restrictions of etiquette (Wilson, 2009). Highlighting the significance of these changes are dance scholars such as Bryson (1997), who suggested that bodily movements were an expression of wider social flows, and were therefore as significant as historical evidence in describing society at a given period.

Dance movements have been utilised in the above sections to illustrate the social contexts of the ballroom during the Season. In so doing, they provide further evidence in support of the work of cultural geographers who argue for the appreciation of the representational practices of performance. This argument, typified by the work of Nash (2000) and Cresswell (2001, 2006a, 2006b), suggested that instead of viewing performance as unreflexive, banal and habitual (Binnie et al, 2007; Edensor, 2007) we should understand dance movements through the scripted nature of routines, polished performances and the consumption of dance by the audience, all appreciated through the context in which the movement occurred. As illustrated by the three examples above, dance during the Season required knowledge of intricate steps and was conducted in front of an audience who judged the status and character of the dancer based on the quality of the performance. The practices of the Season analysed throughout this thesis have pointed to the varied, yet calculated nature of the period, driven by the goals of connection and consolidation. This process of calculation, equally applicable to the performances of the ballroom, ensures that dance during the Season cannot be understood in the context of unreflexivity and habitual motion, thus contradicting the work of scholars such as Edensor (2007) in this respect.

### **Performed Nature of Interaction**

The performed nature of the ballroom was not confined solely to the dance floor, however. Behaviour throughout the ball was performed, scripted by the etiquette of the day. Engelhardt (2009) suggested that an inappropriate network could be identified by their inadequate performance of etiquette, and therefore to perform these rules correctly was an essential element of network formation. Appropriate behaviour was held in high regard by Clarissa Trant (28th January 1825) who

described in her diary those she met by their 'pleasing and polished manners'. Without the ability to converse freely with one another, potential networks relied on their performance of certain behaviours designed to indicate intention. Turner (1954) suggested that facial movements, however slight, were instilled with meaning. A smile combined with a 'half dropped eye' was the most common performance of interest. Georgina Smythe noted that a suitor "pressed [her] hand violently" upon leaving a ball, signifying his intentions towards her (30th July 1832). The importance of these gestures can best be understood through the work of Boden & Molotch (1994), who in the context of co-presence, drew on the work of Goffman. Using this work, they argued that co-present communication can occur without the speaking of words, instead placing value upon non-verbal signals encountered during co-presence, such as 'a pregnant silence, or the gleam in a romantic eye' (1994, p. 259). These cues of physical movement, expression and physical touch (as experienced by Georgina Smythe) are used by Boden & Molotch (1994) to argue for the continued significance of co-present interaction. This notion of the cues of physical movement resonates with the experiences of the Season above, in which performance was more than simply the act of dancing. The signs documented in biographical material are reflective of the performed nature of all interactions occurring within the ballrooms of the Season.

Other performance movements in the ballroom were dictated by strict codes of societal etiquette; it was the gentleman's responsibility to care for his partner from the moment she left the side of her chaperone at the start of a dance to her return at the end of it with the brief period of networking between them concluded with his bow (*Etiquette of Love, Courtship and Marriage*, 1859). Following an introduction from the hostess of the ball, the request for a dance followed a set script according to *Modern Etiquette for Public and Private* (1871): "The Gentleman..says, 'may I have this dance?' or 'Are you engaged for the next?' and the lady says, 'I shall be very happy' or 'I am sorry I am engaged' as the case may be" (p. 108).

The scripted nature of the ballroom, both in terms of speech and movement, is significant because it heightened the importance of performance. Just as in a play, parts were required to be learned beforehand, and then performed to one another in the setting. The significance of this scripted routine can once again be understood through the concept of co-presence and in particular through the work of scholars such as Mintzberg (in Schwartzman, 1989) who understood elements of co-presence as ritualistic. The scripted nature of the dance performances described in

this chapter echo this ritualistic notion. The rules of dance, the preparation beforehand and the desired outcome of dances, all of which were undertaken in a scripted format ensured that co-present interaction was not free, but instead bound up in the values of Society at the time (Knowles, 2009). Whether it be through the steps of a Quadrille or a request to dance, those involved were performing their set parts with the intention of executing them well enough to attract the connection permanently. It was the result of a successful performance, a network alliance and the reason behind participating in the Season, which resulted in the significance of these ritualised performances of the ballroom.

The significance of the scripted performance can be witnessed most clearly through the experiences of those who did not adhere to this prescribed etiquette. *Court Etiquette: a Guide to Intercourse with Royal or Titled Persons* (1850) revealed that the consequence of behaving 'ill' at a ball would be so severe with Society that their networking opportunities would be ruined, no further invitations sent and the incident shared amongst Society, effectively blacklisting the offender. Kate Amberley recorded once such moment in 1859: "They made themselves very unpopular at the ball as they left at 1 (much too early) and other people felt obliged to follow their example. They went into the cloakroom with all their party and there played at games. Someone pulled off Lady Egerton's shoe to play at 'hunt the slipper', so they seem to have been very riotous and vulgar" (13th November 1859). The ballroom therefore was a site of danger for those participating; the punishment for forgetting to perform appropriately led to social ruin. Performance was essential to participation in the Season, not only to attract a network, but to belong to acceptable Society as a whole.

By analysing the activities that occurred in the ballrooms of the Season through notions of performance, the way in which these movements were socially powerful can be understood. Not only were movements created to allow for networks to be forged, primary fuel for the Season, but they occurred in the social context of the period, mirroring Society at the time. An understanding of the importance of performative power in the Season, highlighted by the work of mobilities scholars (Nash, 2000; Cresswell, 2001; Sheller, 2004; Cresswell, 2006a; Urry, 2007), is crucial to an understanding of the ballroom as a powerful site during the nineteenth century and in so doing can be aligned with the work of Massey (1993). Massey stated that movements (in the case of this chapter, the movements of dance) are caught up in the power geometrics of everyday life. In this context, different 'mobility

empowerments' existed, reflecting social hierarchies. In the ballrooms of the Season, those with status and dance ability were more likely to forge connections and increase network capital; the main aim for the Season of a debutante. Those lower down the social hierarchy, and without the tools of a well connected chaperone and a polished performance, experienced different and lesser 'mobility empowerments' than their more powerful compatriots. Understanding the ballroom in terms of these mobility empowerments is significant because it reinforces the conclusion that the ballroom must be seen as a powerful site during the Season, owing to the differential mobility empowerments it afforded. As Aldrich (1991) indicated, it was in the ballroom that social behaviour and performance was distilled and focussed intently, forming a microcosm of Society at the time.

### **The Performance of Fashion**

The performance of dance was not the only area in which mobility empowerments were influenced in the ballrooms of the Season, however. The qualities of a debutante were also performed and displayed through her clothing, her adherence to fashion. Like the ability to dance well, wearing a fashionable and decorated dress signalled to all those in the ballroom the wealth and aristocratic upbringing of the debutante. Just as debutantes were required to be proficient at dancing to impress potential suitors and their families, the clothing worn by these women was also under scrutiny (Sproule, 1978). Fashion was therefore used as a tool in network formation in a similar way to dance. Wearing fashionable, expensive and flattering garments was a way of indicating the wealth and status of the debutante; she became a walking poster-board advertising the qualities of her network (Ashelford, 1996). It should be noted at this stage that whilst the economic and purchasing networks involved in the production and retail of the fashions analysed in this section are significant, the aim of this chapter is not to illuminate the ways in which fashion was produced or consumed, but instead how it was used for particular social situations after purchasing. As such, this aspect of fashion during the nineteenth century will not be discussed. For a detailed analysis of this area of work, see Ashelford (1996), Flanders (2006) and Kellogg et al (2002).

Whilst fashion has been mentioned in some previous studies regarding the Season, the importance of fashion to the performance of the ballroom has not been discussed. Sproule (1978) touched upon the use of clothes to demarcate the aristocracy as a group from other lower sectors of society; however, differences

between the upper classes are not discussed. Similarly, Evans & Evans (1976) note the need for servants to assist in dressing debutantes owing to the constraining nature of the garments. The implications of this information are not discussed, thus limiting understanding. The link between wearing fashionable clothes and performance will be discussed in this chapter, and is an important addition to work regarding the Season in two ways. Firstly, it treats fashion as more than merely clothing, and instead as a tool in the performance of a debutante, in particular, to attract useful connections or the ultimate network of a suitor. The dresses worn become powerful objects, used by those wearing them to portray particular meanings of wealth and status (Jackson, 2000). Secondly, by understanding the importance of fashion to the ballroom, the links between the Season and performance are strengthened (Wilson, 2009). Not only were debutantes expected to perform dances in front of an audience scrutinising their every move, they had to do so wearing clothing which signified the quality of their network. The debutante was doing more than simply wearing a fashionable dress, “women...had become decorative accessories, proclaiming the family’s wealth and status by their display of fashionable dress” (Ashelford, 1996, p. 173). In understanding fashion in this way, moving beyond the uncritical dimensions of previous research regarding the Season, the power of performance can be fully understood. This departure away from traditional scholarship follows the work of mobilities scholars engaged in the power of the material and the way in which material objects, such as clothing, are important constituent part of ‘being human’ (Büscher & Urry, 2009). This approach was successfully adopted by Beaujot (2009) in relation to the material culture of gloves in the making of the middle class body, illustrative of the use of performance metaphors in researching historical geographies.

### **Fashion in the Context of the Season**

As discussed in the introduction to this section, fashion played a crucial role in the ballrooms of the Season, particularly for debutantes, whose role in these spaces was to attract a suitor, or at the very least a male dance partner (Sproule, 1978; Horn, 1992), both through her dance ability, and the clothing she wore. As such, this section will focus on the fashions of women’s clothes only, in particular debutante’s dresses, owing to the additional significance clothes played in the lives of women during the Season.

### *Evidence of the Importance of Fashion*

The significance of fashion in the lives of those participating in the Season can be witnessed in source material from the period. Both diary entries and newspapers from the period frequently comment on the clothes that had been worn to balls, or that should be worn in the future. This enduring connection mirrors the view of Urry (in Adey & Bissell, 2010) in suggesting that networking is accompanied by a long-lasting engagement with material objects. The diaries used in this research frequently mention clothing, speaking positively of certain dresses whilst scolding their own appearance and that of others to an equal extent. Louisa Smythe frequently commented on the fashions of others she had witnessed at balls: “Lady Londonderry’s dress ... was magnificent and very becoming; not so was the dress of Lady Ellenborough, who did not look at all well. The whole court was dazzling in magnificence and splendour ... I thought I never saw people look so well or so handsome as they did that night” (30th June 1828). Mary Gladstone was similarly eager to comment on the fashions of the ballroom: “Was mildly amused by the looks of people, arms worn bare to the shoulder and each person had a curly fringe or bush forehead and a knot of hair low in the neck behind. It makes some people wonderful quizzes [Mary indicates later in this diary entry that this was a word which indicated ‘provincial freak’]” (12th February 1878).

The presence of critical eyes in the ballrooms of the Season to some extent explain episodes of doubt regarding fashion evident in diaries of the period. Louisa Bowater was eager to have purchased a bonnet which would not offend (“I have bought a white bonnet ... I think it is so plain and undemonstrative that nobody can object to it, all white with a few lilies of the valley”, 6th June 1864), whilst Mary Gladstone, a regular critic advised her cousin Lavinia Lyttelton on the issue of satin (“it is so difficult about light blue satin, for I don’t like light-coloured satins ever unless they are white or grey, but I daresay you will look very pretty in it, for you do in most things and anyhow it’s nice and smart. It is generally supposed that satin ought to fit close and not be made full, but I don’t know. Would you have white lace sleeves, do you think?” 5th April 1878).

The importance of looking appropriate to the diarists of the time, and thus illustrating the importance of fashion during the Season, is perhaps best reflected in the shame felt by Clarissa Trant in 1827, who at the last minute was forced to construct a fake

bustle (a framework worn at the back of the skirt to add fullness) only to be found out. "In the hurry of dressing I could not find a regular bustle and I had accordingly substituted it with the first article of dress which I could find. It happened to be an old black silk apron, the ends of which unluckily soon peeped out of the pocket hole and Madame de Palmella dragged out my quondam bustle and in fits of laughter displayed it to a conclave of ladies! And I, who had fancied myself looking so well dressed and so interesting only a moment before, was not glad to hide my diminished head" (26th March 1827).

Newspaper coverage regarding the fashions of the ballroom was also prevalent during the period. Beetham & Boardman (2001) suggested that women's magazines during the nineteenth century became a sight of spectacle, owing to the quality of the visual illustrations of fashions contained in their pages. Publications such as *La Belle Assemblée*, popular during the first half of the century, reflected this quality in their price. Flanders (2006) estimated that the three shilling price tag placed on the publication was the same "as a skilled artisan could expect to be paid for a day's work" (Flanders, 2006, p. 159). Newspapers and magazines provided examples of the latest fashions throughout the year in both Paris and London, as well offering advice to their readers about current trends witnessed during the previous week's balls, often with a particular focus ("the purpose of this week is giving a few details of useful and somewhat simple dress trimmings" *Lady's Own Paper*, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1866).



Plate 6: Fashion advice in *The Queen* (6<sup>th</sup> March 1880).

Advice in these newspapers was often highly detailed, illustrating both the attention to detail paid regarding fashion, and the demand for this information from those consuming the source. This detail is reflected in the following advice for women with golden hair: “talking about the right colour ball dress for golden hair: a very distinguished toilette for auburn hair or golden hair is a blonde dress, white and buillonné from the waist to the hem in small gores, a gold cord or an emerald green band studded with a small filigree gold stars being placed between each” (*Lady's Own Paper*, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1866). The ‘London and Paris Fashions’ column printed weekly in the pages of *The Queen* newspaper often took on a sterner tone especially regarding the fashion faux pas witnessed during the Season: “It grieves us to write it, but bodices are cut quite as low in London as they are in Paris. The backs of bodices, too, are slanted and sloped to match the fronts; shoulder blades are very common spectacles indeed in many London drawing-rooms which are thronged with aristocratic guests. This extreme *décolleté* style is a grievous mistake” (*The Queen*, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1865).

Nineteen of the twenty five London newspapers and magazines which covered events of the London Season during the 1860s featured columns or illustrations

detailing the most fashionable clothes of the period. This extensive coverage regarding fashion during the period is indicative of the importance placed on this networking tool by those participating in the Season.

*Why was fashion so important to the Season?*

As detailed earlier in this chapter, the Season was designed to enable networking to occur, ultimately leading to an increase in network capital and the forging of advantageous connections. This networking was undertaken through the ritualistic performance of etiquette and dance in the ballrooms of the Season (discussed above) (Engelhardt, 2009), and was aided by the clothing worn by participants. Fashion allowed the wealth of a family to be displayed, particularly important due to the restrictions placed upon networking which heightened the importance of other ways of communicating status. This situation supports the work of Jackson (2000) and Maycroft (2004) who investigated the way in which some materials ‘matter’, understanding the ‘use value’ of objects and linking fashionable objects with notions of power (Law & Hetherington, 2000). During the Season, as Wilson (1985) suggested, dress was a crucial part of particularly a debutante’s Season, where networking capacity was lower than at other life stages, increasing its ‘use value’ (Maycroft, 2004). “The dress of the nineteenth-century virgin on the marriage market had therefore subtly to convey family status as well as personal desirability: seductiveness, albeit virginal; along with apparent submissiveness and a willingness to obey, the ability to run a household should be suggested; the ethereal qualities of the Angel in the House must somehow be combined with the suggestion of sufficient health and strength to bear a large family. And in a society, or at least in a class, in which women outnumbered men, the importance for a woman of distinguishing herself from her rivals could not be overestimated” (Wilson, 1985 p. 123).

Linking to the work of Wilson, clothing in the ballroom allowed certain social markers of eligibility to be performed. This occurred in three main respects. Firstly, the fashions of the Season were designed specifically to disable the ability to carry out domestic work. Crinolines, corsets and bustles made it physically impossible to carry out such tasks, thus demarcating the wearer of such garments from those women who were required to carry out domestic duties (Waugh, 1968; Steele, 2001). Crane (2000) suggested that aside from looking elegant, dress which was ornamental as well as highly restrictive, and therefore entirely unsuitable for virtually every activity, was used as a sign of the prevalence of domestic staff in the home, a

sign of the wealth of the family. The more restrictive the dress, the more servants the family employed and, therefore, the more money possessed by the family of the debutante on display.

Wealth was similarly displayed by the array of clothing owned by a debutante. In 1882 Oscar Wilde stated that “Ladies boast that they do not wear a dress more than once” (lecture given by Wilde in 1882, printed in 1909 - *Essays and lectures by Oscar Wilde*), once again an illustration of the wealth which would have been required to continually clothe a debutante in previously unseen dresses for each ball attended. Further to Wilde’s claim is Evans & Evans (1976) assertion that ladies were required to change their clothes repeatedly throughout the day as they attended a variety of events. They predicted that six changes of clothes might be required in a single day during the Season. This was reflective of wealth in two respects. Not only would this continual change of outfit required the purchasing of an even larger clothing collection, but once again signalled the presence of domestic servants in the homes of the debutante. The dresses worn by Society during the nineteenth century were complex, and assistance was required when changing. To be able to complete this process six times in a day reflected the presence of domestic staff to facilitate this dressing, once again demarcating a debutante’s wealth and status and hence the performative power of the clothing (Jackson, 2000; Law & Hetherington, 2000). The different rungs of the Society ladder discussed in Chapter 6 are illustrative of this point. In studying the lives of Marshall family on the fringes of Society, Shonfield (1987) revealed that the two daughters were required to renovate their two ball dresses between one entertainment and the next so as to exude the appearance of a new dress, in the hope that this illusion would increase their social standing. That these aspiring participants felt this was a necessary step is illustrative of the importance of owning many different outfits to those attending, or wishing to attend, balls during the Season.

Finally, the fashions worn by debutantes required a level of performance, the execution of which was based on a knowledge of correct behaviours, further demarcating aristocratic networks. Sproule (1978) indicated that it was deemed vulgar during the nineteenth century to allow the train of a dress sweep an outdoor pavement, but picking it up also required a specific technique. Cunnington (1937) noted that the correct behaviour was to ‘grasp the skirt delicately’ holding the train between the fingers and lifting it up to the hip, without ‘turning the elbow out’. Sproule (1978) identified the difficulties in the manoeuvre, and an improper

performance would immediately signal to those present the lack of aristocratic training received. Oliphant, in *Dress* (1878), declared that “nothing can be a more certain indication that the wearer of a long train is not a Lady, than the fact she allows it to sweep the street behind her!” (1878, p. 84). This is a significant point, because it illustrates the importance of correct performance during the Season. In so doing supporting Desmond’s (2004) argument that performance illuminates society and social situations occurring at particular times. It is also significant, however, when understood in terms of the ‘use value’ (Maycroft, 2004) of the train. The dress, with accompanying train, was used to display knowledge of aristocratic behaviours, signifying status and appropriate upbringing. In this way, the dress takes on performative meanings, enabling the performance of status to be displayed, and hence imbues the dress with significance in the context of the Season (Law & Hetherington, 2000; Lees, 2001).

### **Understanding the performance of fashion**

In order to fully understand the role fashion played in the ballrooms of the Season, contemporary fashion theory has been consulted. Whilst it is not the intention of this research to engage comprehensively with all aspects of this theoretical body of work, certain themes in it are useful in highlighting the importance of fashion to the amassing of network capital.

### **Fashion and Identity**

In recent years, fashion theory and material geographies have overlapped in discussions regarding clothing as a means through which to perform identity, echoing the work of Simmel in the early twentieth century. Broadly speaking, this theoretical position understands clothes as a means for individuals to express their ideas, alliances or to portray a certain view of themselves (Brydon, 1998). This is particularly relevant for work regarding the Season, where clothing was used to demonstrate the wealth, status and the suitability of a debutante’s network. As discussed earlier in this chapter, etiquette dictated that there were little opportunities for potential networks to communicate with one another, and hence dancing and clothing become more significant markers and storytellers of a debutante’s qualities. Such was the importance placed upon clothing combined with a lack of power for women to engage in networking, that political satire during the period often referred to female participants as ‘petticoats’ (Crane, 2000). Whilst the importance of the

clothing displayed may not have been a reflection of the personal choice of the debutante herself, it was the identity deemed necessary by her family to ensure that network formation had a chance to occur. Early studies regarding fashion and identity were carried out by Barnes and Eicher (1992) and suggested that this identity took two forms; as an indicator of group identity and as a differentiating marker in this group. The first of these conclusions is highlighted by Sproule (1978) who discussed the unifying nature of dress in demarcating participants in the Season from lower social classes. The second supports the view of performance geographers earlier in this chapter that performance, in the form of dance, or in this case clothing, was used by those in the ballroom to differentiate between contacts. Barnes and Eicher move on to suggest that in this case “dress becomes a way of establishing the ‘social position of a person in society’ and thus can be used as a mechanism whereby inclusion and exclusion can be exhibited” (Barnes & Eicher in Thomas, 2007 p. 372). The point made by Barnes and Eicher summarises the nature of the Season. Dressing appropriately was a tool used by debutantes to be included and to advance this inclusion through the forging of appropriate networks. Those without the ability to dress effectively and fashionably were by contrast excluded, failing to portray the wealth and suitability required by Society during the Season. In this way, clothing becomes not only a tool enabling debutantes to amass network capital, but a method by which Society as a whole could eliminate unsuitable networks, acting as a further regulatory measure in the Season. The use of clothing in forging identities is evident in the Souls, mentioned in Chapter 6 in the context of frenetic networking. This group of individuals aimed to stand out from others in Society, valuing wit and intelligence above fortune and landed property (Lambert, 1989). To identify as a member of this exclusive group, female members wore bay leaves on their ball gowns fastened by identical paste brooches, providing material symbols of their alliance (Ashelford, 1996).

The study of fashion and identity was taken further by the work of Entwistle (2001) who stated that it is important to go beyond the representational aspects of dress, such as the image desired by debutantes during the Season, and instead understand clothing as a means “by which individuals orientate themselves in the social world” (Entwistle, 2001 p. 55). Applying this view to the Season deepens the analysis. Participants in the Season did not simply wear clothes to a ball to portray a particular image of themselves, they dressed in fashionable clothing to place themselves positively in this social group. They were illustrating a desire not simply to attract networks, but to maintain their position in Society. This use of fashion

during the Season is clearly illustrated by the experiences of the Duke of Wellington upon entering the Almack's ballroom. According to Chancellor (1922) in *The Annals of Almack's*: "The Duke of Wellington, then probably the most popular, as he certainly was the greatest, man in England, once appeared at those portals [the doors of Almack's] armed with voucher and all necessary credentials, but, horrible to relate, in trousers instead of knee-breeches, which had been strictly forbidden by the committee sitting in solemn conclave [the Almack's hostesses]!" and found himself being turned away as a result (1922, p. 106). This strict adherence to the particular rules of fashion for this Season reveals the extent to which Society, even in the face of one of its most popular members, refused to accept a lapse in adherence to fashionable clothing.

### *Fashion and a reflection of class*

Linked to these discussions regarding a debutante's position in the social order of the Season is a body of contemporary theory which suggests that clothing is worn by people as a marker of class. This theoretical discussion mirrors the work of Sproule (1978), who identified the use of fashion in this way during the Season. To belong to the Season, to be worthy of invitation to balls and network formation, it was important to align with modes of upper class dress. Jackson et al (2007) use the work of Bourdieu in understanding fashion and class. Bourdieu's 'sociology of taste' was based on the consumption culture of France after WW2, in which he argued that cultural distinctions involved more than simple choices about what to wear, also involving social distinctions. In summarising this theory, Jackson et al suggested that "notions of 'good taste' function as class markers and investments in the appropriate (culturally approved) commodities can be 'traded' for social position (2007 p. 909). Whilst participation in the Season was a far more rigorous process than that described by Jackson et al, thereby limiting the ability of clothing to act as a sole facilitator for entry into the Season, there is some evidence to suggest that in certain spheres of the Season, clothing was nonetheless a useful tool in rising up Society's tiers. In Chapter 6, the Prince of Wales' role in facilitating the networking of American debutantes was discussed. Through their close contact with the Prince, these untitled families were accepted into the London Season. There is some evidence to suggest that clothing aided some of these American debutantes, termed 'professional beauties' by Worsley-Gough (1952, p. 22); the Prince of Wales was noted for having chosen to socially support those who dressed in an appealing manner. MacColl & Wallace (1989) found evidence to suggest that the Prince was

so preoccupied with the fashions of Americans that he requested they each wear a new dress when visiting him for dinner at Marlborough House.

The example of American girls may be atypical to a certain extent, owing to the Prince of Wales' specific liking for American women in appealing garments and his powerful position in Society. However, on a more universal level, for all those participating in the Season, clothing was still invaluable as an essential marker of class. The social importance of dressing according to class has been described by Cannon (1998), however, as restricted to those societies which display a clearly defined class structure, as was the case during the Season. The importance of this in terms of the nineteenth century has been discussed by Crane (2000). In the nineteenth century, differences in 'clothing behaviour' mirrored the wide differences in 'social behaviour' between the different classes in British society. Crane suggested that although some costume historians identify a democratization of clothing styles during the century, this did not alter the fundamental way in which class could be identified by the clothes worn, securing the position of the material object as a way in which past social geographies can be understood (Law & Hetherington, 2000). According to Crane, in the nineteenth century, clothing was important for both genders of the upper classes because it constituted a major factor in the presentation of self in public and private space. To dress appropriate to class during the Season was an act of belonging, as well as a means by which to attract networks and perform wealth and status. This echoes the work of Law & Hetherington (2000) who called for an appreciation of the power relations reaffirmed through material objects.

#### *Performing fashion in spatial contexts*

The role played by fashion in performance can be contextualised further by linking it to the spatial contexts in which it operated. This consideration of the space in relation to fashion has been proposed by Potvin (2009) who called for an engagement between the two. He argued that encounters with fashion happen in space in a certain place and that these places and spaces do not simply act as backdrops but are pivotal to the meaning and experiences of fashion. Particularly useful to a study regarding the ballroom are Potvin's comments detailing the way in which spaces inform, control and enhance how fashion is performed and displayed. Conversely, fashion also enhances the currency of certain places as centres of importance. During the Season, fashion was made meaningful through the

existence of ballrooms, spaces of display in which performance and interaction occurred. This provides a historical context to the work of Whatmore (2002) who suggested that material objects combine with mobilities to produce and reproduce spaces.

Crucially, and linked to the ideas of Whatmore, Potvin asks what fashion reveals about how people perform in certain places and spaces. This question underpins the importance of studying fashion in relation to the Season. Through an appreciation of the role fashion played in the ballrooms of the Season it is possible to understand the importance of performance in the Season. Debutantes were expected to play a particular role in these spaces to attract advantageous networks, and they did this both through the performance of dance and the display of their status and wealth through the clothes they wore.

Through this brief introduction to contemporary debates existing amongst fashion theorists, the use of these ideas to understanding the Season becomes apparent. Not only did class formation during the Season rely upon wearing suitable clothing, but in this group fashion was used as a marker of identity, displaying wealth and status. The importance of fashion to the Season is given context in relation to the spaces of the ballroom, in which specific codes of performance were adhered to in order to achieve the ultimate goal of an appropriate network. The role fashion played in the formation of network capital by members of Society is a significant one, and will be discussed in more detail below.

### **Micro-geographies of Fashion**

It is clear that fashion was an important element in the performance of a particular image during a ball, one which was utilised to attract networks during the period. So far in this section, broad scale patterns in the use of fashion have been discussed. In the following section, the role of fashion will move to the individual scale. Four dresses worn by three different participants will be examined in detail, understanding the way in which these garments aided a particular performance for an individual and how differences between these performances can be witnessed through their clothing. This micro-scale approach bypasses an analysis of the broad changes in the style and structure of dress during the nineteenth century. Much literature exists documenting these changes (for example Steele (2001) on the cultural history of the corset, Waugh (1954 & 1968) on the importance of the

crinoline and the cut of women's clothes, Jackson and Shaw (2006) on the emergence of the fashion industry), which were frequent throughout the course of the century (Wildeblood, 1965).

This micro-scale approach to understanding the importance of fashion takes inspiration from the work of Thomas (2007) who examined the clothing of Mary Curzon, the Vicereine of India between 1899 and 1905 to understand the way in which dress was used to perform colonial power and authority. This individual examination of clothing enabled Thomas to illustrate the extent to which clothing was actively used by Mary Curzon as a political tool. A similar approach with regards to using clothes as an active agent in network formation during the Season will be undertaken here. These micro-geography examinations also serve to reinforce the work of Gunn and Owens (2006), Highmore (2002) and Moran (2005) who called for an engagement with the power of individual material objects to further understanding social life in past geographies.

#### *White Crepe Dress, 1831*

On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1831, Louisa Smythe attended one of the Queen's Drawing Rooms to witness a court presentation dressed in: "a white crepe dress, embroidered in silver, with blond apauettes, train of white satin trimmed with silver lama. A plume of feathers, brilliants and blond lappets". Not only can Louisa's dress be understood in terms of its fashionability during the period, but also in terms of the role it played in the context of her life at the time she wore it. Crepe was a popular material during the early nineteenth century (Waugh, 1968), defined by Cunnington (1937) as a transparent crimped silk gauze. Choosing to wear a white dress ensured Louisa adhered to the fashionable trend for soft colours during the period (Johnston, 2005). In the 1820s and 1830s ball gowns were expected to exude a harmonious and dreamy quality, mirroring the 'Angel of the House' ideal as described by Wilson (1985) earlier in this chapter. Johnston (2005) revealed that white was particularly popular in this respect, emphasising a graceful air. This ethereal image was contrasted with the use of feathers by Louisa, again popular during the period to represent the exotic, as well as conveniently displaying the wealth of the wearer. Combining these various sources confirms that Louisa was wearing a dress which would have been deemed fashionable during the period. Cunnington revealed that a dress like Louisa's was also designed to maximise beauty. The description of the dress contains several references to decoration, including silver embroidery and a

train, again trimmed with silver. Cunnington (1937) suggested that before 1840, ballrooms would have been lit using candlelight. To use this light source most effectively dresses would have been lavished with metal ornamentation, such as silver in this case, to glitter in the candlelight, a tool used to highlight the beauty of the face.

