Terminopolis or Terminal Institution? A Sociological Examination of the Institutionalised Airport Terminal.

Jeremy Alan Coulton

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University of Salford

School of Humanities, Languages & Social Sciences

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<u>Abstract</u>

The airport terminal is becoming an increasingly 'taken for granted' part of many peoples' lives. As air travel becomes less expensive, more and more individuals are choosing to travel for both business and pleasure, and the airport has become a site of increasing interest to scholars from a variety of academic disciplines. Sociologists, geographers and anthropologists have offered a range of perspectives on the spatial nature of the airport, ranging from the 'transitional space' described by Gottdiener (2001), to Auge's (1995) 'non-place', free and empty of power and social relationships. The sociological foundation for this thesis however, stems from the work of Erving Goffman, and specifically his examination of the total institution. In an effort to capture the institutional nature of the airport terminal, the study used observation, semi-structured interviews and video and audio recordings during fieldwork at airport terminals across the globe. Specific conceptualisations of the airport as a city, shopping mall, theme park and non-place are explored through existing literature and empirical study, and are measured against the institutional backdrop of the practices and activities of the places themselves. The author concludes that airport terminal buildings are not the conceptualisations they are often cited as being. They are however sociologically significant spaces because of their design and use in the era of increased globalisation, security, control and uncertainty, where people management and control is seen as a vital function, and where the conversion of customers into compliant docile bodies is key to minimising risk and maximising profits.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Global travel is now a frequent and ordinary experience for a significant percentage of the populations of industrialised and developed nations. Taking a flight is, in itself, a relatively unremarkable event; the development of airports from their humble beginnings, into the vast commercial and architecturally significant structures they have become though is indeed quite remarkable. This thesis examines the manner in which the airport impacts upon those whom work in them, or travel through them. Sociologists, social geographers, anthropologists and architects amongst others, have written widely about this relatively contemporary space, and yet all appear to have overlooked the importance of the sites as managed, controlling or manipulative spaces, and this is the key issue addressed here. Airport buildings have been cited as being the archetypal sterile and 'lifeless' artefact of postmodernity, and yet, the role this may play in determining how users perceive or manage their behaviour is still overlooked. This thesis examines the nature of the airport terminal, and explores how this key contemporary space has been conceptualised and identified as a societal metaphor by a variety of scholars, and ultimately seeks to identify whether there is any element of institutionalisation in the way it operates on a day-to-day basis. It is necessary to first examine the historical development of airport buildings, as this charts the progression in the significance of 'terminalisation'. This thesis however, is not simply a theoretical exploration of airport and urban advancement, but aims to utilise a variety of methodological approaches to enable a more empirically grounded evaluation of the modern airport environment, and these methods are discussed in some depth in Chapter 3.

This thesis sets out to provide the reader with a step-by-step examination of what the airport is purported to be, and then to examine the methodological considerations of this study, and in so doing, introduce analysis which provides a more satisfactory comprehension of the nature of space within the airport terminal building. The findings are discussed in the context of the institutional nature of the spaces themselves. This thesis then offers a further discussion of the concept of the 'Terminal Institution', derived primarily from an application and development of the work of Erving Goffman.

1.1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Research

Before it is possible to embark upon any investigation, it is first necessary to identify precisely what is to be studied, which specific areas of interest are to be examined, what questions need to be asked in order to generate the necessary data to support the project, and then to highlight just how these questions are to be answered through choice of method. This will of course be given far more attention in Chapter 3; however, there are some key aims to the study that can be outlined here.

The ultimate objective of the thesis is to determine the extent to which the contemporary airport terminal can be viewed as an 'institutional' place or space; before this can be determined however, there are specific areas for consideration: firstly, it is necessary to establish the extent to which airport terminals can be viewed as being like any other public or private space; this is important as it is necessary to determine whether airport terminals are, in fact, nothing other than transport sortation hubs. Assuming that there are similarities with other spaces, both historic and

contemporary, then investigation must take place to ascertain what these similarities are, and equally as importantly, where the differences lie. Airport terminals are clearly people-sorting and controlled spaces, so it is fundamental to examine how this control is exercised and measured. There is a clear need here to examine the institutional nature of airport space, against a Goffmanesque framework for the 'total institution', and again, if there are similarities or differences to this, then these require investigation and discussion.

1.1.2   Operationalisation

It is key within any study to operationalize the question. Here, this involves defining certain key terms, and providing detail as to whether it will be possible to determine the extent to which the 'question' asked has indeed been answered. This is particularly prudent here, as the purpose of the study is not to test a hypothesis per se, but instead, through qualitative social investigation, to determine the extent to which airport spaces fit into any predetermined 'type', and to further explore the re-application of a prominent sociological theory with regard to airport spaces.

The first area requiring definition is the 'airport' itself. As discussed more fully in section 1.2.1, the airport has evolved primarily through the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, and throughout this process of development, different types of airports exist to serve different markets. Despite the seemingly utilitarian nature of the airport, their size and design for example, differ greatly dependent upon whether their primary function is for domestic, intercontinental, military or private air travel. There is also a significant difference between the functions of a 'hub' airport, where the

majority of passengers converge to change flights, and a 'terminal' where more flights are the point of first departure or final destination. There are also smaller regional airports, which whilst being 'terminals', are less busy, and tend to operate more holiday charter flights and less frequent schedule flights. We must also not forget 'airfields', and these are generally for the benefit of private plane owners or for private jet charter. For the purposes of this study, military installations and private airfields are not included, despite their functionality being similar, there is not the same intensity of organisation as in larger airports. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 3.4 where the process of sampling is examined; however it is prudent here to create a trifold typology of the airports utilised in this study: regional airports, intercontinental hub airports and intercontinental terminals. All three are utilised throughout the study, and each will be identified within this classification. It must be noted, that whilst it is possible to group different airport spaces together in this way, it still does not remove the individual idiosyncrasies with each terminal, borne out of their geographical location, their architect, or their history.

It is important here, to clarify who the users of the airport spaces are as discussed in this study. In examining the sociological importance of the spaces themselves, it is key that all users are in fact in some way affected by this, and thus both staff and air travellers are key here. In the same way that Goffman (1991:7) suggests that 'any group of persons……. develop a life of their own that becomes meaningful, reasonable and normal once you get close to it', it is fundamental here that those who spend the most time in the airport terminal setting, such as those who work there, will be at least as touched, managed, controlled or manipulated by it, as those who pass through from check-in to plane. One key group who are excluded here however, are

those who deliver or collect individuals from the airport. This is due to the fact that 'airside' spaces are those being investigated here; spaces only accessible by those with either a valid ticket to travel and the associated travel and legal documentation, or those with appropriate passes, supplied the airport operators or the Civil Aviation Authority, accessed following security checks and baggage check-in. The reason for this should be reasonably clear, as check-in and arrival halls are not subject to anywhere near the same level of scrutiny, control or people management. This does not belittle the sociological importance of these spaces, as they are sites of anxiety, spatial ordering, emotion, and are even more now becoming spaces for consumption, although somewhat more limited than those accessed once through security.

The most complex area for operationalization in this study, lies in the ability to 'define' and measure control, management, manipulation, institutionalisation and so on. It is possible to