It is clear that Louisa wished to appear beautiful, wealthy and fashionable, and this can be explained in part by her circumstances at the time. In March 1831, Louisa discovered that a suitor she had previously rejected still wished to seek her network, at a time when she herself was running out of options in terms of potential marriage partners. This change in fortune resulted in Louisa and her family re-establishing the network of this previously rejected opportunity. The occasion to which this dress was worn signalled the first meeting between the pair in four years and the reestablishment of connections between their respective families. It is not surprising that Louisa used her clothing to maximum effect. She arrived at the ball knowing she was required to reaffirm a connection, and she did so armed with a fashionable outfit designed to make her look beautiful.

#### *White Silk Gown, 1861*

Fast-forward nearly thirty years, and another dress is used to maximum effect. Louisa Bowater was presented to the Queen on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1861 wearing: “a white silk gown and white petticoat of white net, trimmed with roses and lilies of the valley, feather and cut lappets, pearl-diamond earrings, pearl necklace and bracelets”. Louisa was from a well-connected, yet financially troubled family with royal connections. Her father Edward Bowater was a groom-in-waiting to Queen Victoria and they resided at the Royal residence of Thatched House Lodge in Richmond Park (Fletcher, 2008). The presentation at court symbolised Louisa’s ‘coming out’ in Society, and commencement of the Season. Aside from the ritual of curtsying to the Queen, court presentation was effectively used by families as a walking advertisement. New debutantes were watched closely, in a similar fashion to ballrooms, and hence it was an environment in which debutantes were effectively performing to catch the attention of an eligible suitor or his family (Ellenberger, 1990). In this situation it is not surprising that Louisa wore fashionable, and more significantly, expensive clothing and jewellery. Louisa made clear in her diary from the outset that she wished to marry well, and the illusion of wealth she demonstrated during court presentation was no doubt designed to aid this process.

By choosing to wear a dress made from silk, Louisa immediately exuded wealth. Silk was an expensive material, described by Cunnington as an “elevating force, perhaps more potent even than sermons” (Cunnington, 1937, p. 426). Moreover, silk became an important tool in maintaining the most pleasant appearance of dresses in the gas lit ballrooms of the 1860s. Materials such as silk and satin possessed the highest possible refractory power, thereby best negating the yellowing effect caused by gas lighting most successfully (Cunnington, 1937). The use of silk in ball gowns of the period provides support for the work of Thomas (2007) who suggested that evidence regarding historical contexts could be found through an analysis of material objects. Silk was made fashionable during the 1860s by philanthropic Society leaders to assist the revival of the silk trade, which had suffered against the popularity of cottons (Waugh, 1968). In this case, not only does an analysis of Louisa’s 1861 dress reveal details of her individual experiences and fashionability, but it can also be used to reflect and explain wider societal trends, as proposed by Thomas (2007). Aside from a use of silk, Louisa’s dress was also characterised by the adornment of flowers. Roses were particularly popular during this period (Yarwood, 1952), and it is not surprising lilies of the valley were favoured by Louisa. In 1864, the Princess of Wales, a friend of the family, was revealed by *The Queen* newspaper to have a preference for this particular flower (18<sup>th</sup> June, 1864).

Just like Louisa Smythe, Louisa Bowater similarly used clothing to enhance her appearance. The yellowing effect of gas lighting was negated by silk, and fashionable flowers were used alongside this most expensive of materials to exude wealth and an adherence to fashion (Gernsheim, 1963). Her inclusion of the Princess of Wales’s favourite flower may well have been a further deliberate move to identify royal connections. Louisa and her family ensured that her dress could be identified with the most positive connotations in the hope that her performance may have attracted eligible and wealthy suitors.

#### *Green Gown, 1864*

Three years after Louisa’s presentation at court and her circumstances had changed considerably. Her father had died in December, 1861 (Chichester, 2004) leaving her family with significant financial difficulties. Although the Queen had insisted they continue to reside at Thatched House Lodge, Louisa’s mother no longer chaperoned her daughter to balls, and this responsibility was instead undertaken by an older

cousin, Mrs Newdegate. This combination of circumstances reduced Louisa's ability to secure an advantageous network, yet increased the need for her to do so. On 10<sup>th</sup> June, 1864 she attended a ball with her new chaperone in the hope of attracting a suitable match. Wearing a "green gown with bush roses", she maintained the fashionable appearance of three years previously, albeit without the more expensive trimmings and headpieces worn during 1861.

The choice of colour for this dress is significant and again reflects the fashions of the period. Gernshiem (1963) revealed that during the 1860s chemical dyes replaced vegetable dyes making it far easier to wear brighter colours, leading to their popularity. Increasing numbers participating in the Season also rendered bright colours more useful in the ballroom; Cunnington (1936) suggested that colours were for the first time used to 'catch the eye' during the 1860s. Vivid emerald green was particularly popular, possibly the shade chosen by Louisa, and was made from arsenite of copper. By the mid 1860s the use of this dye was stopped, however, following reports of an illness in a young woman who went to a ball wearing a dress made using this dye. The small window of fashion afforded to these green gowns, therefore, reveals Louisa was wearing a dress of contemporary popularity.

Newspapers published in June 1864 also popularise green, once again reflecting the fashionable choice made by Louisa. *The Queen* declared on June 7<sup>th</sup> 1864 that "as predicted at the commencement of the Season, green would be very much worn during the summer months". The popularity of the colour was somewhat explained a fortnight later when the newspaper declared that colours reflecting the natural world were still in fashion (21<sup>st</sup> June, 1864).

Roses were once again favoured by Louisa, reflecting the still current trend for flowers to be used as a dress adornment (Yarwood, 1954). Louisa's diary revealed that Mrs Newdegate "insisted on sending for a bunch to match for the front of my dress" (6<sup>th</sup> June 1864), signifying the importance of flowers in enhancing the appearance of a debutante. The significance and popularity of using flowers during the Season has been well documented. Morgan & Richards (1990) suggested the importance of a bouquet in completing an outfit, explaining Mrs Newdegate's insistence at ordering this for Louisa. Roses were popular during the period owing to their sweet smell and waxy petal, which proved more long-lasting in the often hot ballroom (Burbidge, 1874). Flowers too were affected by fashionable trends. During the 1860s, tightly-knit bouquets were favoured, a design easily achieved using roses, adding a further explanation for their popularity during Louisa's Season.

Davies (1991) indicated that the bouquets constructed by the florists in Covent Garden market were so tightly packed together that they resembled cauliflowers. The use of flowers in enhancing performance during the period can be understood through the work of scholars such as Moran (2007) and Highmore (2004) who have suggested that historical geographers must focus on the everyday objects which have shaped society. Flowers were a taken for granted commodity used by those participating in the Season to adhere to fashion and improve their overall dress and appearance. The role of both dress and flowers as material objects during this period is, therefore, a significant one. Both objects were powerful tools in maintaining certain desired images, and their importance to the Season should not be understated.

Despite the change in Louisa's circumstances and her lack of wealth, she still attended a ball dressed in a fashionable outfit. Whilst the dress may not have been adorned in the most ornate and expensive manner possible, it was, however, representative of the fashions of the period. This adherence to fashion in spite of diminishing network capital highlights the importance of fashion to the period. Wearing a fashionable dress was used by Louisa to her advantage. She did not have a huge fortune, and her chaperone was not titled or well connected, so she instead relied upon a fashionable outfit to ensure she maintained social status. Louisa's experiences highlight the power of fashion during the period, and its importance to those participating.

#### *Black Stamped Velvet, 1880*

In March 1880, Mary Gladstone attended the Queen's Drawing Room wearing a black stamped velvet gown and train. This outfit gains significance when understood in context. "I am awoken by Schuler telling me I am to go to the Drawing Room on Friday. I get up in a rage and find mama meek and almost in tears but inexorable. I fly to the shops for a ready-made gown at Jay's and train at Heilbronner's. Black-stamped velvet" (11<sup>th</sup> March, 1880). The impression this diary entry gives is one of irritation, yet a gown is bought for the occasion. It is possible to imagine Mary Gladstone using the words 'oh, that'll do' when selecting the garment.

Her choice of outfit reflects her life at the time. By 1880, Mary had been a participant in the Season for 17 years without receiving a marriage proposal, and was regarded as a spinster by many in her family (Jalland, 1986). Yet owing to her

father's role as Prime Minister, Mary now attended the events of the Season in a different capacity, as William Gladstone's private secretary. With this information in mind, it is no wonder that Mary felt a sense of duty in attending the ball, and why she did not choose a particularly ornate gown for the occasion. Her choice of black reflects this image. Gernshiem (1963) indicated that throughout the nineteenth century, black dresses were regarded as an invaluable standby, denoting respectability without undue pride. This was exactly the image Mary Gladstone was presumably intending through the purchase of this new black dress, understandable considering her political position during the period.

Although relying on a 'staple dress', the importance of fashion remains despite Mary's rejection of more contemporary fashions of the period. In previous entries in her diary, she regularly notes the dresses she has worn, including several black gowns. Despite the array of black dresses therefore presumably available to her, and despite the rush she was in to prepare for the Drawing Room, Mary still purchased a new gown for the occasion, reflecting the work of Evans and Evans (1976) earlier in the chapter who identified the importance of new clothing. *The Queen*, however, highlighted the fashion of wearing black in June 1880, stating that darker colours, blacks and deep violets, were the fashionable colours of the Season. The fashion for black during the period was in part due to the influence actress Lillie Langtry held over Society at the time. Lillie wore simple black dresses owing to her lack of wealth, yet her swift rise to fashionable heights rendered black a popular option for those participating in the Season, as illustrated by the first two lines of the poem by Dorothea Mapleson: "She's a lovely lady in a plain black gown, she isn't very rich but she's taken all the town" (Birkett & Richardson, 1979; Ashelford, 1996). It appears that Mary chose a new and fashionable yet 'safe' dress for this Drawing Room, indicating both her changed position in the Season and her adherence to fashion. Despite the focus of her Season shifting away from securing a husband, Mary still ensured she attended this event dressed in a previously unseen and proverbially fashionable gown.

This example, more than the previous three dresses discussed in this chapter, is evidence of the enduring adherence to fashion displayed by all those participating in the Season, stretching beyond the intention to attract a suitor. Mary Gladstone's account above points to a duty to remain fashionably dressed. Fashion in this way can be seen in a similar light to mobility. For those who had always dressed according to the rules of fashion, dressing in this manner became a way of life,

adhering to the changes in dress this brought about over time (Gernsheim, 1963). The analysis of these four dresses leads to two important conclusions. Firstly, experiences of the Season are mirrored in the clothes chosen by individuals and their families. The performance required during a ball was facilitated by different items of clothing dependant upon the different circumstances faced by these three different debutantes. Secondly, despite these differing circumstances, all four dresses were adhering to the fashionable trends of the period. This illustrates clearly the continued importance of following fashion felt by all those participating, and is indicative in the prominent role fashion played during the Season.

### **The example of mourning**

The relationship between fashion and the ballroom was controlled further during periods of mourning. Wilson (1985) declared that mourning was a huge business in the nineteenth century, largely because death was no longer being taken for granted following a decrease in mortality rates during the period. Queen Victoria's prolonged period of mourning following the death of Prince Albert may have further enhanced this 'business'. Death linked fashion and the performance of etiquette closely during these periods, heightening the importance of certain types of dress (*Manners & Social Usages*, 1884; Jalland, 2000). Sproule (1978) summarised these strict rules. For much of the nineteenth century, a widow was to mourn openly for three years. In the first year she was required to wear undecorated black dresses, with her face covered by a crepe veil. In the second year, she could replace the veil with black jewellery, and by the third year she could add elements of grey or mauve. These restrictions lessened amongst other family members, although all those affected by the death were also affected by these strict rules of dress to varying extents (Strange, 2005). The fabric used by mourners was also designed to increase the image of grief (Coleman, 1969). For those wishing to appear in deep mourning, dress material could be treated to give a lustreless surface, reflecting no light and intensifying the blackened colour of the garment (Cunnington, 1937). What is clear from this example is that fashion and material objects were once again used to heighten the appearance of the individual wearing the garment.

The reactions of diarists to periods of mourning, however, are illustrative of the importance of fashion during ball attendance. In all the examples of mourning identified in diaries written during the Season, not one entry appears to accept the wearing of black. In every instance, the death is treated as a disaster, not for the

loss of the relative, but for the restriction this placed on the fashions worn by the diarists. Alice Miles noted on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1868:

“Oh dear! Oh dear! I am so angry I don't know what to do. A message has just come to say that my great-grandfather's second wife has been gathered to her forefathers at the ripe age of 76, and we are all to be plunged into desolation and mourning for an indefinite period. Mother declares we shall go out just the same, but still all our pretty dresses must be put in the cupboard, and we must assume mourning garments at total variance with our feelings on the subject. Oh dear me! What a blessed thing it would be if one had no relations. As far as my experience of them goes, they do nothing but worry and contradict you during their lives and at their death plunge you into hot black garments when the thermometer is a 100 and something in the shade”.

Louisa Smythe, meanwhile, worried that her chances of networking would diminish when she was forced into mourning dress: “We went [to a ball] in black with crepe veils. I think I never was so ill coiffed or looked so atrociously ugly in my life, I was quite out of conceit with myself” (26th July 1830). These two examples reflect the strong reactions to mourning solely on the basis of the limitations the state placed on the wearing of certain garments. This clearly highlights the importance of being able to wear the latest fashions to ballrooms, and further illustrates the importance placed upon the networking potential afforded by being fashionable.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, the networking practices adopted during the Season have been understood through an engagement with the principle of performance. Whilst the networking which took place during the Season has been well-documented at a broad scale (Davidoff, 1973; Evans & Evans, 1976; Sproule, 1978), the way in which this networking was undertaken and manipulated has been considered far less frequently. The two tools of dance and fashion were used in this chapter to understand this networking at a micro-scale. The importance of dance in these performances was considered in the first half of the chapter. The dances which took place in the ballrooms of the Season were the only contact to take place between a debutante and potential suitor away from a chaperone and must consequently be approached as significant networking moments. The strict rules by which the

performance of dance was enacted were highlighted in this chapter, before the way in which specific dance steps were used for display was considered. This enabled an understanding for the way Society used the intricacies of dance to convey status, wealth and power to those present, supporting the work of Desmond (1994) and Cresswell (2006a, 2006b).

The way in which these performances were aided by the choices of clothing worn by participants was the focus of the second half of the chapter. The garments worn during the Season were subject to the same strict rules which dictated performance during the period. An adherence to the specific fashions of each Season was of the utmost importance because dress was used to attract networks. Armed with a fashionable and expensive dress whilst performing dances in the ballrooms of the Season was a tool used by families to increase the chances of forging an advantageous connection. The importance of fashion in creating this required identity was discussed along with a wider recognition of the importance of clothing in identifying class (Barnes & Eicher, 1992). Evidence from diaries and newspapers revealed the significance of fashion in the lives of those participating. This importance was then understood at a micro-scale through an analysis of four dresses worn during the Season. The ability of dress to aid the success of a Season was illustrated, as well as the importance of fashion in the overall display potential of a debutante.

By studying in detail the performance practices of networking, both in terms of dance and fashion, the Season can be understood in greater detail. The importance of performing appropriately and creating a desirable image, particularly for a debutante, was a crucial element of the Season. Understanding the way in which debutantes were required to perform a role during the Season, by adhering to correct and scripted behaviours whilst advertising their status through the clothes they wore, builds on past work regarding the Season, moving to a small scale analysis of the way in which the Season operated and providing context to the networking activities discussed in the previous chapter.

## **Chapter 8: The Spatial Implications of the London Season**



In previous chapters, the concepts of movement and networking have been identified as crucial to understanding the Season. In this chapter, these movements and networking practices will be contextualised and grounded through an analysis of their spatial implications. As discussed in Chapter 2, previous research on the Season has failed to consider the West End as an active agent in the Season, instead treating it as a blank canvas upon which the Season existed (Evans & Evans, 1976; Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980). This chapter moves beyond this banal reading of this corner of London, instead pinpointing the ways in which the spaces of the West End actively influenced the practices of the Season. This approach takes inspiration from the work of mobilities scholars such as Cresswell (2004) who understood places and spaces as a way of seeing, understanding and knowing the world. By studying the attachments and connections between people and places, it is possible to understand the interlinking which occurs between them. This assertion follows an engagement with the work of Larsen et al (2006) who claimed that spaces must be understood through the social networks and associated networking practices occurring within the particular space. Viewing space in this manner in the context of the Season ensures that the West End can no longer be treated as a banal template, but instead as an integral element of the period. As such, understanding the spaces of the West End is a useful tool in understanding the Season, and hence why it is, therefore, a significant element of this research.

Space in this chapter will be understood through a variety of interlocking analyses. Firstly, the concept of the West End as a 'part time place' will be introduced and discussed, before the fluid nature of the space during the Season is addressed. The chapter continues with an analysis of the presence of network nodes, and corresponding spaces of networking intensity. The influence of the Season in remaking space follows, leading to conclusions being drawn as to the relationship between the Season and the spaces of the West End.

### **The West End as a Part Time Place**

Throughout the nineteenth century, the West End of London was subject to the mobility of the Season. Not only was this area of London in a continual state of

motion during the period, as families utilised mobile technologies to travel to networking events, but it also witnessed the arrival of participating families from many areas of the country, as well as from Europe and, in the latter half of the century, from North America, for the few months of the Season. Whilst this sector of West London was typified by the movement that occurred in it, for many months of the year the area fell comparatively silent. Colson (1945) likened the area during winter to Pompeii, recollecting that: “after Goodwood, the last smart racing fixture of the Season, Mayfair and Belgravia settled down for their winter sleep. The streets of Pompeii are not more silent than were Berkeley, Grosvenor and Belgrave Squares and their surrounding streets. Gone were the gay window-boxes, the smart carriages, and powdered coachmen and footmen; indeed, almost the only sign of life was an occasional caretaker smoking his evening pipe...and chatting with a yawning policeman” (Colson, 1945, p. 24).

The dates of the Season were never fixed, however its social peak began at the end of April and continued until the end of July; lasting roughly three months. Pullar (1978) likened the arrival of the social elite in the West End to spring, suggesting that on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May each year, the area burst into full bloom, houses would be freshly painted and window boxes filled with flowers. The Season occupied a dense space in West London, concentrated between Oxford Street in the North and Victoria in the South and between Piccadilly in the East and Kensington in the West. In these individual streets many houses would be occupied by those participating in the Season, and consequently left empty during the autumn and winter months when families migrated away from London. Because of the spatial concentration of the Season, this rendered a significant proportion of the West End empty during the rest of the year, causing Atkins to refer to it as a ‘part time place’ (1990), one continually in flux, poised for the arrival of its residents. *The Illustrated London News* contrasted Regent Street during the Season and the winter months: “In the former case, all is bustle and gaiety; in the latter, gloom and desolation” (April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1866). As witnessed in the quote, the character of the space altered dramatically during these months, and those people who were hidden from view during the Season found themselves centre stage during the winter. Despite this increased presence of servants during the winter, their numbers were greatly reduced from the summer months, leading to much unemployment and poverty in the area during the majority of the year, reflective of the desolation described in the above quote (Weightman & Humphries, 1983). The contrast between these two faces of the

West End is testament to the significance of the Season in altering the nature of the spaces in which it existed.

The ghostly quality of the space during this period can be witnessed by taking a snapshot of the census for 1861. Viewing the houses in St James's Square, surveyed on 7th April before the Season began, it is possible to see that only eleven of the thirty houses surveyed were occupied by the main family group or individual renting the property. The other nineteen houses surveyed were only recorded as hosting domestic staff, most commonly a 'housekeeper' and a 'servant'. This evidence can be contrasted by the arrivals notices published in *The Morning Post* for the start of May of the same year. As the first entertainments of the Season approached, an influx of participants arrived into the spaces of the West End daily, transforming the near empty houses and streets into bustling hyper mobile centres. The fluid nature of the space at this time can be witnessed in Figure 10.

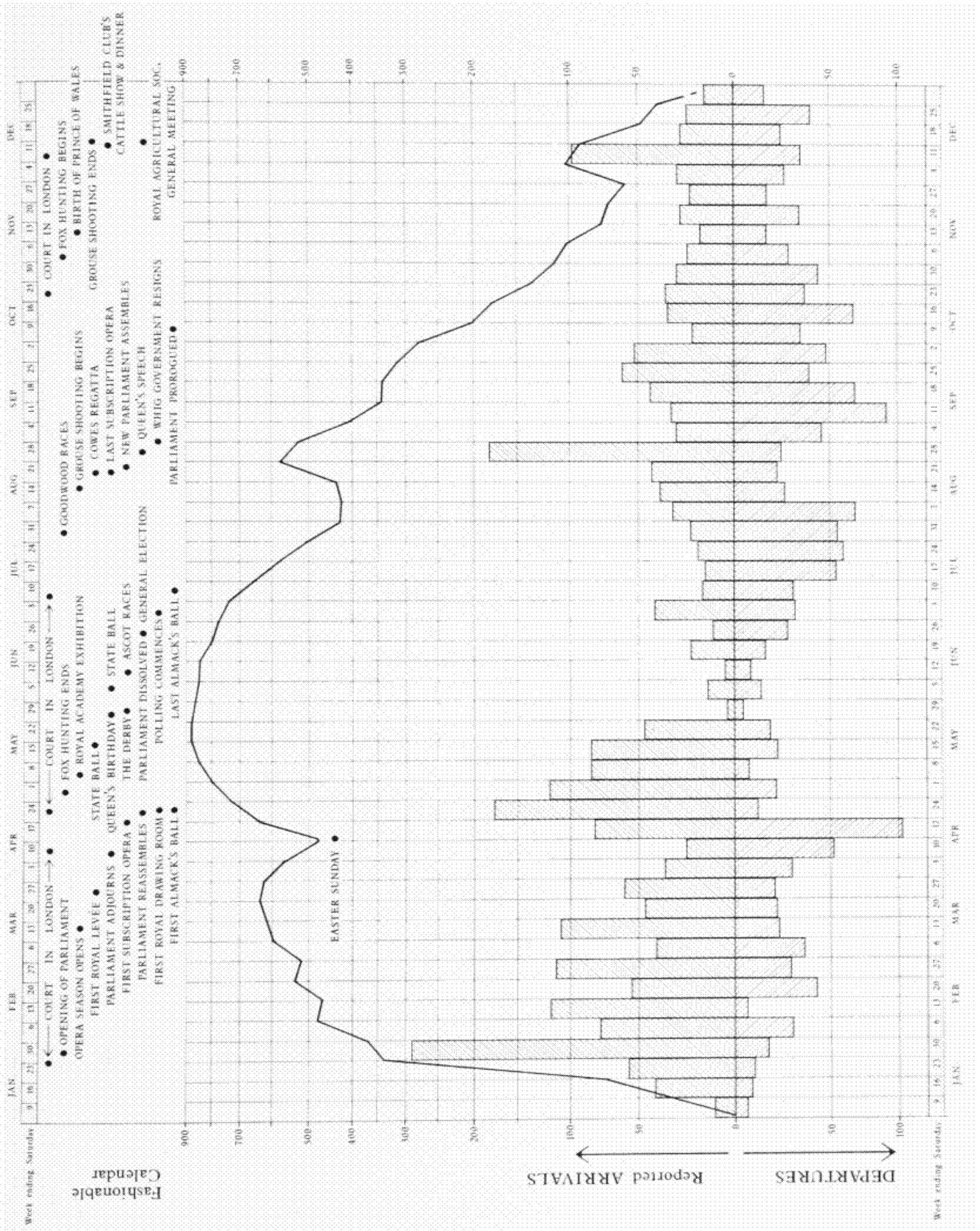


Figure 10: 'Seasonal migrations of the fashionable world in 1841' (Sheppard, 1977)

Sheppard (1977) plotted the flow of fashionable migrations into and out of London during the 1841 Season using *The Morning Post*, correlating these with the main events which occurred in the entertainment calendar. Over four thousand movements are plotted on the graph, and although Sheppard suggested the actual figure would have been considerably higher, this is still illustrative of the fluidity of the area at the time. The graph reveals that arrivals for the Season peak in late April, with both arrivals and departures remaining low throughout May and June and both then peaking at the start of August as many people leave for their country houses. This later peak in arrivals can be explained by the new parliamentary session which commenced at a similar time (Beckett, 1986). Whilst these trends can be easily identified, what the graph also illustrates is that throughout the Season, participants were continually arriving and departing; the space was in a state of continual motion.

### **'Fluidity' in Relation to the Season**

The fluidity of the area during the Season, and the comparative winter stillness which followed, can be linked to the work of mobilities scholars. Theoretical discussions by Adey (2006) and Conradson & Latham (2007) reject views of place as sites fixed in geographical space and time. They suggest that instead academics should embrace the concepts of fluidity and movement; places as shaped by the movements and flows which occur through them. Lippard (1997) suggested that place and mobility far from being separate entities are in fact joined together; places are composed of hybrid ingredients continually subject to changing components. Lippard positions movement at the heart of place, a view which can be adopted in this research. Chapter 5 illustrated not only the significance of movement for those participating in the Season, but also the volume of movement which occurred. The consequences of this movement in terms of the constantly evolving West End which was created by the Season is witnessed throughout the course of this chapter. Cresswell (2004) prioritised movement further, stating that it is the fluidity of a place, the movement that occurs in a place, which shapes the nature of the particular environment. In this way, places such as the West End must be understood in the context of the mobility that occurred in them. This theory is entirely relevant to work on the Season, where previous studies have failed to consider the impact of the movements discussed in Chapter 5. The temporary migrations to and from the Season, and the mobility witnessed during the Season are important, because they characterised the spaces of the West End as ones of flow. This area of London not

only played host to mobile people, but was also rendered semi-dormant by their absence. In understanding the West End in this way, the importance of the Season in shaping the character of the area is highlighted, along with the compact scale of the area utilised by those participating. Massey (1991) suggested that places are in a constant state of becoming, changed by the events that occur in them, and not fixed, bounded and permanently unchanged. The spaces of the West End at the time altered throughout the year, subject to the movements of those living in it and should be understood through this fluid lens.

Whilst the spaces of the West End during the Season are characterised by fluidity, it is important to note that not everyone residing in the core areas of the West End, such as Grosvenor Square (Rosen & Zuckermann, 1982) were participants in the Season. Utilising ball attendance lists published in *The Morning Post* newspaper once again, Figure 11 demonstrates the percentage of houses on the square in which a ball attendee resided.

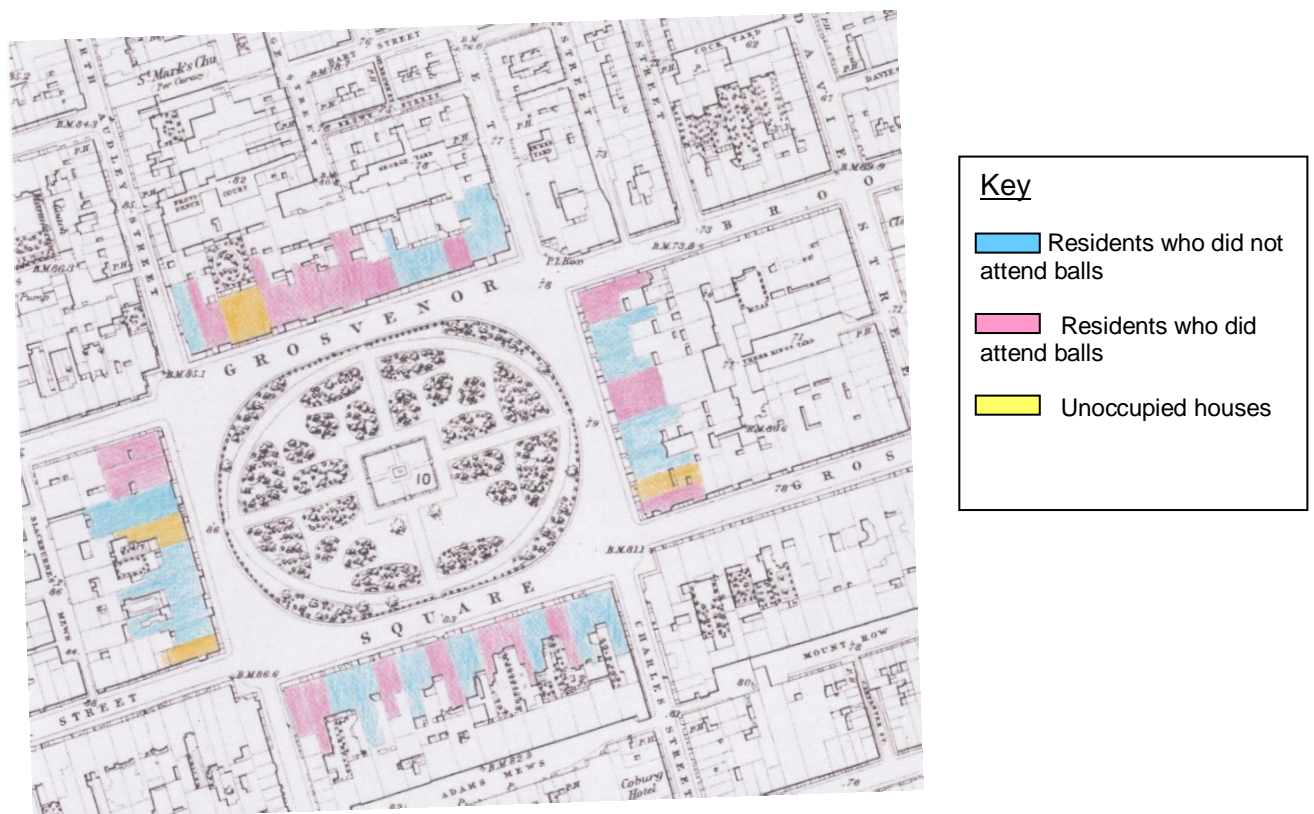


Figure 11: The proportion of houses on Grosvenor Square occupied by a resident attending balls during the 1862 Season.

Although limitations regarding the reliability of the data contained in *The Morning Post* have been discussed (see Chapter 4), the general trend witnessed through the use of this source is an important one. *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* indicated that of the 49 houses on Grosvenor Square in 1862, four were unoccupied during the Season (shaded yellow in Figure 11), possibly for maintenance work or simply because the owner of the leasehold on the property did not migrate to London for the Season. Of the remaining 45 houses occupied in the square, only 23 residents attended balls during the 1862 Season (shaded pink). The other 22 residents (shaded blue), all of whom were recorded in *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* and therefore presumably of suitable reputation to be included in the Season, were never recorded as having attended balls or court presentations (their names do not appear in lists published in *The Morning Post* or in the court presentation attendance records for 1861). Despite issues over the reliability of these data sources it is clear from Figure 11 that not every resident on the street participated in the Season, or participated in it in the same highly prominent manner as those 23 residents whose participation was well publicised.

This analysis raises an important point. At the heart of the Season, in one of the central squares of the West End (Rosen & Zuckermann, 1982) it is possible to conclude that almost half of those residing there did not openly or extensively participate in the Season. Whilst these people may have been aristocratic or elite members of Society, and certainly wealthy (Horn, 1992), they did not participate in the publicised social whirl of engagements and networking opportunities which existed in the spaces surrounding them<sup>26</sup>. Contrasting with the work of scholars such as Pullar (1978), it is important to understand that the Season was not simply imposed on an area in which every resident was a participant, but instead a period of social networking which occurred in an area of London in which 'normal' life also existed<sup>27</sup>. In terms of fluidity, whilst there is no doubt that the spaces of the West End were characterised by the excessive mobility of many of its temporary migrants,

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<sup>26</sup> It is important to note here that people could have been participants in the Season without attending balls and other high profile events (which may have been avoided through personal choice, age or ill-health). Paying calls was a key networking activity during the period of which no record exists (Davidoff, 1973). When utilising evidence which does exist in relation to networking, namely ball attendance lists, it must be remembered that this was not the only method by which those participating in the Season connected.

<sup>27</sup> Although this chapter is concerned with those participating in the Season, it must be noted that Mayfair also contained many other residents besides those living in aristocratic estates (Picard, 2005), many of whose businesses were utilised by those participating. Shopkeepers, manufacturers, servants, prostitutes and many other sectors of society also resided or worked in the areas of the West End discussed in this chapter (Glinert, 2007).

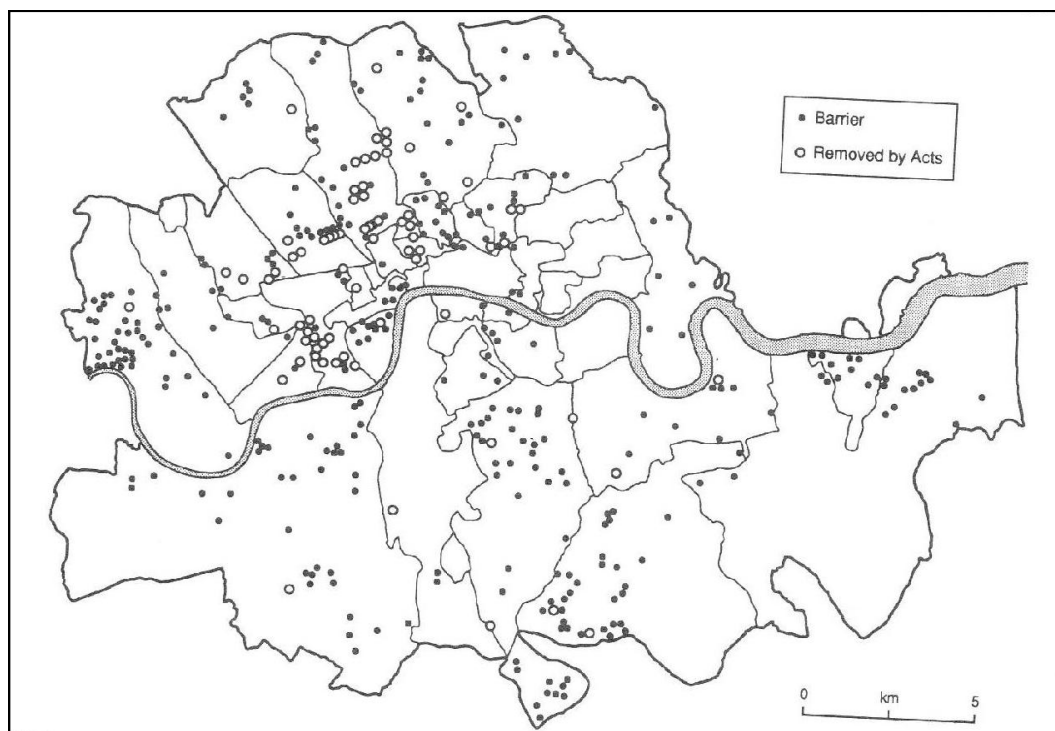
the area also played host to potentially less fluid individuals. The variety of residents depicted in Figure 11 supports the work of Massey (1993) who stated that far from being homogeneous, places are made up of a combination of different residents, both permanent and temporary, ensuring that no place can be viewed as having a single identity. In discussions regarding the Season it is important to remember that this pocket of London during the nineteenth century was far from homogeneous, it was not simply a blank canvas onto which elite families prescribed a single identity, that of the Season; instead there were multiple engagements occurring with the same spaces of the West End at the same time.

### *Enclaved Fluidity*

Whilst those in the West End who were participating in the Season displayed a significant level of fluidity regarding their movements on a variety of scales, this group of people also attempted to monopolise this space, controlling the fluidity of others who wished to travel to the area. A social commentator of the day, Captain Gronow noted that: “the lower or middle classes [did not] think of intruding themselves in regions which, with a sort of tacit understanding were given up exclusively to persons of rank” (Gronow, 1877, p. 53). This quote is significant because it illustrates that the elite residents of this area of London, many of whom participated in the Season, characterised the area to such an extent that other London citizens understood they were not welcome. The creation of this enclaved space in which the Season existed was far from a benign assumption on the part of those who felt excluded. Throughout the nineteenth century, planned developments in the West End were designed to keep the area exclusive (Rappaport, 2002). When the prominent elite shopping area of Regent Street was first designed by Nash in 1811, the plans excluded areas to the East, primarily the less desirable area of Soho, and instead aimed to ‘look to the West’ (Porter, 1994). This was to be achieved through a limitation placed on the number of roads entering Regent Street from the east, favouring access routes from the more fashionable west side of the street. Not all these plans came to fruition, but nevertheless, the intention to use the new street development as a barrier for the West End and the elite families who resided there is clear (Weightman & Humphries, 1983).

The development of Regent Street was not the only example of the blockading of the lower classes by the elite, however. Atkins (1993) suggested that the West End during the nineteenth century was a ‘gilded cage of privilege’ demarcated not only

through the social status of the people who resided there, but physically through the creation of street barriers designed to keep out undesirables. These barriers took the form of gates, bars or posts which were erected at the boundaries of the estates which comprised much of the West End (Dennis, 2008). Officially introduced to prevent the use of privately maintained estate roads by those who did not pay rent to the ground landlord, they also served to reinforce the elite nature of the gated community inside (Atkins, 1993). Whilst these gates and bars were introduced across London during the nineteenth century, the proliferation of these in the West End (shown in Figure 12) is illustrative of the enclosed nature of this area of London in comparison with other areas of the capital<sup>28</sup>.



*Figure 12: Gates and bars in the Metropolitan Board of Works Administrative Area (Atkins, 1993).*

The five gates erected to defend the Bloomsbury estate from unwanted traffic were positioned in Upper Woburn Place, Endsleigh Street, Georgina Street (now known as Taviton Street), Gordon Street, and Torrington Place, protecting the northern boundary of the estate and had all been erected by 1831 (Olsen, 1964). The rules for the gates (except Upper Woburn Place) were designed to strictly limit the ability

<sup>28</sup> Not all residential districts imposed street barriers; gates were often restricted to boundaries which were subject to heavy traffic passing through them. It is also important to note that as the nineteenth century progressed, negative public opinion regarding these barriers led to the creation of pressure groups who lobbied for their removal (Atkins, 1993).

for non-residents to enter. As stated in Olsen (1964): “The rules for the new gates...permitted “gentlemen’s carriages of every description, cabs with fares and persons on horseback” to pass through them. They prohibited “omnibuses, empty hackney carriages, empty cabs, carts, drays, wagons, trucks, cattle and horses at exercise, or funerals”. The gates were closed to all traffic from 11pm to 7am” (p. 147). The daytime restrictions noted by Olsen limited entrance to those who could afford to keep a carriage, providing a barrier against those who could not. The complete closure of the northern barrier of the estate between 11pm and 7am, however, effectively privatised the area completely. Whilst those inside were travelling within the area to balls and entertainments, displaying frenetic and fluid mobility, those on the outside of the gates had their mobility prohibited by these elite residents on the other side of the barrier.

This control of space by the elite living in the West End is significant, reflecting the work of Cresswell (2004) who suggested that such spaces are made meaningful through the context of power. Estate owners and their tenants held a powerful position in society, which was manifested in their control over the spaces in which they resided<sup>29</sup>. Not only is this significant in highlighting the exclusive nature of the Season, but it is also illustrative of the extent to which these powerful families locating in the West End had influence over this space. Using physical barriers and planning designs, those living in the West End moulded the space, creating a gated community in the heart of London throughout much of the nineteenth century. Whilst those participating in the Season may have displayed significant fluidity of movement, the monopolisation of space which existed in the West End meant that their hyper mobility was undertaken, certainly at night, in the confines of an enclaved pocket of exclusivity.

### *Fluidity and Fashion*

Whilst the fluid nature of the movements occurring during the Season were subject to the barriers and gates which demarcated this elite area, once inside the confines of the West End, this fluidity was subject to the fast-moving trends of fashion. Although gates and bars marked the boundaries of the estates, placing Mayfair at the core of the Season, the popularity of certain areas of the West End was subject to the changing rules of fashion, an adherence to which was identified in Chapter 7

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<sup>29</sup> Estate owners also displayed this power in relation to vetoing initial railway developments planned through their land in the West End. For a detailed study see Kellett (1979).

as an essential tool used by participants to attract networks. Areas in the West End gained and lost popularity throughout the nineteenth century, rendering certain areas as hubs of movement and others less engaged in networking (Atkins, 1990). Space became an important marker of status because of these fashionable trends, the importance of a good address in the 'right' space added to the networking potential of a participant in the Season (Horn, 1992). The importance of this adherence to fashion can be witnessed by the rental prices placed upon certain areas over others. Wilson Brothers of South Audley Street advertised to their clients in 1871 that they had 'all the fashionable positions in the West End of Town', and listed a fourteen bedroomed house in Grosvenor Place with six sitting rooms at a rent of 800 guineas for the Season. This can be contrasted by the advertisement of a property in Devonport Street, off Gloucester Square in Bayswater, and away from the heart of the Season, which commanded 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the rental price of Grosvenor Place (Horn, 1992). This rent differential is evidence of Jackson's claim that certain areas never gained the same level of aristocratic reputation as Mayfair (Jackson, 2004), a claim supported by Charles Dickens Jr in 1879: "Mayfair...is still, from the society point of view, the *crème de la crème* of residential London" (1879, p. 141).

The mobility and fluidity created by fashion in the West End is significant because, as suggested by scholars such as Lippard (1997) and Adey (2010), space is influenced accordingly. It cannot be said that the spaces of the Season were fixed entities, it was not an event which could be bounded. Instead it was one which was in a constant state of flux, the periphery continually shifting around a relatively central core, adherent to the fashion of the period. Atkins (1990) investigated these changing fashions in relation to the Season through the use of court directories, concluding that throughout the nineteenth century the West End was a "spatial envelope which was open to the south-west but closed to the north east" (p. 50) reflecting the patterns of residential movements by the elite during the period. In 1800 fashionable addresses in the West End were located solely to the east of Hyde Park, however, by 1860 fashions had shifted west (due to the demand for the larger properties of Kensington (Olsen, 1964)), elite residences now spanned all four corners of the park. By adopting the mobilities theories of scholars such as Hannam et al (2006) who call for an understanding of space in terms of fluidity, a renewed emphasis can be placed on the way in which the Season impacted on the spaces of the West End of London at the time rendering certain areas popular and others less so. The fluctuating fashionability of space outside the central core of Mayfair (Atkins, 1990) is illustrative of the trends witnessed in Figure 8. This map compared

the residences of all the attendees of two balls occurring on the same night of the Season in May 1862, and revealed that those attending a less prestigious ball travelled from a far wider distance than the majority of participants attending a more prestigious event in the heart of Mayfair. In Figure 8 these differences were represented as different sectors of Society, in which those in the upper tier predominantly lived and networked in the core of the West End, surrounded by those participants less titled or wealthy who resided further from the core. It is clear that the social structure of Society during the Season impacted greatly on the spaces of the West End, prescribing certain areas as core and more powerful spaces than others.

### **The Stable Core of the Season**

The character of this central and powerful core existing in the heart of the West End has been analysed further using *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* in relation to Grosvenor Square, depicted by several scholars and commentators as the centre of the Season (Rosen & Zuckermann, 1982; Banfield, 1890). Table 4 overleaf depicts the residents of house numbers 1-10 in Grosvenor Square in 1862 and for the four years either side of this central year. In a period depicted as fluid, where participants were often noted as renting different houses every year for the Season (Atkins, 1990), the results of this analysis are significant. Names in red text depict changes from the resident of the house in 1862. As the table shows, in 1863 there were only three changes in the residents between the two years, rising to four changes in 1864. In 1862 there was only one different resident from the previous year. Overall, between 1861 and 1864 there were only 10 changes of resident in the Square as a whole, leaving 39 houses unchanged. Over a longer period the trend remains similar. In 1850, only 16 of the 49 houses on Grosvenor Square were occupied by different residents to those living there in 1862, twelve years later.

1858	Mrs Arcedeckne	Lady E Clements	Lady E Balfour	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Lady Domvile	John Neeld MP	Earl of Wilton	Mrs Bathurst	Charles Henry Mills	Earl Grosvenor
1859	Mrs Arcedeckne	Empty	Lady E Balfour	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Beriah Botfield	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	Mrs Bathurst	Charles Henry Mills	Earl Grosvenor
1860	Mrs Arcedeckne	Empty	Earl of Chesterfield	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Beriah Botfield	Lady Edith Abney Hastings	Earl of Wilton	Mrs Bathurst	Charles Henry Mills	Lord Harris
1861	Mrs Arcedeckne	Empty	Earl of Chesterfield	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Beriah Botfield	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	Mrs Bathurst	Charles Henry Mills	Lord Harris

1862	1 Mrs Arcedeckne	2 Empty	3 Earl of Chesterfield	4 Viscount Fitzwilliam	5 Beriah Botfield MP	6 Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	7 Earl of Wilton	8 Mrs Bathurst	9 Charles Henry Mills	10 Empty
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1863	Mrs Arcedeckne	Colonel Clifton	Lady E Balfour	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Beriah Botfield	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	General Fox	Charles Henry Mills	Empty
1864	Mrs Arcedeckne	Colonel Clifton	Belgian Minister	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Mrs Ricketts	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	Mrs Bathurst	Charles Henry Mills	Herbert Canning
1865	Mrs Arcedeckne	Colonel Clifton	Belgian Minister	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Mrs Ricketts	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	Lord Dufferin	Charles Henry Mills	Empty
1866	Mrs Arcedeckne	Colonel Clifton	Earl of Chesterfield	Viscount Fitzwilliam	Mrs Ricketts	Earl of Home/Lord Douglas	Earl of Wilton	Lord Dufferin	Charles Henry Mills	Empty

Table 4: The residents of numbers 1-10 Grosvenor Square between 1858 and 1866.

Table 4 reveals some other interesting trends. Of those houses which did change occupant, several appeared only to be temporary. In 1862 number 8 Grosvenor Square was occupied by the Bathurst family. However, in 1863 the property was inhabited by General and Lady Mary Fox, only to be replaced by the return of the Bathursts in 1864. *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* indicates that the Bathurst family had also lived in the property for the previous four Seasons 1858-61. The temporary abandonment of the property and their absence from the 1863 *Boyle's Fashionable Court Guide* indicates that the Bathursts may well have missed this Season, renting out their leasehold on number 8 to General Fox for the single year of their absence. Table 4 also reveals the relocation of certain residents in the Square; it appears that changing homes in the same location was common. In 1864 the Clifton family moved from their previous residence at number 2 Grosvenor Square to number 42, a house that was slightly smaller than their previous location. Similarly Richard Benyon (not included in Table 4), who for sixteen years had lived at number 34 Grosvenor Square (1850-1866), had relocated 20 doors along to number 17 by 1870, to a house of much larger proportions.

Table 4 illustrates that depicting the West End as having a central core is largely accurate, in Grosvenor Square at the heart of the West End, residents were relatively stable. A significant proportion returned to the same house every year between 1850 and 1870. Leasehold ownership made this a possibility (Olsen, 1964), but the desire to utilise the opportunity to remain in Grosvenor Square is illustrative of the core of fashion which remained in this area throughout the nineteenth century. Just as the sectors of society map in Figure 8 and Atkins (1990) have illustrated, whilst other areas of the West End may have fluctuated, the fashionable heart of Mayfair remained throughout the period of this research. The spaces in this core area were attributed with fashion, power and significance throughout the nineteenth century, and as such remained key to the networking possibilities of the Season. As Atkins (1990) suggested, locating in the most fashionable area of the West End increased the image of social acceptability so necessary in forging advantageous alliances during the period, "to reside at an unfashionable address was to risk social ostracism" (Atkins, 1990 p. 44).

## **Network Nodes**

Whilst the concept of fluidity in mobilities literature is useful for studying the fashionable trends of the Season, the way in which this central core of the West End (described above) acted as a focus for networking must be contextualised further, achieved through an engagement with the concept of 'network nodes'. The use of the term takes inspiration from the work of mobilities scholars, who have employed the concept in defining the social spaces where face to face mobilities are encountered (in particular Urry, 2007). Cresswell (2002) also adopted the term, elaborating that in re-imagining place in the context of movement and flow, we must examine place as a network node, continually being made and remade by the actors meeting and networking in it (see also Sheller & Urry, 2006)<sup>30</sup>. In existing literature regarding the Season, the spaces in which networking occurs are rarely considered, the streets and houses in which people congregate and reside are not the subject of significant enquiry (see Chapter 2 for a review of this literature). In this research, however, the concept of a network node is a crucial tool in understanding the way in which the Season operated around a central core and the impact this event had upon the West End during the nineteenth century. As discussed in earlier chapters, networking occurred through the social events of the Season, the opportunity to network was itself fuel for these events to occur. Social meetings took place in ballrooms, private drawing rooms, along Rotten Row in Hyde Park and on the streets of the West End (Evans & Evans, 1976; Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). These meeting points, located in the core of the West End, can thus be identified as network nodes, areas in which the coming together of networks occurred. This assertion supports the work of Wittel (2001) who utilised the concept of 'network sociality' to acknowledge the way in which networking practices had the ability to shape and reshape spaces. As such, the West End during the period can not only be understood as a network node, but as a historical example of Wittel's contemporary theory.

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<sup>30</sup> It should be noted that the term 'network node' is here being used in the same context as was employed by Cresswell (2002), Sheller & Urry (2006), Urry (2007) as a term to define the spaces of face-to-face interaction between mobile people. The term 'network node' was used in a different context by Adey (2010) to summarise the work of sedentarist scholars who saw place as a bounded container, an immobile point. The use of the term in this research bears no relation to its use in this secondary context.

### Micro-geographies of a network node

Understanding network nodes as the areas in which the coming together of networks occurred, as areas co-present opportunity, was achieved in this thesis through an engagement with ball report attendance lists published in *The Morning Post*, used in earlier chapters of this thesis. Ball attendance lists were published daily in the newspaper and were the clearest, though by no means totally reliable, indicator of who was networking at specific events. By listing the name of every person attending a ball during the 1862 Season and totalling the number of times a name appeared, a list of the most frequently networking families or individuals was compiled. Using *Boyles Fashionable Court Guide* for 1862, the addresses of these networking participants could be found. In order to understand connections between networking and space, all the networkers living on the same street were collated and the total number of times each resident on this street attended a networking event was added together. This gave the total number of networking moments that either occurred on each street, or were launched from each street<sup>31</sup>. In total, this survey found that for three months of the Season a total of 82 purely ballroom networking events occurred in the West End during the Season. In order to view these results spatially, street totals were grouped together. On the map in Figure 13, red indicates the greatest amount of networking occurring in a street, followed by yellow and then orange and green; blue and brown indicating the lowest levels of networking.

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<sup>31</sup> A detailed explanation of the way in which Figure 13 was constructed can be found in Chapter 4.

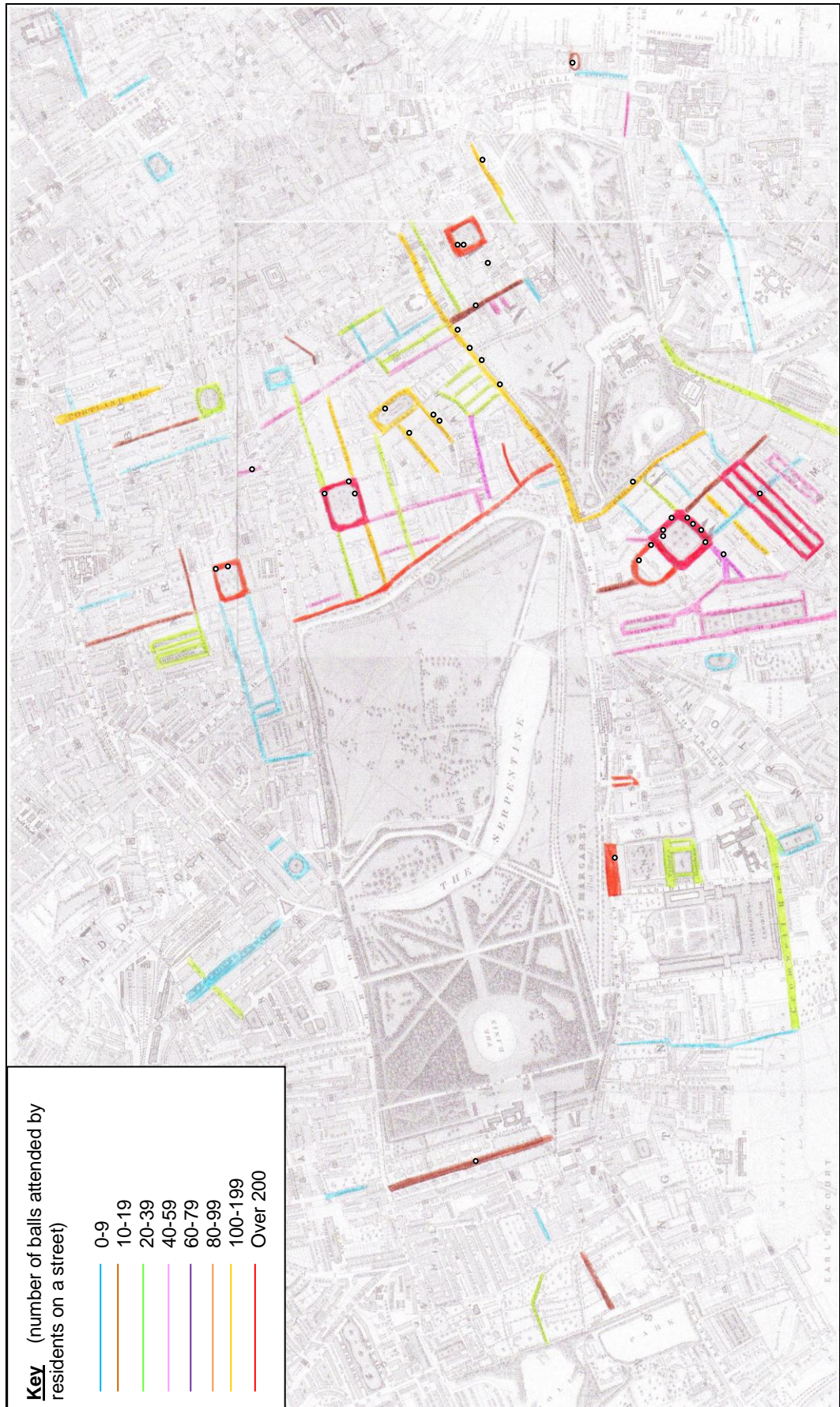


Figure 13: The number of ballroom attendances undertaken from each street of the West End during the 1862 Season (base map reproduced with permission from Anthony Craig)

From the map it is possible to identify the areas of the West End which were the most densely engaged in networking in 1862, and the areas which were less involved in the Season. Not only does this map support the findings of Atkins (1990), in that the most fashionable areas housed the most well connected participants, it also highlights some important trends.

The three most highly networked areas of the West End were Belgrave Square, Eaton Square and Grosvenor Square (coloured red). Branching off each of these squares were streets which were only marginally less networked than the square itself (coloured yellow and orange on the map), with the oldest and most traditionally aristocratic stronghold in the core of central Mayfair (Rosen & Zuckermann, 1982). This demonstrated that the greatest number of these highly networked branching streets correlate with the most fashionable areas in Atkins' (1990) study. The further from these core networked squares streets became, the less networking which occurred in and from them. Charles Booth's survey: *Life and Labour in London 1886-1903* also correlates strongly with Figure 13. The areas of highly networking residents in Figure 13 are represented as yellow on Charles Booth's survey (Figure 14), depicting the highest level of social status 'upper class and upper middle class wealthy'.



Figure 14: Grosvenor Square and surrounding area, Charles Booth's Survey into *Life and Labour in London, 1886-1903*.

The dense networking shown by areas of red in Figure 13 indicates that these were centres of activity during the Season, areas which offered the maximum opportunity for networking owing to the extensive network capital of its residents. This leads to a conclusion that these core squares were the real network nodes of the Season, the areas in which maximum potential for networking formation occurred. This conclusion is supported by plotting the location of balls in the 1862 Season, as demonstrated by the white dots in Figure 13. Of all the balls taking place, only two were not located in a street coded red, yellow or orange, the most densely networking areas, and of these, over half occur in the red network nodes discussed above. The correlation is further heightened when combined with the addresses of the Almack's hostesses for 1862, discussed in Chapter 6 as 'network hubs'. Four of these women lived in the red 'network nodes' shown in Figure 13, three were located in streets directly branching off them and two were in the orange St James's Square. This correlation between network nodes and the location of influential members of Society is further evidence of the power of these spaces in the Season (Cresswell, 1996). It would also be possible to conclude that the nearer to these core areas a participant located themselves during a Season, the more likely they were to network advantageously, be invited to co-present events and utilise the opportunities of the Season most successfully. An additional point in this discussion of network nodes should note, however, that the network node was not necessarily the place in which the most number of individual attendances occurred. As discussed in Chapter 6, some of the most influential Society hostesses did not network very frequently. Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury, the most highly networked individual in the 1862 Season, who attended 41 balls, did not live in a network node, but on Hertford Street, albeit in the centre of Mayfair, but still not the densest of networking spaces. This raises the point that network nodes were not made nodes by the extraordinary networking of one, or several residents, but made up of all residents on the street networking a reasonably large amount, or hosting balls more frequently than those in other spaces. It is this combination which made these squares the most powerful spaces during the period (Cresswell, 1996)<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> It is important to remember that this study relates solely to the Season in 1862. Whilst literature and source material points to the enduring significance of these squares in the Season, the analysis included in this chapter cannot be taken to represent the Season throughout the nineteenth century.

### **Spaces of Networking Intensity**

The network nodes on the map in Figure 13 can also be understood as spaces of networking intensity. Intensity in spaces, as termed by Massey et al (1999), is something which emerges as an effect of the constellations and intersections which occur in it. These social interactions that create spaces of intensity can be witnessed during the Season as the red areas in Figure 13, network nodes of intense spaces in the West End. Massey et al (1999) suggested that in a city, there would be areas of dense networked relations, contrasted by areas where networking took place less intensely. Evidence of this intensity scale can be seen in Figure 13, where radiating from these network nodes are streets of progressively less intense networking. Just as motility (Flamm & Kaufmann, 2006) was introduced as a concept in Chapter 5 to examine the power associated with the potential to be mobile, intensity can be used to understand the potential to network. Although this is not always applicable, it can be concluded that those people located in these network nodes had the greatest amount of networking potential, the greatest chance of securing a network due to their location in a well connected hub and surrounded by networks which were equally well connected. The more closely located a family was to one of the three network nodes of the 1862 Season, the more capacity they had to network and forge connections between one another.

In this way it is possible to understand space as a significant tool for those participating in the Season. Just as a carriage, a material technology, was an essential tool in allowing mobility to occur, so space during the Season can be loaded with the same significance. To locate in a certain space during the Season would give a participant a level of network capital greater than a participant living in another street in the West End. The ability of space to create these increased capacities to succeed in the Season means that space can never be seen as dormant, but instead is loaded with power. Combining this concept of network nodes in the West End with earlier ideas of fashion and fluidity it is important to remember that whilst these nodes existed, they were not fixed entities. These were not permanently powerful streets, squares or areas, but to a certain extent subject to the fluid trends of the period, actively made powerful in a continual process of construction and reconstruction in accordance with the fashions of the Season.

The attribution of power to certain spaces during the Season can be understood most clearly through an analysis of rate books and ball attendance. As discussed in

Chapter 4, rates were recorded annually and provide a record of the gross estimated rental for each property on a street with this value being representative of the size of the property (Thom, 2005). As participants of the Season used their houses as a status symbol, renting or owning the leasehold for a suitable property was a major tool in network facilitation as can be witnessed in the following analysis. The gross estimated rental of houses along a range of streets featured in Figure 13 for 1862 were collected. The maps (Figures 15-20) illustrate the main trends identified, with houses in which ball attendees resided denoted with a white dot.

The first example is that of Belgrave Square, a network node in 1862 Season as indicated in Figure 13 and was purpose built for Society in the 1820s (for key see Figure 14).

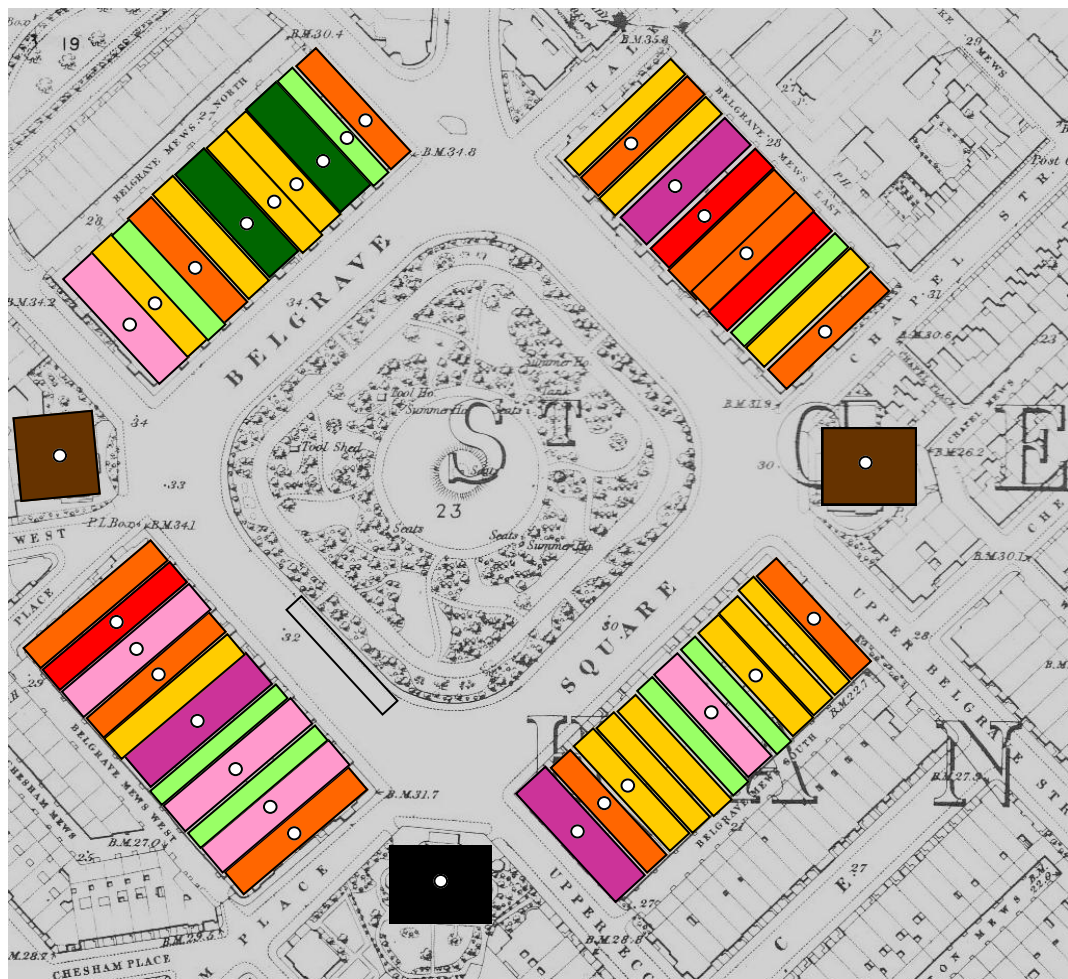


Figure 15: The gross estimated rental values of the houses on Belgrave Square in 1862.

The gross estimated rental of the houses in Belgrave Square were relatively uniformly high in relation to other streets, indicating that they were large properties, as would be expected with homes purpose built for entertaining and housing elite and wealthy families. Unlike many older streets in Mayfair, every house in Belgrave Square was also charged rent for mews and outbuildings, again representative of the purpose built nature of this node. Whilst Belgrave Square may not have traditionally been a centre of fashion during the Season, the purpose built nature of the area made it popular. The houses were large and furnished with all the trappings required by members of Society, and as witnessed in Figure 13 clearly popular with hostesses in 1862 for this reason. The popularity of Belgrave Square is documented in the work of Rosen & Zuckermann (1982) who used examples of writings from the nineteenth century which declared these streets to be the 'most aristocratic' area in London.

Analysing the rentable values of streets radiating from Belgrave Square highlights further interesting trends. Halkin Street runs from the north east corner of the square, and is shaded blue in Figure 13, representative of a low level of ball attendance. This low level of ball attendance from a street so close to a network node, where a higher level of networking would have been expected owing to this proximity, can be explained using the data from rate books (see Figure 16).

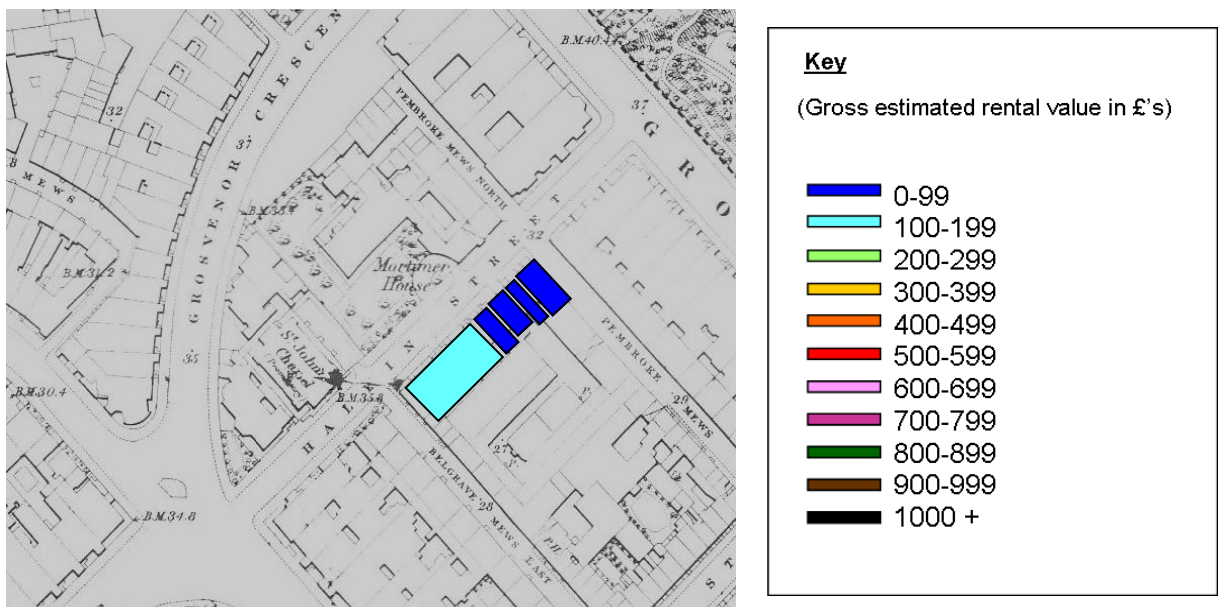


Figure 16: The gross estimated rental value of the houses on Halkin Street in 1862

The gross estimated rental value of the houses on Halkin street were low in comparison to surrounding streets, indicating that these properties were smaller than others in the area. This data provides an explanation in two respects. Firstly, smaller houses would not have attracted ball attendees who were anxious to display status through their property. Secondly, the people living in Halkin Street would have spent less money on rent than those in other streets, and as such these cheaper properties may have attracted those on the fringes of Society who would not have been invited to the same number of balls as those in the upper tiers of Society, thus explaining the lower level of ball attendance witnessed from this street. This trend can be witnessed in streets with smaller houses across Mayfair such as North Audley Street and Duke Street.

Charles Booth's: *Life and Labour in London 1886-1903* confirms this assessment. Both North Audley Street and Duke Street are coloured red on Booth's map, depicting 'middle class, well to do' residents. As discussed above, the majority of the West End, other than the mews in which the lower classes lived, was coloured yellow, denoting upper class residents. The fact that streets such as Duke Street were not recorded as being upper class by Booth correlates with the findings of this rate book analysis and the ball attendance lists in Figure 13.



Figure 17: The gross estimated rental values of houses on North Audley Street in 1862 (see key on p. 218)

Both Duke Street and North Audley street (Figure 17) contained many houses with lower gross estimated rental values, indicating smaller properties less desired by those participating in the Season. This is confirmed by Figure 13, where no ball attendees were recorded as having occupied a property on either street. This lack of attendance was probably due to the lower status of the residents on this street as identified by Booth, further confirming that the size of property was an important factor in a family's location decision.

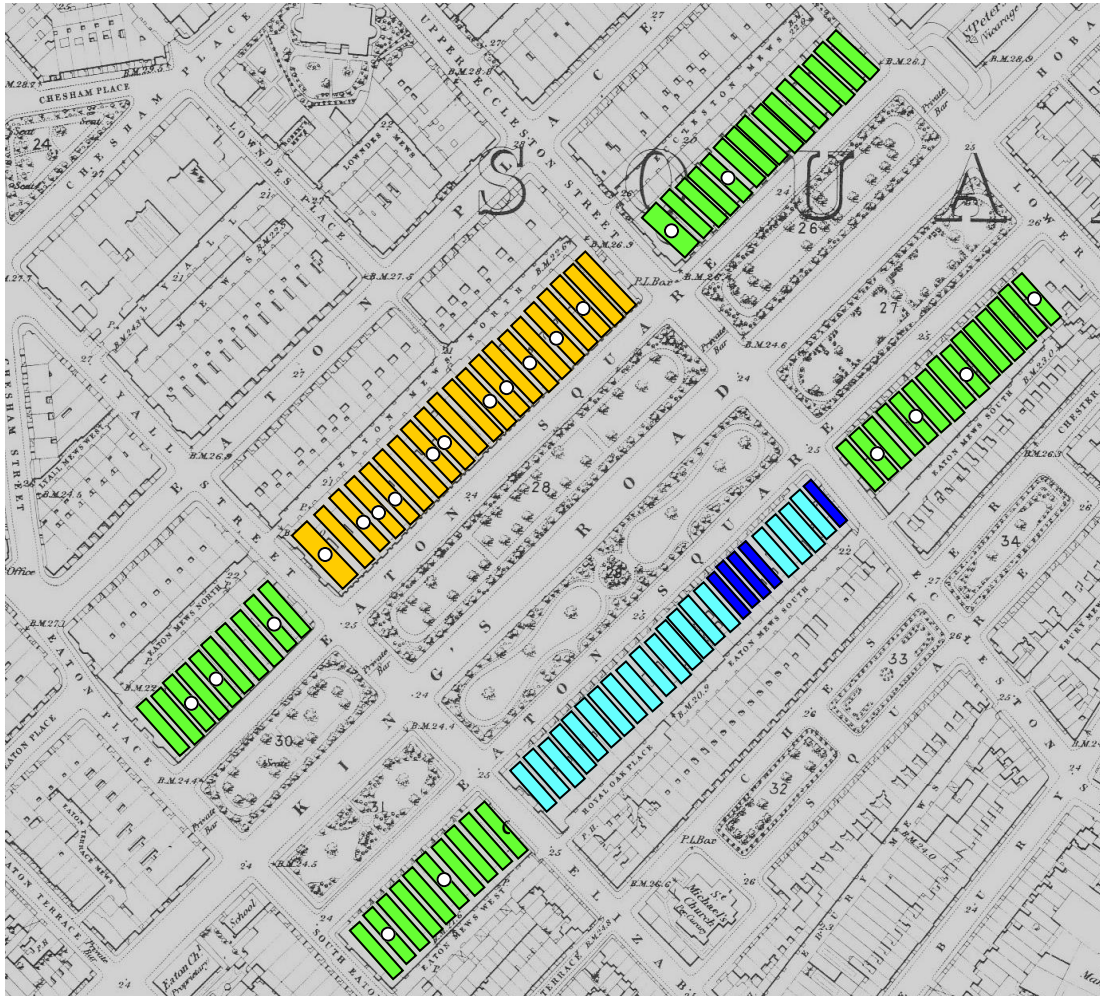
The example of Halkin Street can be contrasted with Chesham Place, another street radiating from Belgrave Square. As Figure 18 demonstrates, the gross estimated rental value for properties on Chesham Place is far higher. A greater degree of networking activity occurred on this street (coloured purple on Figure 13), explained by the difference in the size of property standing on each.



Figure 18: The gross estimated rental values of the houses on Chesham Place in 1862 (see key on p.218)

Chesham Place would have been far more suitable to those participating in the Season than Halkin Street despite both streets' close location to the network node of Belgrave Square due to the larger size of property built there, satisfying the demands of the elite during the period for a property which reflected the status of the family. The contrast between these two streets is illustrative of the role space played in the Season and the importance of an appropriate location to those participating. Atkins (1990) suggested that those participating in the Season used their physical location in the 'pecking order' of the West End to illustrate their position in Society, a conclusion supported by the differences in popularity between these two streets.

The gross estimated rental values for another network hub, Eaton Square, provide further evidence of the utilisation of space by the upper classes and elite. Eaton Square was a hive of networking activity during the Season, however, on average, the rental values for this street were far lower than for the other two network nodes, indicating that these houses were of a much smaller size. Rather than differing from the trend witnessed in the previous examples analysed, however, Eaton Square can be seen to follow a similar pattern when investigated at the micro-scale.



*Figure 19: The gross estimated rental values of the houses in Eaton Square in 1862 (see key on p. 218).*

Numbers 73-98 were larger than other houses on the Square, and therefore had a higher gross estimated rental value (as shown by Figure 19). These houses correlate directly with the residences of those attending balls most frequently, shown by the proliferation of white dots on these properties in Figure 19. The other, smaller, houses on the street did not contain people participating in the balls of the 1862 Season. This once again reiterates the trend witnessed above, that during the Season participants were interested in locating in the largest possible house, closest to the core centres of the Season. This differential between houses on the same street was also witnessed in South Audley Street, which links Grosvenor Street and Curzon Street at the corner of Chesterfield House, one of the largest mansions in Mayfair.

Despite the close location to the major network node of Grosvenor Square, South Audley Street is only patchily involved in the Season (illustrated in Figure 20). Again, it is the houses with the higher gross estimated rental values that are occupied by ball attendees. Smaller houses on this central street are once again ignored. It appears that during the Season, a property under a certain size was not considered appropriate. This demand for appropriate properties in the relatively confined area of the West End is why these spaces during the nineteenth century were so powerful, and why they were loaded with significance and meaning in accordance with the demands of the Season for houses of a certain type.



Figure 20: The gross estimated rental values of the houses on South Audley Street in 1862 (see key on p. 218).

This analysis of gross estimated rental values raises some important points about space in 1862. Not only does it highlight the demand for larger properties in the West End during the nineteenth century, but it also explains why the core of the West End was not uniformly popular with ball attendees, despite being at the heart of the Season. In most streets of the West End there were smaller and larger houses, leaving streets partially in demand. It is not possible, therefore, to make sweeping judgements about popular spaces of the Season, as Figures 15-20 prove that popularity was locally specific in accordance with size of property. This analysis also reveals that houses were used as status symbols during the Season, spaces were made important through the size of the properties located in given streets.

The spaces of the West End are therefore ascribed with meaning during the Season in accordance with the values placed on property by Society at the time, illustrative of Cresswell's (1996) assertion that places are made meaningful by those with the power to define what is and is not appropriate. Being the owner, or leaseholder, of a large property in a street which contained many other large properties, thereby ensuring at least some well-connected Season participants for close neighbours, was used by the elite as a way of maintaining network capital (Urry, 2007). Through their location and through the enduring principles upon which the Season was based, these individuals had the power to continue to ascribe meaning on the streets of the West End throughout much of the nineteenth century, continuing to make certain streets more popular than others. Viewing space in relation to the acquisition of network capital affords space power during the period. This can be understood in terms of 'spatial capital'. Families with a high level of spatial capital would be those residing in large houses, in an area populated by many other large houses and their aristocratic residents. Their chances of networking success may have been increased by living in these areas owing both to the display of their social status through the high rental value of their property, and through their close location to other highly networked individuals. Certain streets in the West End allowed this spatial capital to be accrued (Chesham Place), whereas others were not equipped for the demands of the Season and were therefore low in spatial capital (Halkin Street). Participants were more likely to acquire network capital locating in streets with a high level of spatial capital, thereby making them the most popular locations for the upper classes during the Season. By understanding individual streets in terms of the spatial capital they afforded it is possible to identify the crucial role space played in the Season.

## **Recomposition of Space**

It is important to remember that the demands of the Season changed over the course of the nineteenth century, and thereby changes were made to the spaces of the West End to accommodate these changes in demand (Borer, 1975). Scholars have understood these continual changes in the nature of space as recompositions, analysing the way in which spaces are continually being made and remade in accordance with the activities occurring in these spaces. Urry (2007) followed on from discussions of spaces as fluid, suggesting that they are not only fluid but also depend on these practices of fluidity occurring in them. Drawing on his 2004 work, he suggested that spaces entail various performances, and that the presences or absences of these performances created by the fluid nature of the space, have the capacity over time to shape and change the nature of the space. It is because of the fluidity of these performances, the way in which people use and engage with space, that spaces are reconfigured and cannot be viewed as fixed entities. This continual performance and reproduction of space leads to new forms of social life in these spaces (Ellegård & Vilhelmson, 2004), as shown in the changing nature of the Season over the course of the nineteenth century. Cresswell (2002) similarly utilised the metaphor of performance in order to understand spatial recomposition, stating that thinking of place as constituted through reiterative social practice enables an appreciation of the open nature of place, continually made and remade by changing performances.

Sheller (2004) has taken this argument further, suggesting that migrations and hyper-mobility, as displayed by those participating in the Season, often associated with a detachment to space, are in fact accompanied by rhizomic attachments to space, as indicated in the previous analysis of network nodes. These attachments act as reterritorializations, reconfiguring the spaces in which they locate. The recomposition of space at the hands of those living in and moving through the West End can be understood through the work of historical geographers such as Llewellyn (2004) who draws on Lefebvre to suggest that spaces are continually produced and reproduced by the everyday actions of those passing through them. This continual reproduction of space forms the backdrop to the work of Lees (2001) who uses this theoretical approach to analyse controversy over the use of Vancouver's Public Library. Whilst Lees' work lies in the present, it is directly applicable to the West End during the Season. Lees understood the Public Library as performative, a place which was continually shaped and differently inhabited.

The same can be said of the Season, albeit at the scale of an area rather than a single building. This part of London was continually performed, in part by those participating in the Season, who shaped the nature of the West End by their actions and the demands they placed on their homes and leisure spaces.

The reconfiguring of space in the West End was largely the result of the demand for suitable residential housing during the period (as seen in the previous analysis of rate books), and the power of estate owners to facilitate this (Olsen, 1964). The West End of London was characterised by aristocratic and larger landholdings than the east of the capital, facilitating the building of planned and controlled estates and was enhanced by the location of these landholdings, situated in the space between Westminster and the City, allowing easy access to both (Beckett, 1986). Combined with the fact that this land was on the west of London and upwind of the smog conditions created by the use of coal, this was the ideal site for aristocratic living in London. The demand for housing in the capital by aristocratic families did not begin until the seventeenth century, and initially concentrated on the areas on the eastern edge of Mayfair. The aristocratic nature of the estate was present from the outset. Atkins (1990) suggested that when the first tenants moved into Grosvenor Square, 69% of them were titled. However, it was not until the Season became a recognised and important event in the calendar of these families in the eighteenth century that the bulk of Mayfair, and the heart of the Season in the nineteenth century, was developed to accommodate the increased numbers of participants. The development of this space was linked to landowning families such as Grosvenor, Cadogan and Bedford (Borer, 1975). However, by far the biggest and most desirable estate was the vision of the landowning Grosvenor family, who initially developed the land from Oxford Street to Park Lane and Piccadilly beginning in 1720. As the Season expanded further in the nineteenth century and demand for residential housing in the west end increased, the family leased their underutilised land in Belgravia to developer Thomas Cubitt in 1820, who took advantage of the area's proximity to newly built Buckingham Palace, and its therefore increased popularity, to construct high quality houses around leafy squares, typified by Belgrave Square at its heart (Hobhouse, 1971; Weightman & Humphries, 1983).

The success of these estates was largely due to the demand for residential housing during the Season. As highlighted in Chapter 2, some families would rent houses for the period, others would own the leasehold for a property and reside there for many Seasons, as illustrated by Table 4. This desire to reside in houses in the

West End stemmed from the aspiration to be as close to the heart of the Season as possible, the network nodes depicted in Figure 13. Due to the compact nature of the area, property at its core was in high demand. This demand can be witnessed in Sheppard's description in the *Survey of London* (1980) where the social composition of the area was recorded in 1871 as being unchanged from that of 100 years previously, dominated by aristocrats and gentlemen. Owing to the popularity of the estate developments as homes during the Season, to live in this area was fashionable, it guaranteed families being one step closer to a place in the Social elite, owing to the close spatial proximity to the hostesses of balls and other social events (Kennedy, 1986).

As the Season expanded and grew in importance as a phenomenon, the estate developers managing land in the West End built properties to the specification desired by the demands of the Season (Sheppard, 1980). Landlords utilised the spaces of the West End and modified them to their own specifications, controlling the uses of the space and ultimately the experiences of those residing there. During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Duke Of Westminster, who was known as 'Daddy Westminster' and a supporter of temperance, 'protected' his tenants by reducing the number of public houses from forty-seven to eight, and through carefully worded license agreements limited their opening hours (Kennedy 1986). Upkeep and control over buildings was also the responsibility of the landlord, (Olsen, 1964; Olsen, 1976). In this way, the nature and development of large sections of space in the West End was reconstructed according to the wishes and demands of single landholding families, who had the power to control how the space was used, who lived in it and what it could look like. Mirroring the work of mobilities scholars such as Urry (2004, 2007) and Sheller (2004), the spaces of the West End were shaped by the practices occurring within them during the nineteenth century, namely the demands of landholding families in continually rebuilding and altering space in accordance with fashionable building trends.

This utilisation of space to serve the particular demands of the Season can be witnessed in detailed land-use maps from the period. The map in Figure 15 features Belgrave Square, built, as mentioned above, by Thomas Cubitt in 1820. This provides an example of the recomposition of space that occurred in the time frame explored in this research project, a construction that occurred in the context of the mobility systems and the society examined in previous chapters. As witnessed on the map, streets are accompanied by mews, every property was built with individual

outbuildings, coach houses to protect carriages and stables for the horses that pulled them. Without the inclusion of mews developments, mobility could not have occurred with ease, as the technologies required for mobility would not have been freely available, thus reducing motility (Kaufmann, 2002; Flamm & Kaufmann, 2006). Much of the space in Belgrave Square was therefore given over to the trappings of this mobile lifestyle. Olsen (1976) has suggested that, particularly in the case of Belgravia, spacious mews facilities were planned specifically to attract very wealthy tenants, many of whom would have required the space for several carriages and pairs of horses (see Chapter 5 for a discussion of carriage ownership). Rosen & Zuckermann (1982) indicated that in Belgrave Square Thomas Cubitt 'perfected' these mews developments. The major alteration in the design of the mews in Belgrave Square included the building of arches set into street facades, which screened the mews behind: "at one stroke enhancing the front streets and hiding the mews" from view (p. 17). The inclusion of this design feature is illustrative of the way in which space reflected the demands and priorities of the Season. As discussed in Chapter 5, families were concerned with the display potential of movement technologies; the unsightly mechanics and working class staff which facilitated this mobility ruined the desired vision of opulence and glamour required by those participating in the Season, and were consequently hidden from view. In these new mews and street facades existed evidence of Massey's (1993) 'power geometrics of everyday life', unequal relationships with movement built into the fabric of the West End. Through an engagement with the differentiated mobility empowerments (Hubbard & Lilley, 2004; Adey, 2007) which occurred during the Season in the nineteenth century it is possible to subsequently identify how the spaces of the West End hosted these inequalities. The tailoring of Belgrave Square to the requirements of the Season can also be witnessed in the size of the houses built on in this area. The difference in size of properties between Belgrave Square and the older Grosvenor Square can be witnessed by comparing the different sizes of mews and outbuildings in Figures 15 and 11. It seems that Cubitt did not develop to maximise residential income as might be expected were he a speculative builder, but rather he developed to match the specification of those participating in the Season in the nineteenth century.

It was not only the residential requirements of the Season which were responsible for influencing the way in which space was utilised, however. Social spaces of the Season were also catered for in the landscape of the West End. In particular, the large assembly rooms, an essential prerequisite for a ball until the very late stages

of the nineteenth century, were constructed entirely for the benefit of participants of the Season (Waller, 2000). These socially exclusive spaces were built on public streets in the West End, to be utilised by a small fraction of Londoners. Rooms, such as those on King Street in St James's, ensured that this area of London became the most fashionable of the period; providing specific points for networking and performance (Chancellor, 1922). Those who were participating in the Season were also those who had the power and resources to determine the uses of space during the period (Cresswell, 1996). The attribution of certain pre-existing spaces with meaning based on the practices of the Season can be witnessed most clearly through the example of St George's, Hannover Square, a parish church in the heart of Mayfair. As illustrated by marriage notices in *The Morning Post*, during the nineteenth century the church became one of the most fashionable wedding venues for those holding Society nuptials in London (Worsley-Gough, 1952). The case of St George's highlights the recomposition of space (Ellegård & Vilhelmson, 2004; Sheller & Urry, 2006) which occurred during the Season through an adherence to the changing trends of fashion. Not only was St George's a place of worship, and as such a suitable wedding venue for those living in Mayfair; it was also a fashionable site, a tool used by those who married there to enhance and confirm their position in Society.

The importance of ballrooms in the Season was not just restricted to the construction of assembly rooms, house plans from the period show the inclusion of ballrooms in many houses in the West End. Building houses which could comfortably accommodate a ballroom was one of the reasons for their large size, and another example of the reconstitution of space for the Season (Bradbury, 2008). Landlords who provided houses with ballrooms in them acted as social facilitators (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Houses with this feature were able to host large entertainments, prime networking opportunities during the Season (Borer, 1975). The house plans of 16 Grosvenor Street, at the heart of the Grosvenor estate can be found in Figure 21. The plans reveal that this terraced house included a large drawing room, suitable for holding entertainments, mews, servants' quarters, a dining room and two dressing rooms, not to mention a 'great-bedchamber'.

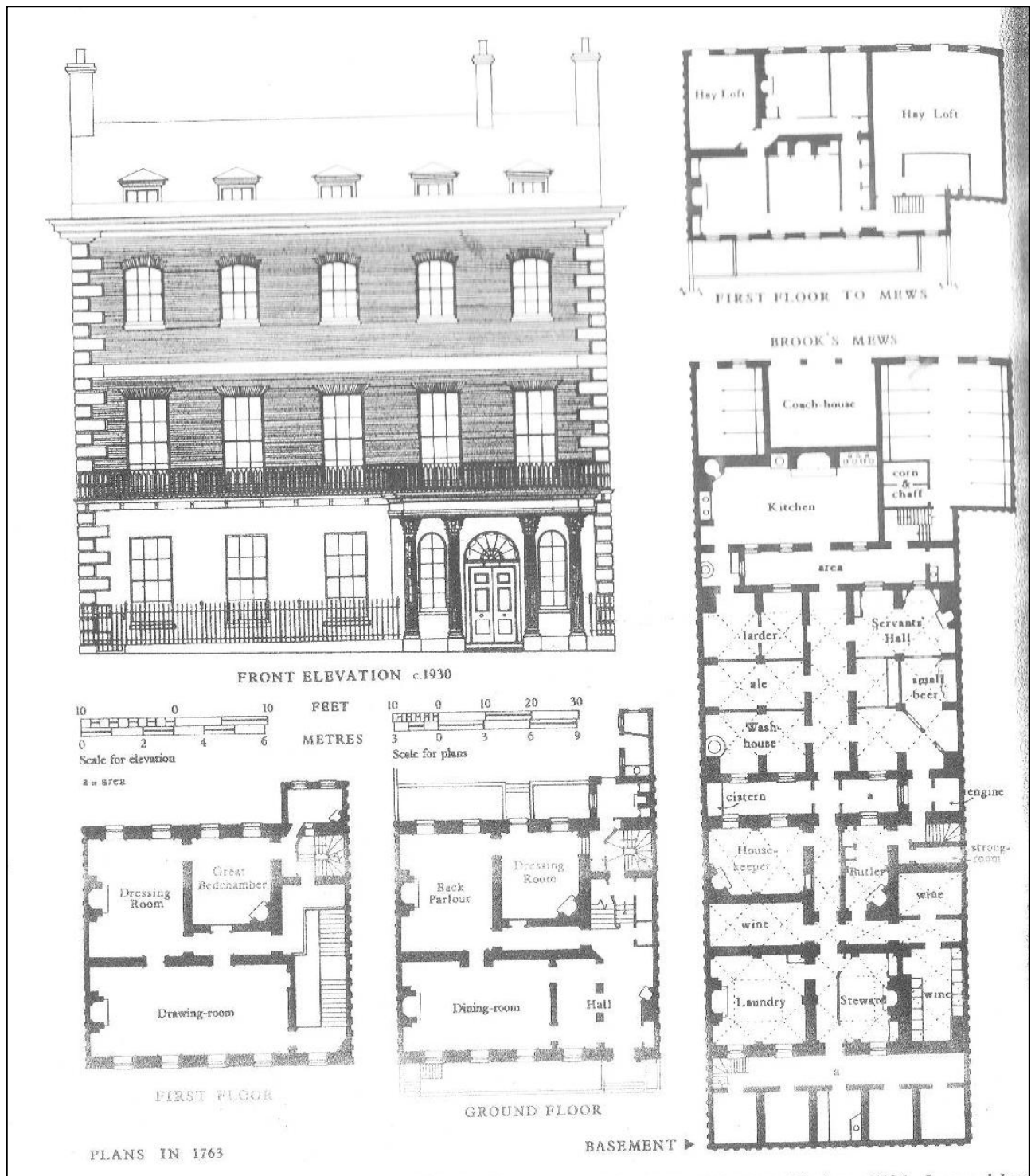


Figure 21: Elevation (c.1930) and plans (1763) for 16 Grosvenor Square by Thomas Ripley (Sheppard, 1980).

A front elevation of the property reveals the size of house required to accommodate all these rooms. As witnessed on the plan, servant's quarters were required to be built out of site of the family and any potential guests, mirroring the social rules of the time (Davidoff, 1973). At the centre of the house and in prime position were the

entertainment spaces of the dining room and drawing room. The central positioning of these rooms in the house made, according to Girouard (1993), the house less congenial for living, yet more suitable for entertaining; clearly reflecting the prioritisation of networking in the house building of the period. This precedence for entertainment spaces can in part be explained by the work of McCarthy (2006) who concluded that substantial ballrooms were required by those participating in the Season with a first time debutante, as the 'coming out' ball was traditionally held at home. To rent a property with a small ballroom would be to limit the number of attendees at this, and other social occasions, limiting the number of connections forged as well as revealing a lack of wealth and status. Large ballrooms can, therefore, be seen as a status symbol, explaining their significance in the houses of the West End (Port, 1995). Julia Cartwright recalled on 12th June 1874 that her grandmother had hosted a party at her home in Eaton Place, inviting over one thousand guests, with 250 people in the room at any one time. This large number of people reveals once again the extent to which the houses of the West End required large ballrooms, and acted as sites of social significance during the Season as a result. As the Season progressed throughout the nineteenth century, social trends shifted, and new requirements were placed upon these spaces. Towards the latter half of the century dances such as the Polka and Waltz, which required a large dance floor, became more fashionable (Richardson, 1960). Ballrooms were altered accordingly to accommodate the extra space required (Thompson, 1995); the houses of the West End acting as a reflection of the changing narrative of the Season as performance practices during the nineteenth century evolved. Some of the larger houses of the Season, such as Grosvenor House, were also extended during the nineteenth century to make space for art collections, another essential marker of status (Bradbury, 2008). These micro-scale spaces of the Season were in a continual cycle of modification, subject to the desire to maintain credibility in the social elite, to participate in the latest networking strategies and performances (Thompson, 1995; Cresswell, 2006; Jensen, 2006).

It was not just internally where space was reconstituted throughout the nineteenth century, however. External modifications were also requested to adhere to the demands of fashion. The Grosvenor estate office was required to approve any remodelling work desired, ultimately controlling the space, and maintaining a uniform style. Viscount Goschen's attempt to build a conservatory on the side of his house on the corner of Mount Street was rejected. However, Lady Bouch's veranda overlooking Hyde Park was granted permission. Whole scale modifications of

houses were also common during the period. Thomas Cundy was commissioned to design a new look for the houses in streets off Grosvenor Square, plain frontages were converted to stucco and Doric porches were added (Kennedy, 1986). As the century progressed, and the fashions of the Season changed, it is clear from these examples that the spaces inhabited by the Season were subject to reconfiguration, altered to suit the new demands of this powerful and wealthy societal group, and as such, mirror the work of mobilities scholars in calling for an understanding of space as reconstituted through the networking practices occurring within it (Sheller, 2004; Hubbard & Lilley, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Adey, 2010)

### **Conclusion**

By understanding the fluid nature of the spaces of the West End during the Season and the way in which it was comprised of network nodes and intense social spaces, the way in which this space was an important and powerful element of the Season can be understood. Those participating in the Season, continually reshaping the areas in which they networked and moved, were in a constant and active relationship with space throughout the period.

The impact the Season had upon the spaces of the West End and the way in which this corner of London enabled the Season to occur has largely been taken for granted in previous studies regarding the period. In this chapter, the spatial implications of the Season have been considered, working towards filling the gap in this spatial knowledge. The spatial composition of the area was discussed, highlighting the presence of a stable core of the Season alongside a community of residents not engaged in the practices of the Season; a lack of homogeneity which contradicted previous literature regarding the period, typified by Puller (1978). Mobilities scholars such as Urry (2007) and Massey (1993) were employed to understand the Season through the concept of network nodes: areas of intense networking. By utilising this concept, space was identified as being made meaningful through the practices of the Season, certain areas were more popular because of the networking activities of their residents. Building on the concept of intense spaces of networking found in these network nodes led to discussions regarding spatial capital, and the way in which the West End was used as a tool to enhance the success of a Season, based on spatial proximity. This work drew heavily on that by Cresswell (1996) who suggested that spaces are made powerful by the activities that occur within them. Throughout this chapter, the way in which

space played an important role in facilitating the Season has been discussed, highlighting this significant, yet often forgotten, element in the networking practices of those participating.

## Chapter 9: Conclusions

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This conclusion begins by highlighting the way in which a mobilities perspective enabled new understandings of the Season to be drawn, as well as suggesting that a historical exploration of these theories adds further depth to the arguments posed by this body of work. The way in which an engagement with biographical material sheds new light on the Season is emphasised, and a different way of approaching the period is proposed. These conclusions lead into a review of the areas of the thesis that could have been developed further, especially with regards to source material and analysis. Finally, some thoughts are offered as to some of the remaining gaps in knowledge regarding the Season, pinpointing areas in need of further theoretical exploration.

### The Season through a Mobilities Lens

In Chapter 2, a mobilities perspective was identified as one of the ways through which research into the Season could move forward in an attempt to plug acknowledged gaps in the existing literature regarding the period. In particular, these past approaches lacked detail in respect to the practices of the Season, how this was manifested spatially and detail regarding individual experiences of those participating. This limited the extent to which these previous studies provided insights into the period in any great depth, creating an uncritical account. Instead, in this research, a mobilities approach which aimed to understand the meanings behind movement (Cresswell, 2001; Blunt, 2007), as well as the social networks, and associated networking practices occurring in space (Larsen et al, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006) underpinned interpretations of the data collected. By adopting a range of facets of the paradigm stemming from the overarching approach above, it has been possible to gain new insights into the period.

Firstly, by utilising a theoretical lens which is founded upon an interest in movement, the mobility of those participating in the Season has been uncovered. Movement was not only frenetic, in an era when scholars have shown that the majority of the country were relatively immobile (Lawton & Pooley, 1975; Green 1988), but that this ability to move was used as a tool to those participating in the Season. Not only was movement used as a tool for participation in the Season, but by utilising the work of Lyons and Urry (2005), Urry (2006) and Watts (2008), it was possible to

identify that participants in the Season also used their mobility as a form of display; as a marker of status. This appreciation of the significance of mobility during this period marks a significant departure away from existing scholarship, in which movement is either absent from accounts, or considered purely in terms of ownership of private carriages (Evans & Evans, 1976; Sproule, 1978). Davidoff (1973) is the only scholar to acknowledge the annual act of migrating to London, commenting on the difficulty in moving long distances. This research moves beyond these accounts, however, and instead highlights the importance of movement in the lives of those participating. Figure 6 began to document the extent to which movement characterised daily lives during the Season (akin to the contemporary mobility researched by scholars such as Kesselring, 2006; Bissell, 2009; Ohnmacht, 2009), as well as utilising the work of Massey (1993) and Adey (2006) to identify differentiated mobility empowerments existing during the period. The use of mobility as a status symbol was considered through an engagement with the use of carriages, horses and footmen, illustrating the importance of being mobile to those participating. The consideration of movement during the Season was enabled through an engagement in the work of mobility scholars, for whom an appreciation of the mobile nature of societies is at the heart of research enquiries (for example Adey, 2006; Cresswell, 2006a; Merriman, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Bissell, 2009). By acknowledging the significance of being mobile during the Season it is possible to understand how the mobility systems which facilitated movement were crucial to the existence of the Season.

The second significant departure from existing scholarship regarding the Season through the use of a mobility lens came through the utilisation of the concept of networks for an understanding of the reasons behind participation in the Season. Whilst acknowledging that those participating in the Season did so to forge connections, previous research has failed to consider why attending events during the Season was so significant, and in so doing, failed to consider the differentiated experiences of these events dependant on the outcome of these attempts to connect. Because the Season was so concerned with the connections made between individuals, mobility literature was again identified as a useful avenue through which the practices of the Season could be understood. In particular, the concept of network capital (Larsen et al, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007) was identified as a means by which participation in the period could be understood and measured. This approach led to an appreciation for the differential networking experiences which occurred during the Season. A consideration of the period in

terms of the desire to network also foregrounds the importance of the chaperone and hostess during the period, and the prominent role these women held in the Season, based on their ability to manipulate the acquisition of network capital. This builds on the work of scholars such as Davidoff (1973), Sproule (1978) and Horn (1992), in which the role was documented but not analysed in terms of networking capabilities. In particular, this research concluded that hostesses during the Season can be seen as 'network hubs' and had a greater significance than has previously been acknowledged, holding the greatest power to change the nature of the Season at a time when gender inequality prevailed in other areas of society.

Encapsulated in a mobilities exploration of networking is an appreciation of the specific practices of network formation, the performances enacted during networking. In an era in which connecting was key, the performance of forging connections is a useful lens through which to understand these specific moments in the Season. Two main elements of performance were identified specifically in this research, namely the importance of dance and scripted performance in the ballrooms of the Season and secondly the role of dress in reflecting the status of the performer; again utilised as a tool through which to attract a connection. Just as movement was identified as a means to display during the Season, so dance and dress were considered at the micro-scale to understand the networking practices, the performances, of the Season. The importance of dance and scripted performance was inspired by the work of Cresswell (2001, 2006b) and also Nash (2000), who both utilised the work of dance theorists to interpret performance in the context of different networking moments. An engagement with dance during the Season revealed the extent to which 'success' often rested on these series of movements; as well as identifying dance as a tool through which attitudes displayed by Society at the time can be examined and understood. This analysis of the specific networking moments involved in dance marks a departure from existing literature regarding the period, in which specific dances are mentioned without their significance in the context of the Season being considered. Likewise, the performance of networking through an engagement with dress is absent from previous scholarship. The use of materials in the construction of networks is a common theme in mobilities research (Law & Hetherington, 2000; Urry, 2007; Löfgren, 2008; Adey & Bissell, 2010), the study of which led to the investigation of the significance of clothing in this research. Combining this approach with the work of historical geographers such as Thomas (2007) led to the interpretation of dress at the micro-scale, identifying how specific clothes were used by those participating in

the Season for specific effects. The utilisation of clothing to aid specific performances mirrors the work of scholars such as Jackson et al (2007), Crane (2002), Potvin (2009) and Entwistle (2001), who called for an appreciation of the role played by clothes in shaping identity, class consolidation and specific spatial contexts.

As identified in the introduction to this section, existing scholarship regarding the Season failed to engage with the period spatially, leading to significant gaps in the research in this respect. It previously fell to specific readings of spatial sources, such as Sheppard (1980, in relation to building plans) and Atkins (1990, in relation to court directories) to provide a spatial consideration. This void was identified following an engagement with a mobilities perspective, in which space is considered as an integral part of understanding movement (Ellegård & Vilhelmson, 2004; Massey, 2004; Cresswell, 2006a; Adey, 2010). This research marks a significant departure from previous scholarship, concluding that space was an active agent in the Season, moving from the banal depiction of the West End in previous research to an appreciation of the importance of space as a tool used by those participating. In order to appreciate the relationship between the Season and space, broad scale analyses were conducted which combined a wide range of sources, including court directories, rate books and newspapers. The maps constructed as a result of this enquiry were understood through this mobilities interpretation, in which places are treated as 'network nodes', continually in a process of remoulding in accordance with the actors using the space (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007). This interpretation led to an appreciation of the way in which space was used as a tool by those residing there during the Season, areas were made meaningful by the practices of the Season and the values made significant by Society at the time. During the nineteenth century, the spaces of the West End were imbued with power (building on Cresswell, 1996), to locate in a particular street gained or lost significant networking advantage; rendering space as significant as movement, dance or clothing in the acquisition of network capital.

By adopting a mobilities perspective to analysing the Season, this thesis supports the work of scholars engaging in historical mobility. In particular, this research supports the work of Pooley et al (2006) and Cresswell (2001, 2005, 2006a, 2010), who have called for an appreciation of historical moments of mobility. They have suggested that whilst contemporary mobilities literature highlights important challenges and changes in the way in which people move and interact, these

challenges are not new. Both scholars instead argue that an engagement in historical incidents of mobility must be used to understand contemporary experiences in a broader perspective. This research regarding the Season provides further evidence for the arguments proposed by scholars engaged in historical mobility by demonstrating the extent and importance of movement to those participating. As such, this research adds to the body of work in this field, suggesting that contemporary mobilities scholarship can be supported by an engagement with incidences of mobility in past situations.

#### The importance of the individual approach

As highlighted in Chapter 2, and again at the start of this conclusion, scholars previously engaged in researching the Season treated the period as a single experience, in which all those involved participated in the same way, with the same aim, and the same conclusion. Throughout this thesis, measures have been taken to explore this notion, heavily influenced by moves in other areas of historical geography in recent years to utilise biographical sources (Blunt, 2000a; Ogborn, 2002; McDowell, 2007; Legg, 2008). In Chapter 5, the individual movements of Mary Gladstone were considered, alongside individual accounts of those facilitating movement. In Chapter 6, attendance at balls was studied at the individual level, revealing that in contrast to much literature regarding the Season which depicted the period as a 'marriage market' (Inwood, 1998; Sheppard, 1998; Mitchell, 2009), there were in fact multiple reasons for attending, broadening an appreciation for the significance of the Season. This individual approach continued through an analysis of specific dresses worn and the context behind the wearer of each in Chapter 7, allowing for a more detailed engagement with the source. Most particularly, biographical sources formed the backbone of Appendix 1, in which individual experiences of participation were compared. These analyses concluded that the Season was experienced in contrasting ways depending on a variety of factors, including wealth, family status, upbringing, location and personality. By using these individual accounts, the mobilities concepts through which the Season was approached could be examined in detail, providing a deeper and sometimes contrasting understanding of the trends identified at the broad scale. These different experiences of the Season lead to the conclusion that scholars cannot apply the 'Season' as a blanket term. Instead of there being just one Season, a single uniform experience, there are in fact many seasons, all being played out at the same time and overlapping with each other, yet offering very different experiences and hopes

of the same phenomenon. This research concludes that the Season is a far more differentiated and complex period than has previously been portrayed.

#### The potential for the development of this research

There are areas of this research which would merit extension. Firstly, as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, research had initially been planned to cover three dates in detail (1832, 1862, 1892). Owing to the time constraints imposed on this PhD, and the difficulty in amassing the sources necessary to complete these analyses, only the data for 1862 could be processed. This led to a reduction in the temporal depth in the research; changes in the Season over time could not be analysed at the level of detail initially planned (the temporal depth found in Atkins' 1990 study of the changing fashions of the West End from 1800 to 1920 provided a model for these initial plans). The changing nature of the Season warrants this analysis in the light of an engagement with movement. Significant developments in the mobility of all sectors of society occurred during the nineteenth century, from the omnibus in 1829, to the first underground railway in 1863 (Taylor, 2001). These revolutions in transport technology may have significantly impacted on the nature of networking in the latter stages of the nineteenth century as the Season expanded; a contention which would have been explored had the initial research plans been attained.

Time constraints once again impacted on the ability to utilise sources fully in relation to rate books. As illustrated in Figures 15-20, this source was significant in understanding the way in which space was made meaningful by the practices of the Season. Whilst the analyses completed were significant enough for conclusions to be confidently drawn, these arguments could have been strengthened by a more comprehensive utilisation of this data. Just as ball attendance lists were compiled corresponding to every street in the West End, resulting in comparisons to be drawn across the West End, this blanket analysis of rate books would allow for similar comparisons. This would have enabled theories regarding property desires to be extended, supporting the conclusions found in this research.

Finally, the role of newspapers as sources in historical research is changing. In Chapter 4, the significance of this source to a study of the Season was explored, inspired by the work of Philo (1987) and Domosh (2001) who both utilised newspapers to deepen their historical enquires by including a range of perspectives

garnered from the source. Since 2006 (the commencement of this research) there have been significant developments in the way in which nineteenth century newspapers relevant to the Season can be accessed. Since 2009, the process of converting newspapers and periodicals to digitised forms has begun. The *British Library Newspapers 1800-1900*<sup>33</sup> project which houses these online documents also includes a search tool, enabling relevant articles to be found in a matter of seconds, as opposed to the many months of searching undertaken with individual paper copies during this research. Whilst the digitisation of all newspaper sources is far from complete, this new resource significantly increases the volume of information which can be assessed in a short timeframe, adding greatly to the potential of this source in future research regarding the Season.

#### Additional Explorations into the Season

The Season is a vast topic for enquiry, and as stated in the introduction to the thesis, it was impossible to cover every facet of the period. During the course of this research, additional areas of enquiry were identified as particularly lacking in previous investigation, and would benefit from the approaches adopted in the present research.

Firstly, the role of servants in facilitating the Season has been touched upon in this thesis, however, a more comprehensive analysis is necessary to understand the extent to which the Season existed as a result of domestic staff. This would extend the work of Horn (1975) who undertook a broad overview analysis of domestic service during the nineteenth century and Davidoff (1979) who focussed on the single experiences of the servant Hannah Culwick. Whilst a lack of source material regarding servants during the nineteenth century in general has been identified (Ogborn, 2003), work in this respect is possible, as illustrated by Horn and Davidoff. Secondly, several scholars previously engaged in research on the Season have identified the importance of studying the Season abroad. For example, Sproule documented the Grand Tour (1978), whilst MacColl & Wallace (1989) described the transatlantic voyages which occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century. Whilst this PhD focussed solely on the Season in London, and therefore did not analyse any accounts regarding travel abroad, it is clear that the source material is available which could extend this enquiry in the future. Understanding the

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<sup>33</sup> Which can be viewed at: <http://newspapers.bl.uk/blcs/> (accessed: 11/06/10)

international mobility of those participating in the Season would broaden the arguments made in Chapter 5 and could lead to an increased appreciation for the cosmopolitan nature of many of the Season participants, echoing the work of scholars such as Szerszynski and Urry (2006), Bridge (2007) and Butler (2007) who engage in this area of contemporary mobilities scholarship.

Finally, in searching for biographical material related to the Season, extensive readings of the year-round lives of those participating were conducted. Whilst accounts relating to the rest of the year away from London were not used in this research, it became clear through these readings that many of the connections initially forged during the Season were either maintained, or cemented through marriage, away from London. This evidence supports the work of mobilities scholars engaged in understanding networking and in particular the work of Urry (2007) in relation to the maintenance of networks at a distance. The connection between the London Season and year-round networking is a significant, yet under-researched, body of work which could be interpreted successfully by an engagement with mobilities literature.

These additional explorations would ensure that the Season continues to be discussed in the light of contemporary scholarship, utilising the ever growing body of source material available to researchers of this field to extend our knowledge and understanding of this significant period.

## **Appendix 1 : Stories of the Season**

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In recent years, historical geographers have turned to this biographical approach to understand past geographies, the discussion of which was included in the methodological chapter of this thesis. Scholars such as White (2004) have suggested that by delving into the personal histories of those participating in historical moments, such as the Season, an alternative version of these histories can be found, providing an 'intimate engagement' with the period (see Thomas, 2004; McDowell, 2007; Legg, 2008). It is through this methodological approach that biographical material has been evaluated in this research, as a way of delving further into the broader trends discussed in earlier chapters. Like all other sources called upon in this research, the biographical material selected has been examined through a mobilities lens; with a focus on the impact different experiences of connection had on an overall experience of the Season. This reflects the work of many scholars in the mobilities field (Lassen, 2005; Conradson & Latham, 2006; Axhausen, 2007; Ohnmacht, 2009) who have adopted this approach in contemporary situations.

Seven diaries are consulted in this appendix, forming six distinct case studies of the Season. Ranging from 1816 to 1885, all but one are written by female authors, and all span the entire duration of their experiences in the Season from 'coming out' to marriage. It is important to note two points at this stage. First, not every diarist participated in the same number of Seasons; Georgina Smythe for instance only participated in one before her marriage, whereas Mary Gladstone was 'out' in Society for twenty years before finally marrying. Encounters with the diarists therefore occur for a non-uniform number of years. Second, these diaries are in no way different from the norm at the time. As was discussed in Chapter 4, many diaries were initially consulted, and the seven were selected for their usefulness in relation to the specific research questions posed by this thesis, and not because they were in some way a-typical from a norm.

In order to analyse the experiences of the diarists selected in this appendix and the ways in which their Seasons contrast with the 'typical' view of the Season depicted in existing literature regarding the period, a 'model debutante', termed 'Model A' has been constructed based on the assumptions made in current literature. 'Model A' would typically have been prepared for the Season, proficient in dancing, playing the

piano, drawing, needlework and letter writing (Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). She would have travelled from her large country estate to London where her two-parent, wealthy, titled family (Sproule, 1978, Weightman & Humphries, 1983) leased a large house in the centre of the West End for the duration of the Season (Evans & Evans, 1976; Horn, 1992). Their sole purpose of being in London, other than perhaps the political duties of the head of the household (Davidoff, 1973; Jalland, 1986), was to find 'Model A' a wealthy, aristocratic husband (Pullar, 1978; Margetson, 1980; Horn, 1992). She would be happy to be participating in the Season (Worsley-Gough, 1952), and this would have been her only interest (Sproule, 1978; Paterson, 2008). She would adhere to the rules of Society exactly (Davidoff, 1973; Margetson, 1980) and would judge her success in all matters of the Season based on the number of useful connections she forged and then subsequently maintained (Evans & Evans, 1976, Perkin; 1989). Whilst this description simplifies the existing literature regarding the Season to enable the creation of this single model debutante, the stereotypes which generally occur in this body of work are accurately represented in the creation of 'Model A'.

In this appendix, each case study will be introduced in turn, starting with a brief discussion of their family background before moving on to discuss their respective Seasons and an analysis of their networks and main trends. After all the case studies have been presented, a comparison of their respective experiences in terms of their networks will be undertaken, allowing conclusions to be formed at the end.

### **Story 1: Clarissa Trant**

The first case study reflected upon is that of Clarissa Trant, whose unusual upbringing and lack of a mother created difficulties in her participation in the Season. The absence of a large family in addition to the death of her mother when she was five contrasts sharply with the experiences of another motherless debutante, Lucy Lyttelton, discussed later in the appendix. Clarissa Trant was born in 1800 in Portugal, and she spent her childhood accompanying her father and younger brother around the world. Nicolas Trant, Clarissa's father, retired from military action and took on the role of Governor of Oporto when she was ten, involving both his children in the daily diplomatic activities of this new post (Luard, 1925). This unusual upbringing influenced Clarissa's Season significantly in three main respects. Firstly, her small and flexible family life led to close connections between Clarissa and her father and brother. She confided in her father with every

respect, and this continued during the Season (Luard, 1925). This relationship between father and daughter is often overlooked during the period, with a female relative depicted as a debutante's closest confidant (Sproule, 1978). Secondly, it allowed Clarissa to experience the world (she was fluent in six languages) at an age when many girls were sheltered at home, schooled in socially desirable skills such as needlework and letter writing (Davidoff, 1973; Blodgett, 1992; Horn, 1992). Lastly, her infrequent visits to England resulted in her family knowing few connections participating in the London Season. Whilst the Trant's may have been well connected in the military, and to a certain extent in diplomatic circles, the aristocracy and upper circles of Society were foreign territory, and this was a significant disadvantage to Clarissa's chances of amassing the network capital (Urry, 2007) identified in earlier chapters as significant for success in the Season.

### Clarissa's Season

Clarissa arrived in London in 1815, accompanied by her father, who soon left her in the care of her godfather Lord Mount Sandford, a close friend of Nicolas Trant. Clarissa's first year in London was one of worry and isolation, she knew very few people (*"My stock of English friends was very small indeed, with the exception of my Father's old military companions, our warm-hearted and eccentric Lindenthal [an old family friend] and my kind aunt there was no one in England whom I could even fancy that I was glad to see again"* summary of May, 1815). It is clear that Clarissa was feeling isolated away from her family and the life she was familiar with abroad, but also that she was starting from scratch in terms of her Season experience, reliant upon old friends of her father to assist her in forging connections. This experience differs from the work of scholars such as Horn (1992) and Perkin (1993) who suggested that the upbringing of aristocratic girls revolved around the acquisition of desirable female traits. Clarissa's upbringing involving extensive travel and an immersion in military circles differs from the 'norm' as described by Horn and Perkin, and serves to demonstrate that not every debutante arrived at the Season having experienced the same uniform childhood. Understanding the way in which upbringing varied amongst debutantes is important, because the networking possibilities experienced by the children as a debutantes were altered accordingly, a conclusion which will be identified in later sections of this appendix. The isolation felt by Clarissa at a time when many girls who were networking successfully during the Season would have felt connected indicates her position in the Season *"the first time I felt to its full extent the loss of my mother. I had just reached the age, I was*

*seventeen, when a mother's care, and a mother's counsel are most required and most valued*" summary of May, 1818). To counteract this persisting loneliness, her father eventually arranged a female friend for Clarissa to talk to: "*he consented with his usual kindness that I should not be thrown without a female friend into the society of foreigners at my early age and it was settled that Mr Lawlor should escort his sister in the sprint to some seaport where my father would meet her and convey her to our temporary home*" (January, 1820). Clarissa's early Seasons raise an interesting point. Amongst the frenetic displays of networking occurring during the period (Davidoff, 1973; Horn, 1992), there were debutantes on the fringes of Society unable to network effectively, leading to feelings of isolation. This can be explained by the work of mobilities scholars engaged in immobility. Those without the means to pass through the gates put in place by Society, such as Clarissa, were rendered immobile, or in this case, excluded, by their lack of connection (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Adey, 2007). Despite the huge numbers of people who were connected during the Season, Clarissa's experiences demonstrate that there were participants whose experiences were far less positive, and whose negativity regarding the Season is an underrepresented element of the period.

Clarissa's Season improved, however, as she began to be chaperoned by more of her father's military and Portuguese connections, as well as the continued involvement of her godfather (reinforcing Davidoff's (1973) claim included in Chapter 6 that godparents were an important element of a networking campaign). This extended participation in the Season soon led to her first proposal of marriage, which Clarissa immediately refused. For a debutante struggling to make connections, existing literature which depicts the Season as a cut-throat marriage market (Inwood, 1998; Mitchell, 2009) signalled that this was an ill-advisable move, yet as her diary reveals, Clarissa could not bring herself to swap the happiness and exciting life she led with her father and brother for an uncertain, and potentially unhappy future with a stranger. This highlights both the extent of her close family connections, and her continued longing for her old life away from London ("*I am too conscious of the blessing I enjoy in my beloved father's society, to wish to exchange a real happiness for an uncertain one*" 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1822). Existing literature regarding the emotional responses to the Season is sparse; negativity regarding marriage is treated as an oddity (Margetson, 1980; MacColl & Wallace, 1989). The example of Clarissa Trant, however, overturns this one-dimensional representation; a debutante who rejected the 'prize' of the Season in favour of something she considered to be more important. Using biographical material in this way allows a more open-minded

appreciation of the period, an approach utilised successfully by historical geographers such as Blunt (2000), in relation to a focus on the domestic sphere during the Indian siege of the Lucknow Residency in 1857.



Plate 7: *Clarissa Trant, 1829, by David Maclise (source: Luard, 1925)*

Two years on and the experience was repeated, with Clarissa rejecting a suitor based on his personality: *“I could not help seeing that he liked me, but I certainly was unprepared for any serious declaration on his part ... I said many wise things after I had fully explained the nature of my own feelings towards him, and now that I know he cannot misunderstand me, I shall treat him with ease and confidence of friendship. I cannot but feel most grateful for such an instance of disinterested affection”* (30<sup>th</sup> August 1824). Her father, however, was less pleased with her decision. It was clearly expensive and difficult supporting a daughter in the Season whilst working abroad, and he recognised her weak position in Society: *“In the evening I had a long and painful conversation with my beloved Father, he represented to me in the strongest terms the folly of which I had been guilty in refusing so advantageous an offer and told me what I knew to be the case that if our situation with respect to pecuniary matters had less dreadful he would have urged me still more to consider the absolute necessity of giving up all romantic thoughts at this moment”* (4<sup>th</sup> September, 1824). Clarissa’s refusal of a second proposal,

combined with her father's displeasure at the decision, illustrates the gaps in existing literature regarding the Season. Whilst Nicolas Trant's position supports the main argument proposed by many scholars of the period: that the Season was essentially a 'marriage market' (Sproule, 1978; Scott, 1991; Inwood, 1998; Paterson, 2008), Clarissa's decision to disregard status by refusing an advantageous alliance provides a parallel critique. Perkin (1989) represents the view of scholars succinctly: "Upper-class women rarely had high expectations of romance...in marriage" (p. 55), an account clearly opposed by Clarissa (and several other case studies in this appendix). Once again, the singular all-encompassing depiction of a debutante found in literature is negated by the evidence found in biographical accounts from the period.

It was not until 29<sup>th</sup> January 1827, and aided by her father's close friend the Marchioness de Palmella, that Clarissa received a proposal from a suitor she was more than happy to accept. For Colonel Cameron from Bath (Blodgett, 1992) Clarissa was prepared to break ties with her father and brother, albeit connecting to someone else with military experience ("*The events of yesterday and today have crowded together so rapidly that I can scarcely persuade myself that the whole had been more than a happy dream*" 30<sup>th</sup> January 1827). The reality became far less pleasant for Clarissa, just 20 days later, when her family's lack of fortune forced the engagement to be called off "*The correspondence which has taken place between my father and General Cameron had prepared me for the termination of all future intercourse between L.C. and myself ... The General offered to settle £10,000 upon me and £1,000 per an upon his son, provided that my Father could give me a proportionate quota of fortune*" (19<sup>th</sup> February, 1827) which he evidently could not. Clarissa's experience serves as a reminder that an adequate fortune was in some cases just as important as positive connections in enabling networking to occur during the Season (Lieven, 1992). These exclusionary tactics at the hands of Society were designed to eliminate people such as Clarissa from penetrating the upper circles of the Season (reflecting the differentiated mobility empowerments discussed by Massey (1993)). Clarissa finally began to understand her position in Society, the following quote supporting scholars such as Evans & Evans (1976), Pullar (1978) and Wilson (2009) who detailed the importance of wealth and status to those taking part in the Season: "*The more I see of the World, and of the magic power of wealth, even on young and uncorrupted hearts, the more I wonder at myself for not having earlier discovered its importance. Had I always known as well as I do now, that it is undervalued by none but philosophers or romantic girls, I might*

*perhaps of acted a wiser part, but God only knows whether my lot of life would have been a happier one. I doubt it” (14<sup>th</sup> July, 1827).*

Evidence of this continued negative experience and apathy regarding Society can be found two years later in Clarissa’s account of a visit by ‘Lady T’: *“I was doomed to spend another nonsensical morning varied by the arrival of Lady T and her three gawky daughters. As usual, she was scarcely seated before she announced her determination of not allowing her girls to marry until after her death. **Tell that to the Marines**”* [emphasis in original] (5<sup>th</sup> October 1829). This quote reflects the obvious sarcasm employed by Clarissa during this period, an unconventional view utilised by the author John Dickson Carr in his 1957 novel, *Burn!* Carr used Clarissa’s unorthodox views of Society to contradict more common perceptions of the early nineteenth century; in relation to the quote above stating that: “few fiction-writers would dare make a character in 1829 say ‘*Tell that to the Marines*’: nobody would believe it” (p. 262). The mental frustrations with Society displayed by Clarissa during this period galvanised her father and other connections in England to find Clarissa an appropriate match for her fortunes, in the form of a vicar from Essex. Mr John Bramston was positioned positively in Clarissa’s mind by her family and friends before their first meeting in several years (an example of the co-present renewal discussed by Boden & Molotch, 1994): *“Mr Bramston of whom it is my destiny to hear so much from various quarters. Wherever I go I am sure to meet someone who begins ‘I believe that a friend of mine Mr B had the pleasure of meeting you on board a steam packet’”* (10<sup>th</sup> September 1831). It was not long after their renewed meeting that Clarissa became engaged to Mr Bramston, a clergyman in Great Baddow, Essex who was recorded as being spiritually compatible and was later to become the Dean of Winchester (Lloyd, 2004). It is clear that following her negative experiences at the hands of financial troubles, she agreed to marry so quickly after meeting her suitor because she was both pushed to do so, but also now understood the lack of choice her position in Society afforded her.

#### Clarissa’s Season analysed

Clarissa Trant’s experiences of the Season are useful for a number of reasons. Not only does she represent a sector of Society on the outer fringes of the Season (as represented by the sectors of Society model in Figure 8) but she highlights the negative feelings associated with this position during the period. Loneliness and self-doubt are not emotions often depicted in relation to the Season, yet Clarissa’s experiences are supported by evidence of negativity in relation to the ballroom, as

discussed in Chapter 7. The Season was not the frenetic, happy whirl often depicted in literature (Evans & Evans, 1976). Clarissa also highlights the unusual upbringing a significant proportion of debutantes from military or diplomatic families experienced prior to the Season. Not every debutante was trained for the Season in the way depicted by Horn (1992) and these contrasting family backgrounds will have led, as witnessed through Clarissa's diary, to very different experiences of the Season. The unique nature of Clarissa's family life and her subsequent views regarding Society is highlighted in the work of novelists, drawing on her diary to contrast typical images of the period. John Dickson Carr's analysis is mentioned above, and to this can be added the work of Andrew Taylor, whose historical novel *The American Boy* (2003) also draws upon Clarissa's account. In acknowledging the use of this material, Taylor points to her unusual upbringing and the wider experiences of life during the nineteenth century she experienced as a result<sup>34</sup>. The use of Clarissa's diary in this way highlights that whilst she was in many ways typical, a girl participating in the Season in order to secure a husband, she entered this social whirl from a position very different from that of the typical 'debutante'. Clarissa's experiences highlight the non-uniform nature of the Season, not every girl was participating in the manner illustrated by 'Model A'.

## **Story 2: The Smythe Sisters**

In May 1827, Mrs Wat Smythe, a widow, arrived at the house she had rented in Great Cumberland Place, close to Regent's Park, with her two daughters, sixteen year old Louisa, who was to be launched in Society that year, and twelve year old Georgina, known as Cou. Accompanied by eight servants and a governess, as well as the use of two carriages, Mrs Smythe had stretched herself financially in order to increase the appearance of social acceptability for her family (mirroring the idea of spatial capital introduced in Chapter 8), in the hope that Louisa may secure an advantageous match (Buckle, 1958). Louisa and Georgina's family was a small one, and following their father's death when they were young children, also one which suffered from financial insecurity. Outside the Season, they lived in Brighton close to their Aunt, Maria Fitzherbert, the secret wife of George IV and their late father's sister. Whilst immensely popular in Brighton and powerful there as a hostess of the Brighton Almack's at a time when the city was a popular winter destination for

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<sup>34</sup> Andrew Taylor talks in more detail about his use of Clarissa Trant's diary in an interview with Shots Magazine: <http://www.shotsmag.co.uk/SHOTS%2019/Taylorinterview.htm> (accessed 14/04/10).

aristocratic families (Irvine, 2005), Maria's reputation was not so favourable in London. Her affairs with the King had spanned decades, and although their marriage was largely kept secret from Society to protect his royal position<sup>35</sup>, many were still distrustful of her and embarrassed by the problems she had caused (Irvine, 2005)<sup>36</sup>. Despite this slightly negative reputation, Aunt Fitz (as the Smythe's called her) was financially secure (she was still receiving an allowance from the King of £10,000 a year (Buckle, 1958)), money she invested, in part, in the Seasons of her nieces. This colourful family connection was balanced by Louisa's cousin Minney, known to them as an Aunt. Adopted by Maria Fitzherbert as a baby when her mother, a mutual friend of both Maria and George IV, died, she had maintained close links to royalty throughout her childhood and into adulthood granting her invitations to the most exclusive events of the Season. Minney was influential in the lives of the Smythe girls, a useful chaperone and a popular lady (and thereby increasing the network capital of those she accompanied (Urry, 2007)). This connection will have been useful to them, for it is evident in the diaries of both sisters that they were distrustful of their mother, who was said to have been socially pushy and often drunk (Buckle, 1958).

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<sup>35</sup> The marriage between the Prince of Wales and Maria Fitzherbert was kept secret owing to Maria's situation in life; she held no title, but more significantly she was a catholic, and as such a public declaration of the marriage would have led to a constitutional crisis (Irvine, 2005)

<sup>36</sup> Reputation was of vital importance to those participating in the Season; upholding Society etiquette and morals was important for social acceptability (Pullar, 1978).

### Louisa's Season



*Plate 8: Louisa Smythe, by James Holmes (source: Buckle, 1958) (reproduced with permission from John Murray Publishers)*

Louisa's early experiences of the Season correlated with those in the outer circles of society as depicted by Figure 8. She knew very few people ("we took the trouble of dressing for a disagreeable, hot and crowded ball, where I knew three people" 11<sup>th</sup> May 1827), and was left feeling delighted when a network she deemed appropriate asked to meet her ("I was much delighted at Lady Londonderry asking to be introduced to us" 28<sup>th</sup> May 1827). Louisa was clearly aware of the necessity to increase her network capital and forge advantageous alliances. By the end of her first Season, her persistence had paid off, for she had seven suitors who regularly paid calls, although none of these had made any serious intentions known to her. This situation did not please her mother, however, who scolded her for 'having no heart' (14<sup>th</sup> August 1827), clearly suggesting that had Louisa been more forthcoming with her emotions, one of these men may have proposed. Her mother's desperation regarding the situation indicates the importance placed upon Louisa to marry well, and to do so quickly at the first possible opportunity. The views of Mrs Wat Smythe echo those of Nicholas Trant; for families participating in the Season without significant wealth and status, it appears that the Season was the 'marriage market' opportunity depicted by scholars such as Sproule (1978), Scott (1991) and Inwood (1998). However, as discussed later in this appendix in reference to the well-connected parents of Lucy Lyttelton and Mary Gladstone, as status increased, the pressures placed upon debutantes to marry decreased, contrasting with the

experiences of the Smythes and Trants, as well as requiring a widening of the literature to accommodate the different goals present amongst those participating.

Louisa's first major suitor took the form of Thomas Hyde Villiers, a 27 year old second son and MP for Hedon, Yorkshire who had pursued Louisa during her first Season, and whose intentions became clear during regular visits to her home in Brighton, to the presumable delight of her mother (Courtney, 2004). This potential match was avoided, however, by the interference of her Aunt, Maria Fitzherbert, who warned Louisa of the dangers of the network ("*She ... put me on my guard as to not showing him any particular preference, because I would not wish to give him my encouragement*" 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1828). It was clear that Aunt Fitz differed from Mrs Smythe in the appropriate course of action for Louisa, and advocated holding out for a better option.

This option came in the form of Sir Frederick Hervey Bathurst, twenty years old in 1828, an officer in the Grenadier Guards and a baronet with a property in Wiltshire (Buckle, 1858). During the 1828 Season the pair regularly danced together, and Louisa talks of her wish to marry him ("*He is certainly the only one of my acquaintances or intimate friends who I would accept instantly*" 12<sup>th</sup> July 1828). However, when a month later Sir Frederick wrote to her mother asking for his permission to propose and upon her mother replying with a provisional 'yes', it was Louisa herself who declined the match. Her diary makes no mention of the reactions this provoked in her relatives, although it is possible to imagine their displeasure. It appears that unlike reports in much literature regarding the Season (Scott, 1991; Sheppard, 1998), Louisa instead reflected the experiences of Clarissa Trant in exercising a personal choice ("*I made myself almost unhappy at the thought of my fate being so soon settled*" 12<sup>th</sup> September 1828). Whilst Louisa's diary indicated this was an incidence of 'cold feet', Buckle (1958) has suggested that it was likely Aunt Fitzherbert had once again warned Louisa off the match, for she made no attempt to hide her hatred for his lack of manners. The importance Maria Fitzherbert clearly placed on appropriate behaviour provides further evidence of the necessity of correct performance as witnessed in Chapter 7.

It was not until the Season of 1830 that Louisa found herself networking with a suitor she actually wished to marry. Lord Ossulton was the son and heir of the Fifth Earl of Tankerville and as such a highly advantageous connection for Louisa (*Burke's Peerage*, 1910). Louisa's intention to marry Lord Ossulton, a man well above her

own status, contradicts the work of Perkin (1989) who suggested that 'most upper class women wanted to marry someone of their own social level' (p. 62). This account fails to acknowledge the importance of social climbing (achieved through marriage) to debutantes from families under financial pressure, such as the Smythes. Again the pair went through the scripted moments of dancing and calling, Louisa actively working to maintain their connection (Cass et al, 2005). This led to an invitation for the Smythe's to visit the Tankerville country estate at Chillingham over the winter months. It was here that all hopes for a match between them ended, largely owing to Lord Ossulton's mother's dislike of Mrs Smythe. It became apparent to Louisa that whilst the Tankervilles may have found appropriate and desirable characteristics in her, they had found none in her mother, reducing her network capital (Urry, 2007) and as such it was her family connections that ended the possibility of marriage ("*Lady Tankerville proposed Mama's going on to Edinburgh and leaving me at Chillingham until her return, that I was thoroughly pressed to do; but Mama declined for me*" 1<sup>st</sup> October 1830).

Following this further failed networking moment, Maria Fitzherbert once again stepped in. Enjoying new found social acceptability following the death of her husband, George IV, and an invitation to use royal livery by his successor, Louisa's Aunt had finished a period of mourning, and was once again 'out' in Society (Irvine, 2005). Within a month, Louisa had decided she loved Sir Frederick Hervey Bathurst once more, no doubt after persuasions by Maria Fitzherbert to do so, for she too had also shifted her opinion of him ("*I am half in love Fred Bathurst myself*" December 1831). The renewed connection between Louisa and Frederick was achieved through family liaison, supporting the work of Davidoff (1973) and Horn (1992) who argued for the importance of family networks to the success of the Season. Buckle (1958) suggested that it was Aunt Fitz who drew upon her friendship with Sir Frederick's grandmother to ascertain whether he would be interested in a marriage to Louisa, and encourage her to refresh the networks between them. This process of interaction served to reactivate their network, supporting the argument of Larsen et al (2006) for the importance of co-present meetings to the cementation of connections. It was not until 28<sup>th</sup> March 1831 that Louisa finally met Frederick, four months after she had decided that she wanted to marry him. Fortunately this meeting, and subsequent moments of networking performance were also successful, ultimately leading to a proposal and acceptance of marriage during the autumn of 1831. The about-turn in the apparent feelings of both Louisa and Aunt Fitzherbert towards a network they had both previously wished to reject perhaps

signals Louisa's change in position. Aged 21, and with a series of failed networking opportunities behind her, it is possible that both felt securing a network was now a priority. It was fortunate that Sir Frederick Hervey Bathurst, a relatively advantageous alliance, was in a similar position himself.

### Georgina's Season

Louisa was married at St George's Church, Hanover Square on May 14<sup>th</sup> 1832 (reflecting the popularity of this church as discussed in Chapter 8), and three days later, her younger sister Georgina (known as Cou), now 17, was presented at Court. Having previously drawn on her connections with Aunt Fitz to 'come out' unofficially in Brighton the previous winter, she was well prepared for the Season (Horn, 1992), in contrast to Clarissa Trant. Cou had also watched her sister forge and lose connections, and following Louisa's marriage, she could now rely upon her as an additional chaperone. These benefits did not mean Cou progressed totally smoothly through the events of the Season. Her mother was still difficult, and excessive alcohol consumption often left her unable to attend events ("*Poor Mama was so unwell towards the middle of the day... Minney couldn't take me to Lady Jersey's & I staid [sic] quietly at home*" 28<sup>th</sup> June 1832). Not only was her mother's health a concern, but the family were beset with significant financial difficulties; never an attribute required in a network, as depicted in 'Model A'. Mrs Smythe's brother-in-law refused to pay the family an allowance from the family estate following her husband's death, and, consequently, they had little to offer potential suitors (Irvine, 2005). Cou did have one significant advantage, and this was her appearance. Her diary is regularly filled with her preoccupation with fashion, and this was combined with beauty; Maria Fitzherbert wrote to Minney in 1833 noting that the Duke of Orleans had referred to Cou as "the prettiest girl in England" (17<sup>th</sup> May 1833).

Cou's Season was characterised by the attention of three major suitors, two of whom were championed by members of her family as suitable matches. Lord Hillsborough, whom Cou refers to as 'Mountain', was a friend of her sister's husband, and an advantageous match. His father was the third Marquis of Downshire (*Burke's Peerage*) and one of the richest landowners in Ireland. Initially, networking performances between the two were frequent, and both appeared settled on a match ("*[he] is my constant partner*" summary of June 1832). The problem lay with Hillsborough's family, who did not feel that Cou was an adequate network for their son, reflecting the tiers of Society model discussed in Chapter 6: ("*The first*

*person I saw was Mountain, who seemed hardly to dare speak to me, as he had been awfully rowed and said that his Parents watched him narrowly ... I was not happy at finding Lord Hillsborough was only allowed to notice me when his Family was not present ... I know I looked miserable and not until Lord and Lady Downshire went away did I feel happier. At the same instant he was by my side, evidently as pleased at his liberty as I was at enjoying his society” 9<sup>th</sup> July 1832).* The control placed upon Hillsborough by his family contrast with much literature regarding the Season in which the control of networking is discussed with relation to female participants only (Evans & Evans, 1976; Sproule., 1978; Margetson, 1980). Whilst unmarried, younger men may not have been under the strict rules of chaperonage documented in Chapter 6, they were nonetheless surveyed by family in the ballroom.



*Plate 9: Georgina Smythe, ‘The prettiest girl in England’ by James Holmes (source: Buckle, 1958) (reproduced with permission from John Murray Publishers)*

Cou’s second suitor was championed by her cousins, Rowland Errington and William Stanley, sons of her father’s younger sister. Lord Albert Conyngham, a wealthy and intelligent man, was not a network to whom Cou felt positively disposed, largely due to her desire to forge a network with her third suitor (discussed below). Upon Rowland inviting Lord Albert to sing for Cou, she noted that it “*frightened me very much*” (29<sup>th</sup> July 1832). Despite this lack of interest, her suitor persisted, presumably encouraged by her cousins, and rich enough to ignore her lack of a fortune (“*Lord Albert called but was not admitted, which I think is very right,*

*as it really is too tiresome to be persecuted every day by the same person*" 19<sup>th</sup> August 1832). So late in the Season, when most families would already have left London (Pullar, 1978), it could perhaps be inferred that Lord Albert was merely 'persecuting' Cou because she was one of the few potential connections left in the capital.

The final suitor pursuing Cou was not favoured by any family member except Cou herself. Augustus Craven was the second son of a large, warm and wealthy family. His mother was popular in Society, despite her unconventional character (she was an actress at a time when this was deemed unacceptable in Society (Fletcher, 2008)), and his younger sister Lupo was, like Augustus, devoted to Cou from the outset (Buckle, 1958). The friendship between the Cou and Lupo was significant in securing networking opportunities between the families, and is illustrative of the arguments posed by Marcus (2007) of the under-represented importance of female friendship during the nineteenth century. It was not improper for females to communicate frequently (Wildeblood, 1965) and in so doing, Augustus was able to maintain regular contact with Cou through his sister, maintaining their connection. Mrs Smythe, however, was less keen on Augustus, a view which was furthered by his regular contact with Cou once the Season was over. She feared that they had progressed from weak to strong networks (using Granovetter's classification, 1973) far too rapidly than was acceptable in Society ("*Mama told me she was much displeased at my having talked so much to August*" 25<sup>th</sup> December 1832). Cou had until this point played a waiting game with her mother, attempting to hide the strength of her desire to marry Augustus until she had time to persuade her of its benefits ("*I was determined ... not to shew too much joy on the subject*" 25<sup>th</sup> November 1832). This manipulation of the Season by a debutante is significant because it contradicts the view that it was always the chaperone or family who dictated the networks of the debutante (Cou later reported that she "*had the disagreeable task of explaining matters to Mama*" 30<sup>th</sup> December 1832) (Perkin, 1989). In this instance, it was the debutante making a decision and then plotting its implementation in collusion with her suitor ("*I would never be foolish enough to be influenced by my family*" 13<sup>th</sup> October 1832). It is not surprising that Cou was so keen to secure a match with Augustus, she had previously declared that "*It is only for a short time shall I have to lead this sort of life, as I am quite determined to think of marrying as soon as I can*" (24<sup>th</sup> September 1832). Not only did Augustus provide a way out from her family, but he had money to support her and relations who welcomed her, qualities often lacking in her own family. Despite some attempts to

stall the young couple, Mrs Smythe eventually removed her objections (“*he called this morning and was very well received by Mama, indeed I think that now she will see how useless it is to snub him in any way*” 30<sup>th</sup> June 1833) and the pair were married at the same church as Louisa on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1833.

### Comparing the Seasons of Two Sisters

By analysing the Seasons of two diarists in the same family, it is possible to see that, although extremely influential in the lives of both the diarists, a similar family background did not lead to the same experiences of the Season. Louisa’s Season was characterised by the influence held over her by extended family, especially that of her Aunt Maria Fitzherbert, who was influential both in warding off unwanted networks and in finally securing a proposal of marriage, supporting the perceptions of existing literature regarding the period (for the most comprehensive argument see Davidoff, 1973 and Horn, 1992). The same extent of familial interference was not witnessed in Georgina’s Season, perhaps a reflection of her position as a second daughter in the shadow of Louisa’s successful match, and contradicts the work of the above scholars. The Seasons of the two sisters are illustrative of the differing approaches taken by debutantes during the period, a variation lacking in past research on the Season in which this differentiation is not recorded, as illustrated by ‘Model A’. Louisa played the ‘risk game’ during her Season, largely as a result of her family directing her to do so. She rejected two eligible proposals in favour of holding out for an even better option: a network which was both advantageous socially and financially. As witnessed by her later experiences, this proved a dangerous strategy for a family desperate to make a connection. In the end, upon failing to secure the type of contact the family required, Louisa was fortunate to fall back upon a previously rejected connection as a ‘second best option’.

Taking risks during the Season was not displayed to the same extent by Georgina, who through the combination of witnessing the disappointing Seasons of her older sister, and experiencing the early rejection of Lord Hillsborough’s family, took the direction of her Season into her own hands. Georgina found a connection she deemed appropriate and together with her suitor they planned their own interactions, manipulating the Season to reach their desired outcome and overcoming the objections from her family. Unlike Louisa, Georgina largely rejected the opinions of those close to her in favour of following her own wishes. Previous studies regarding the Season have pointed to a period in which young women were directed by their

families in order to secure the first suitable proposal of marriage available to them (Inwood, 1998; Sheppard, 1998; Paterson, 2008). The experiences of Louisa and Georgina illustrate that this was not always the case. Louisa was certainly not directed to accept the first proposal she received, instead adopting a riskier strategy advocated by Maria Fitzherbert. Similarly 'atypically', Georgina ignored the advice of her relatives, instead manipulating the Season with the help of her suitor's close connections to eventually force her family to agree to her choice. These experiences suggest that in certain cases, debutantes had a greater degree of power, however undercover this may have been, than has previously been acknowledged.

### **Story 3: The Lyttelton/Gladstone Family**

Lucy Lyttelton was presented on May 26<sup>th</sup> 1859, followed six years later by her cousin, Mary Gladstone on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1865. The Seasons of both Lucy and Mary are significant for this analysis of the Season, because, like the Smythe sisters, their experiences reflect the importance of family in influencing the outcome of the period. The Lyttelton and Gladstone families were famously close-knit (Fletcher, 1997). Their mothers, Mary Lyttelton and Catherine Gladstone were devoted sisters, who married two of the country's most eligible men in a joint wedding ceremony (Askwith, 1975). George, 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Lyttelton, was descended from a long line of aristocracy, and William Gladstone was to become one of the century's most influential Prime Ministers. Both girls grew up in the security of "two of the happiest marriages of the Victorian era", Lucy at Hagley Hall in the West Midlands and Mary at Hawarden Castle in Cheshire, both large country estates (Askwith, 1975 p. 58). The closeness of their mothers was magnified with the arrival of children, eight Gladstones (one of whom, Jessy, died in infancy) and twelve Lytteltons. Lucy, born in 1841, was the second child and one of four daughters. Mary, on the other hand had four older siblings when she was born in 1847. The closeness of the all cousins is well documented (Askwith, 1975; Fletcher, 1997; Gladstone, 1989; Gooddie, 2003), and for Lucy and Mary they offered a solid unit through which to approach the Season. The family developed its own coded language, used throughout both diaries. Known as *Glynnese*, taken from the maiden name of their mothers, it demonstrates the exclusive club created by these close relations (Gladstone, 1989). In contrast to the family situation of the Smythes, a collection of often unhappy individuals, Lucy and Mary's participation armed with the support and company of 18 siblings and cousins, ensured the period was likely to have been a rather different experience.

The closeness between this extended family was reiterated and magnified in 1857 when Lucy's mother died following the birth of her youngest brother Alfred (Askwith, 1975). The loss of a mother, the most influential chaperone during a Season, was a blow to Clarissa Trant, yet Lucy was able to rely on Mary's mother as a 'social conductor' (Lassen, 2005) to ensure that her chances of making networks were unchanged.

### Lucy's Season



*Plate 10: Lucy Lyttelton, by George Richmond (c. 1864) (source: Bailey, 1927)*

During her months in London, Lucy gravitated between the home her father owned on Stratton Street, Piccadilly, and Downing Street or Carlton House Terrace, the residences of the Gladstones during the period (*Boyle's Court Guide*). She was chaperoned by Catherine Gladstone, who, in her role as the Prime Minister's wife, was invited to all events of the Season (Jalland, 1986). This consequently allowed Lucy to attend events fluidly (illustrating the work of Hubbard & Lilley, 2004); there is no mention of anxiety regarding invitations, balls or the forging of connections in the pages of her diary. Initially the ease with which she participated surprised her ("A little past 3am! Our first ball is over. We danced much more than I expected" 24<sup>th</sup>

May 1859) and her familiarity with royalty was evident (upon being presented at court by Catherine Gladstone, Queen Victoria reportedly told her Aunt Coque (her father's sister) "*I am so glad to see them: tell your mother how nice they looked*" 11<sup>th</sup> June 1859). These family connections were useful to Lucy in two respects. Firstly, associating with the Gladstones gave her instant access to the most influential politicians and Society figures at the time. Of any of the diarists, Lucy and Mary were by far the most successfully connected, and because of their relation to the Prime Minister, their network capital was also very high; Society wanted to know them. Secondly, Lucy participated in her first Season with two important allies, her older sister (by one year) Meriel, now in her second Season, and her cousin Agnes Gladstone, another first-time debutante. At every ball Lucy was able to rely on these close networks to discuss events and share connections. As such, they provided a support unit absent in the Seasons of the other diarists, friendships highlighted as significant by Marcus (2007) in the context of the nineteenth century as a whole, yet absent in specific literatures regarding the Season.

Lucy's performance during the Season was not without restriction, however. Both she and Mary were forbidden from dancing the Waltz as their fathers believed it would threaten their reputation, owing to the closeness it allowed between partners (as discussed in Chapter 7). Lucy's restriction extended further, however, as her father only permitted her to attend two balls per week in her first Season (Fletcher, 2008). This contrasts sharply with the portrayal of the Season performing the sole function of a marriage market (Inwood, 1998; Sheppard, 1998; Paterson, 2008), and confirms that Lucy's father was both in no hurry for her to make a connection and content that she would do so despite limiting her attendance. In speaking to Lucy her father declared: "*Now if you had been seventeen, or even at your age if you had been less called on to decide and act a good deal for yourself, we might have taken the matter more into our own hands, but as it is I think it must be left almost entirely to you*" (Fletcher, 1997, p. 93-4). As discussed earlier in this appendix, studying biographical material has highlighted that whilst families without wealth or significant status did, to a certain extent, treat the Season as a means by which their daughters could rapidly secure a husband, there are an equal number of examples from the upper tier of Society (of which the Lytteltons are one), which adopted a different approach regarding the use of the Season.

Her lack of performance, however, left Lucy without a serious suitor for several Seasons, a situation which was not seen as negative by herself or her family. Her

only interest during this period was the Comte de Paris, a fun 'flirtation' fully encouraged by Catherine Gladstone ("*after the Quadrille [which he danced with Lucy] the Comte came up and thanked Aunt P [Aunt Pusey, the familiar name for Catherine Gladstone] for getting him a vis-à-vis*" [another dancing pair, required to make up the square format of the Quadrille] 8<sup>th</sup> July 1859). When she was permitted to dance, Lucy's diary reveals she was usually approached by many willing partners, signalling her popularity and network capital. On the rare occasions when this was not the case, her family connection was as useful in this area of the Season as it was in any other ("*We have been to Lady Derby's ball, which truth to tell, was very dull: hot crowds of chaperones and old gentlemen, and the dancing a fierce struggle with all-surrounding petticoat, and I danced only once, at about 2 with dear Johnny, who turned up when I had quite given up*" June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1859). The Johnny who saved Lucy from being a wallflower at the ball was John Talbot, her elder sister's fiancée and a useful addition to Lucy's large inner circle of connections; once again illustrating the advantage of continuing to amass network capital (Urry, 2007).

The course of Lucy's next Seasons changed significantly following John and Meriel's marriage in 1860. Lucy's father had not yet remarried, leaving Lucy to both run the household, and act as a mother to her ten younger siblings, a role previously undertaken by Meriel as the eldest daughter. Her youngest brother Alfred was just three years old at the time (Lyttelton, 1923). During the winter months at Hagley she cared for the younger boys, and maintained constant contact with the older ones at Harrow School and with Charles, who was at Cambridge University. Her new role left her with little time for networking outside her extended family, further strengthening the ties between them (Fletcher, 1997). Unlike the other diarists in this appendix, yet surely not atypically for the period, Lucy now had responsibilities stretching beyond simply acquiring a husband; she now had a duty as a substitute mother. With this in mind, it is no surprise that Lucy began to lose interest in the Season ("*upon arriving back at Hagley) I feel I have been away ages! Can't but be so glad I haven't married or anything upsetting!*" 12<sup>th</sup> July 1860).

Despite a reduction in her enthusiasm for, and participation in, the Season, it is clear that she was still networking in the upper circles of Society, a situation many in the Season, typified in this appendix by Louisa Smythe, would have only dreamed of experiencing. On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1863 she writes of riding in the park and receiving a "beautiful bow" from the Princess of Wales, and on 13<sup>th</sup> May she recounts attending

'Pam's ball', a familiar reference to Lady Palmerston, one of the most influential and revered Society hostesses of the period (Urquhart, 2007). Her powerful position in Society was confirmed in June the same year, when she was offered the post of Maid of Honour to the Queen ("*The very anticipation is so overpowering that I have had a headache all the afternoon, and I certainly dread the prospect viewing the ... probable cuts into the Hagley holidays*" 19<sup>th</sup> June 1863). Lucy effectively replaced, albeit reluctantly, many of her responsibilities at Hagley with new royal duties for the Queen. The advantage of this change in terms of her experiences of the Season lay in the increase in network capital her association with the royal family brought. These responsibilities also freed her from the ties of her family, which whilst being immensely useful to her in certain respects, had also held her back in participating in the Season. She was now free to build on her royal connections and forge new contacts. The following month she danced with Sir Frederick Cavendish, a political colleague of both her father and uncle, and a family friend (Vane, 2004). He was a wealthy and eligible young man, and proved an extremely advantageous match for Lucy when they became engaged on April 21<sup>st</sup> the following year, to her obvious delight ("*We are engaged and my doubts and fears have been all absorbed in the wonderful happiness and peace ... I wrote to all my darling boys, even to my little fellows at Hagley*" 21<sup>st</sup> April 1864). Lucy's advantageous marriage, five years after 'coming out' in Society, contradicts the work of Sheppard (1998) who stated that a girl entering the Season aged 17 or 18 "would only have two or at most three seasons in which to acquire a husband; and thereafter her chances of success in the matrimonial stakes would be greatly reduced" (p. 304). This generalisation is illustrative of much literature regarding the period, in which all debutantes are represented in a standard way, without consideration of the many factors which led to a great many different experiences of the same period (reflecting the work of Massey (1993) who discussed the existence of relational experiences in the context of mobility).

Lucy's experience of the Season signals a number of important observations. On the surface, her Season was an example of the typical success demonstrated by 'Model A'; she networked in the upper tiers of Society, had the bonus of royal and political links and married advantageously; the ultimate aim of the 'typical Season' and certainly the aim of a number of the diarists mentioned in this thesis. However, upon closer reflection, Lucy's Season was far from 'normal'. She benefited from her large family and the close support network they provided, evidence in itself of the importance of family to the differing experiences of a Season, but she also had to

make her family a priority. By becoming head of the Hagley household upon her elder sister's marriage, she was adhering to the norms of Society at the time. However, she did so willingly, preferring these large responsibilities over her participation in the Season. It was only the call to Royal service which forced her back into extensive networking, and ultimately marriage. What Lucy's experience reveals is that for some debutantes, the Season was not their sole interest; some had duties and roles during the period which stretched beyond simply finding a husband, yet this is not reflected in the existing literature regarding the period (Pullar, 1978; Margetson, 1980).

### Mary's Season



*Plate 11: Mary Gladstone, 1879, by Edward Burne-Jones (source: Masterman, 1930).*

Fast-forward to 1865, and this influential family was still as close-knit as it had been during Lucy's Seasons, although larger through the addition of spouses and children, and a new, and well-liked, wife for George Lyttelton (Fletcher, 1997). Lucy had been married to Lord Frederick Cavendish for a year, and they now lived on the same street at the Gladstones, Carlton House Terrace (Askwith, 1975). Mary was close to her older cousin, and evidence found in both their diaries revealed they

communicated almost daily. This close relationship between Mary, Lucy and all their other siblings and cousins once again had a significant influence on Mary's participation in the Season, much as it had done for Lucy six years previously.

Mary Gladstone's life is well documented biographically. Her long and varied political involvement in her father's career is the subject of many analyses (see Gladstone, 1989; Harris, 2002; Gooddie, 2003). Whilst all aspects of Mary's life are valuable in understanding Victorian society at the time, only elements of her diary and biographical material which illuminate her experiences of the Season will be covered in this appendix. Gooddie (2003) summarised Mary's position upon entering the Season concisely: "Mary's parents were conventional parents but unconventional people which made Mary a typical and, at the same time, unique woman of her time" (Gooddie, 2003 p. xiii-iv). When she came out in 1865, her parents, like George Lyttelton, refused to let her waltz, and controlled the networks she made closely, reflecting the conventional aspect of her parents as described above by Goodie. The influence of her family upon Mary's experiences stretched far further than regulation, however. Like Clarissa Trant, Mary idolised her father, a familial relationship absent in literature where female relations are credited with the role of confidante during the Season (Turner, 1954; Perkin, 1989). Jalland (1986) suggested that this 'hero worship' limited her ability to develop close relationships with suitors for many years, effectively preventing her from networking with intent to marry. As witnessed through the experiences of Clarissa, devotion to family and home life and an unwillingness to forgo these connections in order to marry, led to what much literature (as illustrated by 'Model A') would term 'unsuccessful' Seasons, regardless of the fact that this situation occurred largely through choice.

Mary's character also hampered her ability to make close connections outside her family circle, despite the network capital afforded to her by her parents' position. Unlike Lucy, Mary's personality was smothered by her large family. She was the fifth Gladstone sibling, and six Lyttelton cousins had been born before her. Gladstone (1989) pointed to her shy nature, and the inferiority complex which developed during her early Seasons. As was discussed in Chapter 7, timid debutantes found it extremely hard to network in an environment where standing out was key to networking success. It is important to note that despite being very well connected, she did not enjoy participating and was reticent in doing so (demonstrating the concept of the 'mobility burden' introduced by Shove, 2002). The responses of Mary Gladstone, Clarissa Trant and Kate Stanley (who will be

discussed further into this appendix), can be used to build on the work of Pullar (1978) who reflected that the Season “must often have been boring” (p. 126). This emotional evaluation can be extended by biographical material. Not only was the Season depicted as boring, it was also a source of frustration, anxiety and loneliness for a variety of different reasons. The fact that Mary, and the other diarists in this appendix, still participated in the events of the Season despite their reticence to do so is illustrative of Shove’s (2002) work in relation to the ‘mobility burden’. In this theory, Shove suggested that certain forms of movement to engage in co-present activity (in Mary’s case, attending a networking event) were undertaken through obligation, creating a mobility burden. This concept of obligation (also present in the work of Frello, 2007) is important because it highlights that mobility can be experienced negatively, supporting the work regarding servants in Chapter 5. It also, once again, highlights that experiences during the Season cannot be viewed in a uniform manner, contrasting with the work of scholars such as Evans & Evans (1976) & Huggett (1979).

Despite her dislike for the Season, and her quiet character, Mary participated in a great many events, shielded by her large family with whom she often danced. In her early Seasons there were at least six siblings and cousins also participating in Society at any one time, and a further two cousins already married, thereby providing additional bases in London. This closeness with her family remained throughout her participation in the Season, increasing further as more of her male Lyttelton cousins moved to London. Figure 6 in Chapter 5 illustrated the extent to which Mary interacted with her relatives; her diary revealed that on most days recorded she would usually have seen at least 4 members of her family, other than those she resided with. There is much evidence to suggest that they shared friendships of both sexes, again providing Mary with a wide circle of friends, none of whom she was inclined to marry; extending the work of Marcus (2007) who focussed solely on the importance of female-only friendships. The lack of a serious commitment to finding a husband may in part have been due to her parents. Like Lucy’s father, the Gladstones were in no hurry for Mary to marry, unlike the standard depiction of the desperate parent searching for a suitable match discussed earlier. Jalland (1986) suggested that Catherine Gladstone did little to encourage her daughter in the Season, which may in part have further knocked Mary’s confidence.

Mary’s first inclination to marry occurred in the late 1860s when she developed unrequited feelings for Arthur Balfour, a friend of her cousin Spencer, at a time when

women in Society were not permitted to display such emotion (Jalland, 1986). At the time, Mary, Arthur, Spencer and her cousin May formed close friendships, participating in the Season together. The use of friendship groups such as this, enabling the Season to be experienced as a unit rather than as an individual was also an important factor in Lucy Lyttelton's Season, yet is absent in literature regarding the period, where the relationship between a debutante and her chaperone is depicted as the only support network present (Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980; Wilson, 2009). Ultimately, however, Mary's close connections once again impacted negatively on her Season. Balfour ignored Mary's love in favour of her cousin May (Lambert, 1984), a marriage that was never realised when May died in 1875. Mary's failed opportunity led her to conclude that she would never marry, and her family began to view her as a spinster, effectively terminating her period as a debutante (Gooddie, 2003). Mary's advancing age, yet continued participation in the Season, was not atypical of the period. In Chapter 6, nine of the debutantes attending events most frequently were over thirty years old. It would be a mistake to depict the ballrooms of the Season as simply an occasion for young girls to find appropriate networks and marry immediately as suggested by 'Model A'. In all the settings of the Season there would also clearly have been many older women who were yet to marry. What is evident from Mary's experiences is that these women were not necessarily left out through their poor networking chances. Mary had excessive network capital during this period, and was invited to the most influential events through the position of her father. Her spinster status was brought about both through choice and the influences of her own personality, and not because her network was deemed inappropriate.

By 1880, Mary's position as an unmarried woman in Society had shifted. As her siblings and cousins moved away from the family home (not necessarily through marriage; her sister Helen was a student at Newnham Hall, Cambridge, a further testament to the liberal attitude prevalent amongst the Gladstone family (Fletcher, 2004)), Mary was increasingly relied upon by her parents, both domestically, but more importantly politically. She became her father's private secretary in 1880, transforming her experiences of the Season (Gooddie, 1993). Her now powerful position in Society paved the way for her to forge networks with politicians, forming a new circle of older male friends<sup>37</sup>. At a time when many women were confined to

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<sup>37</sup> Mary's position as an unmarried woman with male friends was unusual for the period, and more typically associated with the change in status that occurred upon marriage (Perkin, 1993).

the domestic sphere, Mary, an unmarried 33 year old, was treated as an equal by some of the most powerful men in the country (Jalland, 1986). Mary was now participating in the Season in a different capacity. She was no longer the shy debutante who never succeeded in securing a husband; she instead attended events in her political capacity surrounded by men who were no longer representative of her failure to connect, but friends who treated her as an equal. Through her father's position as Prime Minister, Mary now had her own identity during the Season and a life without marriage, an unusual position at the time (Jalland, 1986). It is testament to her rejection of the traditional desires of the Season that as her new position brought frequent marriage proposals she refused them, favouring the fulfilment she found in her political life. This again provides evidence that not every debutante aspired to be part of the Season in a single uniform manner. Mary found an alternative position in Society, contrasting with the typical view of the debutante depicted by 'Model A'. Whilst her position as the Prime Minister's daughter was unique and allowed her to experience the Season in this particular capacity, her feelings regarding the events of the period and her advanced age were no doubt representative of a significant proportion of those participating.

#### *Comparing the Seasons of two cousins*

Comparing the Seasons of Lucy Lyttelton and Mary Gladstone reveals that their joint family background resulted in some shared experiences of the Season. Networking in the family group was prioritised by both diarists, and both used their families during the events of the Season to meet new connections or share experiences. Similarly, both Lucy and Mary were not tied by family expectations; neither was expected to marry quickly. This approach to the Season saw both girls take on roles beyond simply 'doing the Season'. Lucy became a substitute mother to her younger brothers and sisters as well as becoming a Maid of Honour to the Queen. Mary, on the other hand, became her father's private secretary; both cousin's roles differing significantly from 'Model A'. Whilst they may have been debutantes, this was not the only role or responsibility Lucy and Mary held. The differences between the Seasons of Lucy and Mary can be explained largely through personality. Mary's shy, self-deprecating manner led to her fear of forging connections, in contrast to Lucy's more outgoing character. The role personality played in the experiences of the Season is significant, because it is not touched upon in existing literature where every debutante is treated in the same manner. The diaries of Lucy and Mary reveal that an individual's character had a significant impact on changing the

experiences of a Season, such that the period cannot be described as a single phenomenon, but instead one that altered depending on the character and outlook of the person participating in it. This evidence supports the work of Massey (1993) who argued that two peoples experiences of a mobility moment may be completely different, reflecting the differentiated nature of connections.

#### **Story 4: Kate Stanley and John Russell**

The story of the Seasons of Katherine Stanley (known as Kate), the fifth daughter and eighth child of Lord and Lady Stanley of Alderley and John Russell, the eldest son of Lord and Lady Russell, are illustrative of the networking practices that led these two people on a path from strangers to marriage. Both wrote diaries throughout the duration of their Seasons, from early discussions before they had met, through to charting their eventual engagement in 1864.



*Plate 12: Kate Stanley, c. 1864 (source: Russell & Russell, 1937).*

Kate Stanley was one of ten children brought up in an intelligent and forward-thinking family, a 'blessed childhood' according to her sister Rosalind (Roberts, 1962, p. 5). Kate's mother, Henrietta, was a public pioneer of women's education and her daughters were brought up accordingly, encouraged to read, learn and ask questions (Roberts, 1962). Her mother's involvement in the women's rights movement ensured Kate approached the Season from a critical perspective (Sutherland, 2004). The tightly bound codes of etiquette which subordinated many

women during the nineteenth century (Wildeblood, 1965) were in opposition to the values of her radical family. This radical position influenced Kate throughout her life; she named her eldest daughter, Rachel Lucrecia, after the American women's rights activist Lucrecia Mott (Crawford, 1999). In her youth, Kate argued regularly with her godmother about her dislike of Jane Austen's 'revolting' novels, and regularly participated in traditionally male pursuits such as hunting (16th September, 1858). The capabilities of women were further demonstrated to Kate by her own family's position. Her mother often ran the household single-handedly during Kate's years as a debutante whilst her father was preoccupied with politics; Lord Edward Stanley was appointed post-master general in 1860, a post he retained until 1866 (Newbould, 2004). Despite the passion for education shared by the majority of Kate's family, she was only especially close to one of her siblings, her brother Lyulph, three years her senior (Fletcher, 2008). They corresponded daily when apart and it was with Lyulph that Kate discussed her true feelings regarding the Season. This contrasts with the standard portrayal of the Season in which a debutante was depicted as being reliant upon her mother to guide her through the Season (Sproule, 1978; Margetson, 1980). Whilst Kate may have relied upon her mother's presence physically as a chaperone, it was her brother upon whom she depended emotionally.

John Russell, on the other hand, came from a rather less open family. His father, Lord John Russell, was twice Prime Minister of Britain, from 1846-1852 and from 1866-1868 (Walpole, 1891). His prominent position in society at the time brought the same expectations upon John as Mary Gladstone, herself the child of a Prime Minister. John's frustration at his expected participation in the Season as a result of his father's political success is evident throughout his diary. His position, however, also left him in a powerful networking position; his connection would have been as heavily sought after as that of Lucy Lyttelton or Mary Gladstone. By contrast, his mother Lady Frances Russell is recorded as having been shy, especially when compared to the other political hostesses of the day such as Emily Palmerston, Catherine Gladstone or Mary Anne Disraeli (Fletcher, 2008). She recorded her unease in a letter to Lady Mary Abercromby on 7th February 1843: "How could I beg Mama, as I used to do, to have more parties and dinners and balls! I cannot now conceive the state of mind which made me actually wish for such things. Now I have them in my power without number, and I detest them all". Lady Russell's dislike for the social whirl of the Season differs from the more characteristic experiences performed by her contemporaries: the more forthcoming political

hostesses whose influence on the Season was discussed in Chapter 6. This uncharacteristic display of displeasure regarding the social events of the Season influenced John, who as discussed in later sections approached social gatherings with a similarly negative outlook.



*Plate 13: John Russell, c. 1964 (source: Russell & Russell, 1937).*

Despite his mother's dislike of the Season, John's upbringing was orchestrated to follow the traditional path of the period (depicted in the work of scholars such as Sproule (1978) and Margetson (1980)). Educated at Harrow, and then Trinity College Cambridge, his father was anxious that this training would lead to a career in parliament (Walpole, 1891). Whilst his mother may have lacked the qualities necessary to enjoy the typical role of a political hostess, it is clear from the path she and her husband paved for John that they were committed to adhering to the expectations of Society (Prest, 2004). In contrast to the Stanleys, however, John's family was fragmented in its make up. Upon marrying Frances, John's Father, twenty three years her senior, was already a widower, with two daughters from his previous marriage and four children from his deceased wife's previous marriage (Reid, 1895). This unusual arrangement leads to the perception of a disjointed

family. With the exception of Georgiana (known as Georgy), his stepsister, with whom he built and retained a strong bond, John rarely mentions his siblings in his detailed diary, indicating their less than prominent position in his life. This contrasts sharply with the familial connections exhibited by Lucy Lyttelton and Mary Gladstone.

### *The Seasons of Kate and John*

Kate Stanley's first Season in 1859 was characterised by a façade of enjoyment behind which was hidden boredom and criticism. She was a willing participant, and would never have disobeyed the wishes of her family to participate (Fletcher, 2008), yet she did so questioningly ("*We went to Lady Harriet de Burgh's wedding in the morning. I never saw a more uninteresting one*" 7<sup>th</sup> March 1859). This boredom with the events of the Season was compounded with her displeasure in the men she was required to network with ("*it is so much trouble to talk to silent men*" 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1860). She shared her concerns in a letter to Lyulph "*I danced all the time, but I did find the young men so difficult to talk with and so little to say...I wish young men were more like you*" (20<sup>th</sup> February 1860). Kate Stanley was aristocratic, and her diary reveals she was attending balls in the upper tier of society, yet, unlike the traditional portrayal of debutantes desperate to meet the eligible men who were prevalent in these circles (as illustrated by Model A), Kate was neither impressed, nor wished to form a network, with any of them. This displeasure must have been evident, for she did not have any serious suitors in the four years before she met John Russell, despite her aristocratic position.

Her first connections with the Russell family came in 1861 when Kate and her mother called on Lady Russell to congratulate her on the marriage of John's sister Victoria. The first positive comment regarding the Season in Kate's diary comes in relation to the visit where she declared that Lady Russell was "quite charming" (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1861). The close ties between the two families aided the networking of Kate and John considerably. Their fathers were parliamentary colleagues, and their shared belief in liberal values created close ties between their spouses (Fletcher, 2008). This connection is confirmed by accounts in Kate's diary, where she is frequently chaperoned by Lady Russell ("*Mama could not go on account of her mourning, & Maude [Kate's older sister] did not care to go so we were put under the care of Lady Russell*" 1st May, 1862). In the light of the duties of a chaperone depicted in Chapter 6, it is clear that Lady Russell not only approved of Kate's

network, but was actively involved in facilitating her social interactions. Upon their eventual wedding, Lord Russell is quoted as having declared that: "it would be a source of joy to him to know that the continued connection [between the two families] would be bound up in the future happiness of their son and daughter-in-law" (Lord John Russell in Walpole, 1891, p. 418).

When John Russell first participated in the Season in 1863, Kate Stanley had been 'out' and unhappy in Society for four years, and had forged no significant networks with anyone, her views and depression regarding her place as a debutante in Society were prevalent throughout (Fletcher, 2008). These negative feelings regarding the Season were mirrored by John ("*I resolved from a sense of duty to go to Lady Westminster's ball to-night. I did not find it so very unpleasant this evening*" 25<sup>th</sup> June 1863). The duty John felt in attending balls reflects the work of Frello (2008) and Shove (2002) who discussed the concept of mandatory mobility, and the mobility burden. In this research both scholars highlight that the way mobility is experienced is highly differentiated, with some, in the case of the 'mobility burden' moving and connecting through a sense of duty, rather than desire (again contrasting with 'Model A'). Despite John's reticence in attending Lady Westminster's ball, it was at this occasion that he first danced with Kate. John's connection with the Stanleys continued through Kate's brother Lyulph, whom John regularly met during the summer. By July of the same year John had found in the Stanley family a group of people similarly displeased with the Season, and he spent an increasing amount of time in their company, revelling in the Kate's distinctive qualities at a time when they were frowned upon by Society ("*Kate and I had a very interesting walk in the evening ... she is wonderfully intellectual*" 11<sup>th</sup> July 1863)<sup>38</sup>. The Stanleys had clearly welcomed John into their homes, just as the Cravens had done with Georgina Smythe, John noted on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1864 "*Tea with the Stanley's today to be continued weekly*".

By March 1864 it is clear from both their diaries that Kate and John had found in each other an escape from the Season, and from the traditional expectations of Society at the time. John writes "*I told KS I wanted to see her alone again if possible. We met and had one fervent embrace; one long loving kiss which was worth hours of conversation. Rosalind [Kate's younger sister] looked in but went out*

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<sup>38</sup> The education of upper class women in the mid-nineteenth century was typically minimal; intelligence was not one of the qualities of a debutante desired by Society at the time (Horn, 1992).

*again astonished*" (8<sup>th</sup> March 1864). In Chapters 6 and 7, the strict codes of etiquette which guided Society at the time, including the contact permitted between unmarried members of the opposite sex, were discussed. Whilst it is evident in the other diaries mentioned here that these rules of behaviour were upheld by many, they were clearly rejected by Kate and John. Ignoring rules of Society was to risk social ostracism (Wildeblood, 1965), yet neither Kate nor John appeared worried that their forward behaviour might signal the end of their connection. This illustrates once again that whilst the Season may have been experienced in a certain way by many in Society, there were equally those participating who actively opposed the scripted networking practices typical of the period, contrasting with the work of scholars such as Puller (1978) and Scott (1991).

Whilst in private their forward behaviour may have been acceptable to one another, in the public settings of the ballroom it was not, and both John and Kate display frustration at the rules Society enforced upon them (*"As I thought, trouble was not long coming. Georgy [John's sister] was congratulated today by some man on my marriage and came kindly to tell me. At Lady Palmerston's accordingly I kept away from Kate though we did speak a few words together in the doorway. I felt disgusted with London"* 12<sup>th</sup> March 1864). The rumours did not escape John's traditionally-minded mother either, and Lady Russell was equally displeased for very different reasons. Whilst she did not oppose Kate as a connection, (as discussed earlier their families shared a longstanding friendship) she was, however, concerned by the youth of her son. In his diary, John revealed his mother's insistence that he was too young to be married and that she believed him to be unable to judge the situation himself<sup>39</sup>. In response he wrote *"I feel myself very oppressed and crushed by the great monster 'conventionality' against whose fearful weight it sometimes appears to be my lot to struggle forever and in vain!"* (17<sup>th</sup> March 1864).

Following Lady Russell's displeasure, Lady Stanley agreed to the trial separation of six months she had suggested between Kate and John. Whilst it has traditionally been documented that the mother of a debutante would be happy for her daughter to be married quickly (see Margetson, 1980), a trait upheld by Lady Stanley who made no objection to the match, it is clear that for a traditional mother of an eligible and eldest son, such urgency was not so desirable. Throughout this trial period

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<sup>39</sup> In Society at the time it was generally considered that men would wait before marrying, first experiencing University, a career in the law or politics and travel abroad (see Horn, 1992 for a detailed description).

(described by Kate as 'uncertain' and 'anxious' (March 22nd 1864)), the pair communicated via their close siblings: John via Kate's closest ally Lyulph and Kate via John's sister, by now a close friend, Georgy. Upon Kate and John's marriage Georgy stated that: "The marriage was a particular joy to me, as Kate had long been a friend of mine. She was like a fresh breeze coming on the family" (Peel, 1920, p. 158-9). As was the case with Georgina Smythe, it appeared that becoming friendly with a potential contact's closest siblings was key to ensuring the connection was maintained when co-present interaction was no longer a possibility. The difference in family values, and between the perceived roles of men and women in Society at the time, was highlighted during the separation by the engagement of Kate's younger sister Rosalind, an announcement which surprised John:

"Very surprising news came this morning in a note from G. Howard which announces that he is to marry Rosalind Stanley. He is younger than me. G[eorgy] writing of the same thing says he is to be 21 in August; while Rosalind is much younger than my dear Kate. I had always looked forward with immense pleasure to having Rosalind as an *unmarried* sister to talk to & c., & the news for this & other reasons filled me with sadness. Or seriousness? My own time of marrying and rejoicing- when will that come? When shall I be old enough?" (30th June, 1864).

The engagement between Kate's younger sister and her equally youthful suitor highlights the more conventional attitude displayed by Lady Russell. It also reflects the experiences of Mountain earlier, highlighting that the Seasons of unmarried men were also subject to the conventions enforced by their families and Society as a whole. Despite her earlier reservations, however, Lady Russell adhered to the plan enforced by the two families; once the six month separation ended, the engagement between John and Kate was immediately announced.

The Seasons of Kate and John are useful to this in-depth analysis of the Season because they represent two people from double-parent typically aristocratic (as depicted by 'Model A'), wealthy families participating in the Season in an 'abnormal' fashion. Whilst both families may have been liberally minded, they were far from rebellious, and both largely upheld the traditional values of Society at the time. Yet in these families existed two people who disliked the Season, and wished not be a part of it. They similarly dismissed the Societal codes of behaviour in which they would have been brought up, breaking rules of etiquette. Their experience is

significant because it reveals that below the surface of a seemingly 'typical' and 'successful' Season lay individuals who inwardly rejected the process. This is important because it underlines that the Season cannot be taken on face value as a typical phenomenon and is illustrative of Sheller's (2004) concept of 'messy social spaces', in which experiences of connection cannot be presumed or stereotyped. Whilst Kate and John's behaviour at balls may have appeared to conform to the conclusions of broad analyses of the Season such as those by Evans & Evans (1976), their thoughts and private behaviour were far from 'normal'. It is only by delving into the lives of these two participants using biographical material that their inner rejection of the Season becomes apparent, and is illustrative of the importance of this source in understanding the period.

## **Conclusions**

By delving below the broader perspectives and trends of the Season and instead focusing on the micro-geographies of the period in the form of individual experiences, it is possible to shed further light on the conclusions made in earlier sections of this thesis. Whilst every diarist did participate in the Season, their experiences were markedly different, dependant on a range of factors. In every case, however, the importance of family in influencing the course of a Season was significant, and illustrates the importance of connections in altering the experiences of the period. The conclusions which follow contradict the views present in much existing literature regarding the period, and are significant additions to our understanding of the Season.

Lucy Lyttelton and Mary Gladstone both experienced the Season alongside a large group of relatives, participating as a unit. This accordingly enabled the sharing of contacts to occur, and there was a continual support network present at the events of the Season. This experience contrasted sharply with that of the Smythe sisters and Clarissa Trant, whose small families led to a lack of connections and at times a difficulty in securing a chaperone necessary for ball attendance (*Modern Etiquette for Public and Private*, 1871). The approach taken by families during the Season was also significantly different. Louisa Smythe was encouraged, particularly by her influential Aunt Fitzherbert, to play a risk game in the Season; rejecting acceptable proposals in the hope that an even more advantageous one would emerge. This approach of the Season contrasted sharply with that of Lucy Lyttelton, whose father declared that he was in no rush to see her marry, a view shared by her

Grandmother, who sought assurance from Meriel (Lucy's sister) that Lucy was not being pressured to marry advantageously (Fletcher, 1997). This lack of familial pressure regarding the necessity to forge connections was demonstrated further by her father's refusal to allow his daughter to attend more than two balls a week, and at these she was forbidden to dance the waltz. Limiting Lucy's networking opportunities is the exact opposite to the approach taken by the Smythe family, who were desperate for both daughters to attend as many performance opportunities as possible. This difference can be explained in part by expectation. Louisa was expected to marry well; her family were desperate for this to occur, contrasting with the Lyttelton family, who may also have expected Lucy to marry, yet were not in a position whereby it was desperate for her to do so, reflecting differing circumstances through which the Season was approached.

The role of family in influencing the course of a Season stretches beyond the period after 'coming-out', however. The case studies in this appendix reveal that the differences in the upbringing of all the diarists impacted significantly on the way in which the individual approached the Season in later life. Kate Stanley, who was brought up in a family which valued the education of women and nurtured free thinking and liberal ideals, found the etiquette and rules of the Season both boring and constraining. She could not accept the role of an upper class woman in Victorian society in the mid-nineteenth century, largely because she had been brought up to reject these roles in childhood. Clarissa Trant's early years were similarly unconventional. Travelling the world with her army officer father and younger brother, she was schooled in political and military matters, and for many years had been more fluent in French and Portuguese than in her native English (Luard, 1923). Returning to the London to participate in the Season proved a shock for Clarissa, and she struggled to adapt to the rigid regime of the period (as identified by etiquette books in Chapter 7). The Smythe sisters, meanwhile, had been brought up by their alcoholic and desperate mother, and had, from an early age, been reminded of their duty to marry well. Their Seasons were approached in a businesslike fashion; both girls participated from the outset with their eyes open to the challenges which lay before them. These different childhoods reveal that even before the Season began, their experiences of the period had already been dictated by their earlier upbringing.

Biographical analysis revealed that in several cases, friendships were as important as family members in the course of a Season. Georgina, Kate and John forge close

and significant friendships with their suitor's siblings. This allowed legitimate and usually unquestioned networking to occur between suitors through the guise of their siblings. In the case of Kate Stanley and John Russell, friendships with Georgy Russell and Lyulph Stanley allowed connections between the pair to exist even during a supposed six month termination in contact between them. Reliance upon friendships stretched beyond network facilitation, however. Several diarists appeared to rely on the emotional support of friendships during the Season. Mary Gladstone relied heavily upon the male friendships she made in the political world through the connections of her father, drawing confidence from the way in which she was treated as an equal member of these partnerships. The importance of a male confidant to debutantes during the Season can also be identified through the case studies. Both Kate Stanley and Clarissa Trant were physically supported in the Season by their female chaperones, to whom they were evidently closely connected. Yet in both cases, their emotional support came from a different source. In the case of Kate this was her brother Lyulph, to whom she discussed her negative emotions regarding male participants in the Season on a regular basis. Clarissa on the other hand turned to her father, discussing her various love affairs in detail, seeking his support where necessary. Neither one of these male figures guided the Seasons of either Kate or Clarissa (her father was still away in Europe for much of the year), yet both were relied upon as support systems during the period. The gendered nature of this is significant, contradicting impressions presented in previous studies of the Season that a mother and daughter, or a female companion and her debutante participated in the Season together, confiding in one another (Sproule, 1978; Pullar, 1978). The influence of male figures in the emotional wellbeing of debutantes has not previously been discussed.

This emotional wellbeing is another facet of the Season which should not be taken for granted. Four out of the seven diarists studied displayed periods of loneliness, insecurity or dislike for the Season. This negativity is again an element of the period which has not previously been touched upon in great detail, apart from in relation to the worry associated with dance and performance (Engelhardt, 2009). The prevalence of a dislike for the Season differs from a traditional view that young women during the nineteenth century were eager to network and marry (as illustrated by 'Model A'). For four of the diarists studied, this was either an unwanted expectation, or a worrying challenge. Likewise, other diarists do not display a particular wish to marry. Clarissa Trant concluded that she would rather spend time with her brother and father than have to marry someone she didn't know would

make her happy, despite the advantageous nature of the match. Georgina Smythe similarly rejected wealthy proposals based on the fact she simply didn't like the men in question. It appears that whilst there may have been pressures from certain quarters of the Season to marry quickly and advantageously, at least in several instances, this pressure was rejected in favour of the chance for a more romantic alternative.

This rejection of certain societal expectations is also prevalent in other aspects of the Season. Georgina Smythe rejected the advice of her family in favour of her own chosen network, fully aware of the need to persuade them to agree to the match. She calculated the best way to manipulate the Season to her advantage at a time when Society dictated that debutantes should be submissive to the desires of their family (again illustrated by 'Model A'). Kate Stanley and John Russell took this rejection of societal norms further, however, through the partial discarding of the strict codes of etiquette demanded by Society during the period. Whilst this may only have occurred in private, this performance of inappropriate behaviour showed a disregard for the expectations placed upon them by Society.

The in-depth analysis of biographical material combined with conclusions made at the broader scale in earlier chapters reveals clearly that the Season cannot be described as a single phenomenon, a single experience uniformly applicable to every participant. Instead, the differences in the experiences of participants points to the existence of many Seasons, interacting and interlinking with one another yet offering very different experiences of the period.

## **Appendix 2: The experiences of the Season as networks**



In earlier chapters of this thesis, in particular in Chapter 6, the importance of networks during the Season has been foregrounded. This analysis can be extended through a detailed engagement with biographical material. In order to see these trends in greater clarity, the diaries have been analysed to construct networking graphs, illustrating the trends in connections occurring. This analysis of individual patterns of connection takes inspiration from the work of mobilities scholars, who have used the approach in a variety of contemporary contexts. Ohnmacht (2009) mapped specific non-local ‘strong ties’ in Switzerland, an approach previously adopted by Conradson and Latham (2007) in understanding individual experiences of migrants in London. Axhausen (2007) again adopted the individual approach to studying networks, combining these single connections to form a wider analysis of ‘activity spaces’. These examples illustrate the success of investigating social circumstances through an engagement with individual records of networking, inspiring this research to use the tool in a similar approach.

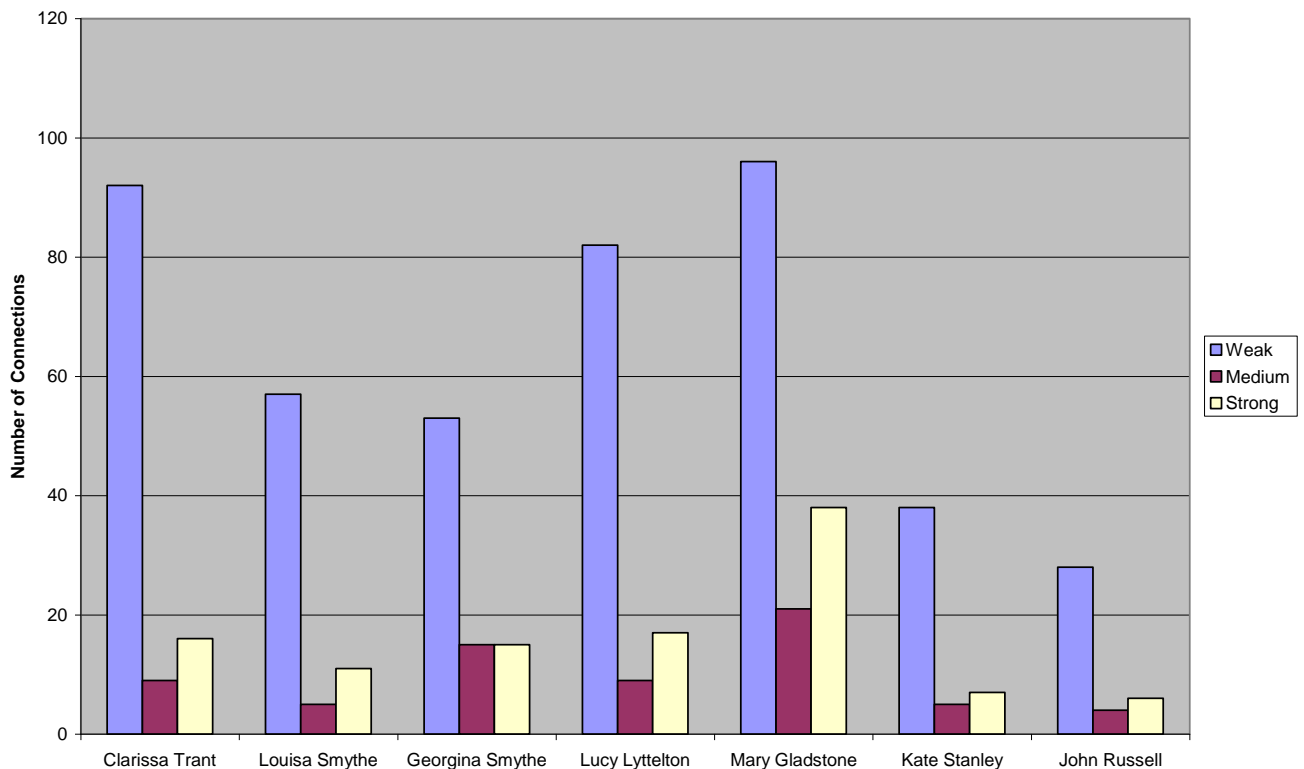
### **Using diaries to understand networks**

In Chapter 4, the principle by which diaries were used to understand the individual stories of the Season was discussed. Every meeting between the diarist and another individual or family whilst the diarist was participating in the Season was recorded, with multiple records constructed for meetings which occurred more than once. These connections were then grouped into three categories: weak, medium and strong. As discussed in Chapter 6, categorising networks in this way took inspiration from the work of Granovetter’s (1973, 1983) weak network ties analysis. In this research, ‘weak networks’ represented connections which occurred once or a maximum of twice, for example an introduction, the paying of a call or the performance of a dance, but the network was not maintained. ‘Medium networks’ were connections which occurred more frequently, with whom the diarist performed dances on numerous occasions, or a hostess whose balls were attended frequently, yet the network was never seriously considered, or was never particularly influential in creating opportunities either in facilitating networking or as a suitor. ‘Strong networks’ by contrast were those which heavily influenced the experiences of a diarist, be it a chaperone, a family friend who regularly introduced suitors, family members who attended balls alongside the diarist or serious suitors who had either

proposed or with whom the diarist had networked intensely over a long period. This analysis was not intended to be a fully accurate account of a Season, this would be impossible, but instead a representation of the level and type of networking achieved by each diarist. It should also be noted, again, that the diarists remained participants in the Season for a variety of different lengths of time, and this impacted on the network analysis. Certain diarists will appear to have more contacts simply because they have been participating and networking for longer than others, an important point to notice when analysing trends.

### *Amount of Networks*

Appreciating the differing amount of networking occurring during the Season takes inspiration from the work of Sheller (2004) who suggested that in a 'messy gel of sociality' such as the Season, actors will simultaneously be in touch with many people in contrasting ways, and will subsequently have different experiences facilitated by these different connections. Exploring this notion enables an understanding of experience through the networks forged by a participant. Mary Gladstone's unusual position in the Season, for example, is reflected in her large number of networks. As her father's private secretary, it was her duty to attend events (Harris, 2002) and to some extent forge connections, as illustrated by the graph (Figure 22).



*Figure 22: The number of connections forged by each diarist.*

This high total, especially of weak contacts, is representative also of the number of years she spent participating in the Season. Kate Stanley, by contrast, made relatively few connections, illustrative of her boredom with the Season and dislike of dancing with 'silent men', limiting her ability to make contacts. Other than Mary Gladstone, it was Clarissa Trant and Lucy Lyttelton who also display high levels of networking. Both have roughly the same number of each category of contact, yet from the biographical material it is clear that their experiences of the Season were extremely different (reflecting Urry's (2007) argument that all mobilities must be understood in relation to one another). In terms of forging connections, Lucy progressed smoothly through the Season, familiar with royalty and the most powerful political figures of the period. She was well connected, and in the end married into one of the oldest and wealthiest aristocratic families in England (Boase, 2004). Yet she appears to have the same number of connections as Clarissa, who struggled to make links throughout the Season, was rejected by her suitor's parents

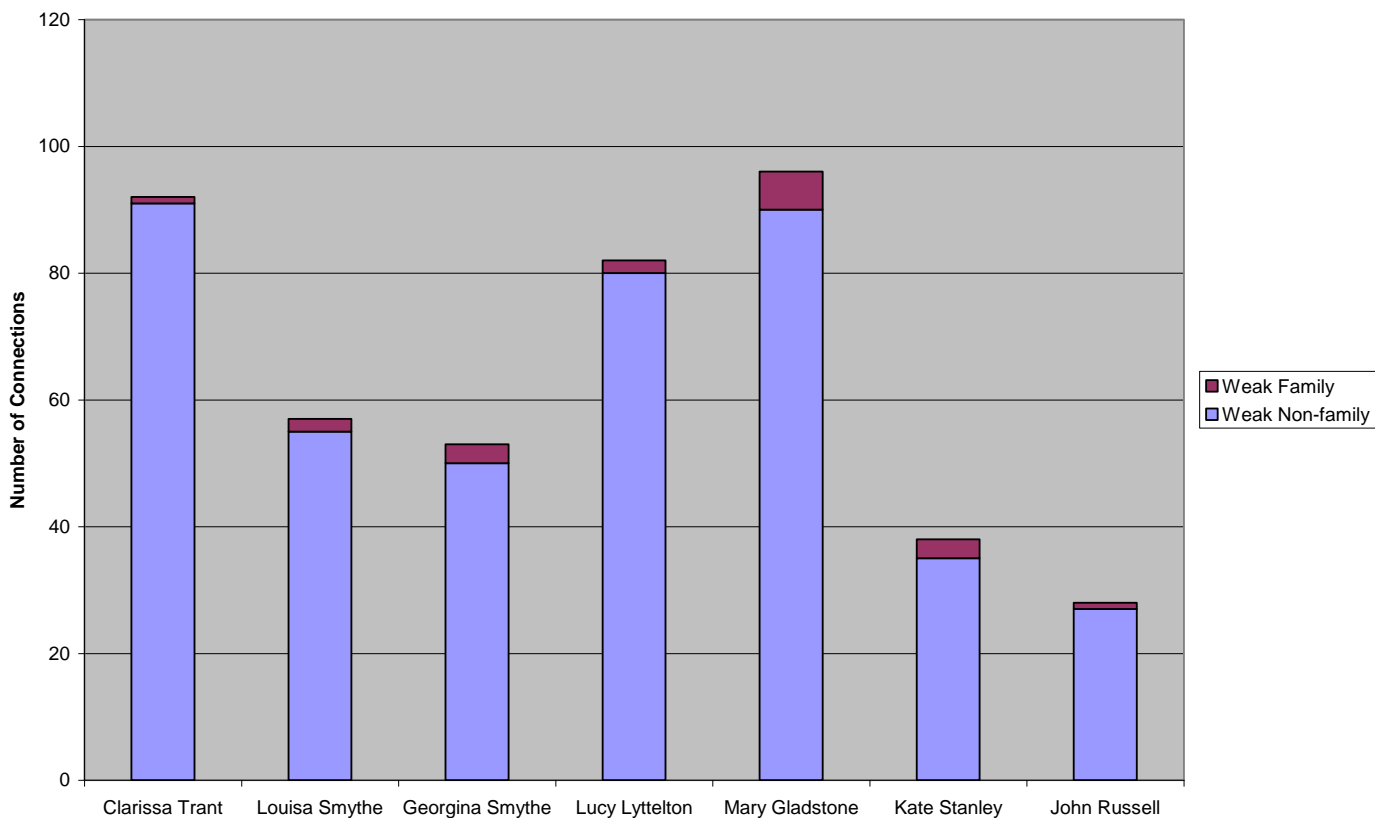
and eventually settled for a vicar without a large fortune. The distinction between these experiences, yet their relatively similar networking totals highlights the importance of combining these statistics with biographical information. This biographical information provides the context needed in this case. Whilst Lucy and Clarissa may have been networking a similarly large amount, seen by some as key to success in the Season (for example Evans & Evans, 1976), the nature of these connections were completely different. Whilst Lucy was connecting with those in the elite circles of Society, Clarissa was networking on the edge of it, engaging with a different group in largely military and diplomatic circles. As suggested earlier in this appendix, this distinction is reflected in Figure 8, serving as a reminder that it was the combination of the type and amount of networking which pointed to a typically successful Season.

Representing networking graphically is also useful in illustrating the experiences uncovered through biographical material. Figure 22 illustrates the difference between Louisa and Georgina Smythe's experiences of the Season. Georgina participated in only one Season before accepting a proposal, compared to Louisa's sometimes desperate four years. Despite differences in the length of networking between the two, they made a similar number of contacts during their respective Seasons. Georgina's relatively successful Season enabled her to forge as many connections as her sister, whose Seasons were beset with problems, made in four years, creating a far higher level of network capital (Urry, 2007). By understanding their experiences in terms of network capital, it is not surprising that Georgina enjoyed a smoother and more rapid progression to engagement than Louisa, as she was embedded in more co-present moments of interaction (Boden & Molotch, 1994).

### *Categorisation of Networks*

Dividing the connections made by the diarists into three categories also enables the success of a Season to be compared to the connections forged (reflecting the complex patterns of connections discussed by Sheller & Urry, 2006). Weak networks signal connections which have either failed or were not pursued by either party, or were simply acquaintances that a diarist saw occasionally during the Season at events. These contacts would not have been very influential to the outcome of a Season, but may have been useful in social situations where knowing the maximum number of people was seen as an advantage (Granovetter, 1973).

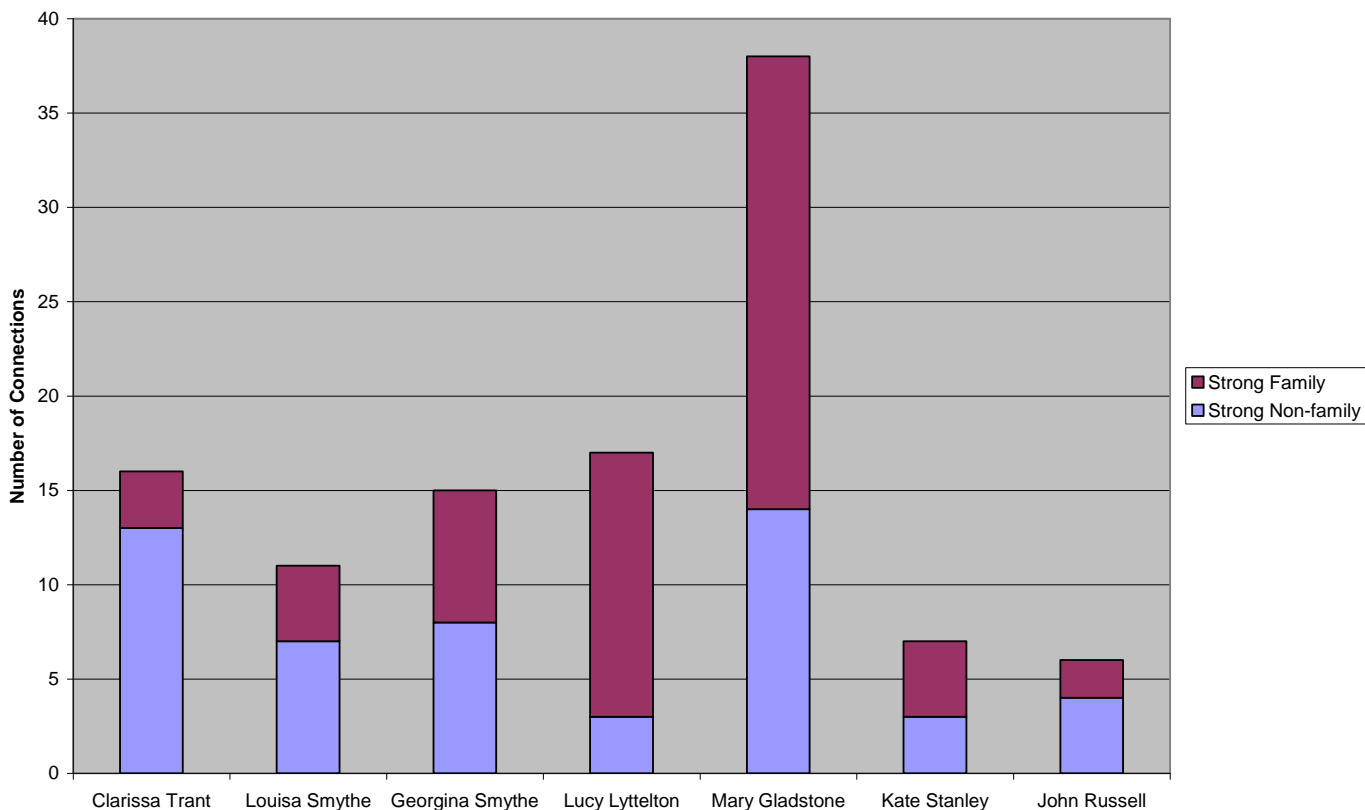
Medium and strong connections were more useful to the outcome of a Season, and as such it could be concluded that diarists with more strong and medium connections were generally better connected and would have a greater chance of a 'successful' Season. Again it is Mary Gladstone who has the most number of both strong and weak networks, an indication of her time spent participating in the Season and her large extended family (who she saw frequently and were therefore classed as strong connections). Georgina Smythe has a comparatively high level of strong networks, many more than her sister, again reflecting her smoother passage through the Season.



*Figure 23: Proportion of the diarist's weak ties who were family members.*

Throughout this thesis the importance of family in influencing the Season has been discussed, and this link between family and connections can be seen through the categorisation of these networks as weaker or stronger. Figure 23 illustrates that very few family members of the diarists were weak connections, suggesting that

whatever family the diarist had was either utilised frequently and played an important part in their Seasons, or they had no role and were never mentioned. With family such an important part in influencing the Season, the number of family acting as strong networks alongside the diarist was a potential advantage. There would have been more chaperones to utilise, more friends of family to be introduced to, and more chances of making new links through family connections. Lucy Lyttelton and Mary Gladstone coming from their large and close-knit family demonstrate the importance of family ties, as witnessed in Figure 24.



*Figure 24: The proportion of the diarist's strong ties who were family members.*

Lucy's Season was one of the most typically 'successful' and her positive experiences were largely due to the strength and usefulness of her family connections. Only three of Lucy's seventeen strongest contacts were non-family members, highlighting the extent to which she relied upon her family to aid networking during the Season. Lucy's experience can be contrasted with Clarissa Trant, whose diary revealed her struggle to network. Of her 16 strong contacts, only three were family members, the others being friends or colleagues of her father. Although these were people upon whom Clarissa could rely, they were not directly

affected by the fluctuating fortunes of her Season and could not share in the emotional rollercoaster of the period in the way a family member could (Horn, 1992). Clarissa's lack of family networks hampered her Season.

### Sibling Connections

Whilst Lucy and Mary were from the same family, their connections cannot be analysed in relation to each other in any significant way owing to the length of time between their two first Seasons. Louisa and Georgina Smythe's networks, however, provide a useful analysis and illustration of the importance of family in the Season. Georgina's Season commenced the same year her elder sister married, resulting in their family's continued un-broken participation in the Season for a total of five years. Biographical material points to Georgina having a much smoother and more controlled approach to the Season than Louisa, and this experience can be explained through their respective networks. What this analysis reveals is the extent to which Georgina utilised the connections made previously by her sister to her own advantage. It appears that for the second, and then subsequent daughters, the Season was a far easier experience, largely because their elder sibling had paved their way to potential connections, an element missing in previous research on the period. Georgina shared seven out of eleven of Louisa's strongest contacts, all of her medium strength contacts and fifteen of the least successful weak connections. They shared 37% of their connections in all. Many of these were family members whose influence in both the sister's Seasons would be expected (illustrated by Model A). However, six of the contacts they shared increased in significance between Louisa's Season and Georgina's, four of whom were suitors of them both, indicating that Georgina clearly built on the networks of her sister, smoothing her passage in the Season from the outset.

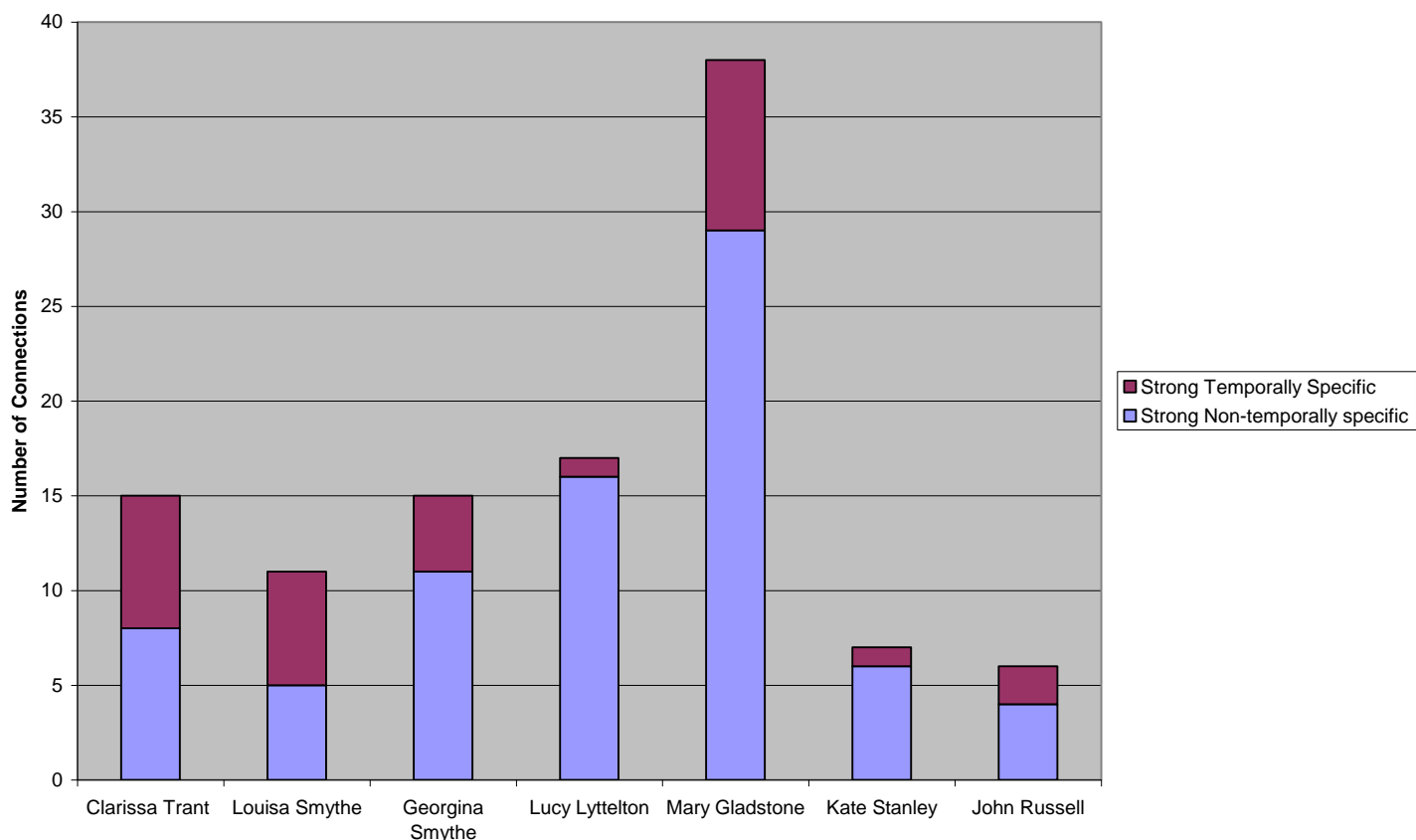
Family was also an important route to connection for potential suitors and debutantes. By analysing the networks of the diarists, it is evident that three of them forged significantly close relationships with their eventual spouse's family, supporting biographical material which pointed to the importance of these individuals. Georgina Smythe forged a strong connection with Lupo, Augustus Craven's younger sister and it was through this friendship that she was able to arrange meetings with her brother, securing their connection. The most significant example of the importance of family in this respect, however, is demonstrated by John Russell and Kate Stanley. During their enforced six month separation, their

diaries indicate the importance of family members in acting as sympathetic go-betweens, ensuring contact was maintained between the pair (illustrative of Urry's (2007) 'connections at a distance'). This would not have been possible had Kate not forged a close friendship with John's closest sibling, his sister Georgy, and likewise John with Kate's brother and confidant Lyulph. Four out of six of John's closest connections in Figure 24 were members of Kate's close family prior to their period of separation and his contact with them during this period enabled this contact to be sustained.

### *Temporary v Permanent Networks*

Throughout this section, the importance of a diarist maintaining strong connections has pointed to a smoother experience of the Season. It is important to analyse these stronger connections further, however, in terms of their temporality. The temporal nature of networks is highlighted in the work of Rettie (2008) who documented the dynamic nature of networks in relation to mobile phone use. An understanding of this dynamism is important in the context of the Season, because it illustrates that networking was not fixed, but fluctuated in intensity and significance over time (illustrative of Pahl's (2000) notion of the 'social convoy'). The differing nature of networks described in this section are illustrative of the varied and changing experiences of the Season witnessed in Appendix 1, and serve to reinforce the importance of understanding networking in research on the Season.

Weak contacts during the Season, by their very nature, were not sustained over any length of time, and certainly rarely between Seasons. Strong links, however, had the potential to be a long-lasting presence in the life of the diarists to whom they were connecting. Understanding these contacts in terms of their temporality is therefore important in examining their significance in the Season. A strong but short link points to a death, a serious yet ultimately rejected connection or a refusal of marriage, all events which point to problems in the Seasons of the diarist concerned. However, a maintained connection, illustrative of a chaperone, family member or friend who would have remained a useful influence for the duration of the Season, ultimately aided the experience.



*Figure 25: The proportion of the diarist's strong networks which were temporally specific.*

Figure 25 reflects the proportion of temporally specific strong networks forged by each diarist and reveals an interesting trend. Lucy Lyttelton had the lowest proportion of temporarily strong contacts (6%) in contrast with Clarissa Trant (54%) and Louisa Smythe (55%) with the highest proportion. Louisa's sister Georgina by contrast only had 27% strong but temporary connections. This reflects the experiences of the Season well. Those diarists who struggled to make connections because they themselves were rejected had a significantly higher proportion of temporarily stronger contacts than those debutantes who progressed more smoothly through the Season.

By analysing the networks of the diarists in this way, and by combining this evidence with biographical material, it is possible to identify trends in the way in which different diarists experienced the Season through the contacts they made. The connections forged, or equally, a failure to connect, created the experiences witnessed in the diaries of these debutantes. Possessing many long-term, secure and influential links enabled the traditional goals of the Season to be achieved.

Where these networks were lacking, or where the search for these connections proved fruitless, the experience became far more negative. This analysis proves that in understanding the Season, the period must be viewed through the concept of individual connections, and the associated concept of network capital (Urry, 2007), to enable a detailed understanding of the differentiated experiences witnessed during the period.



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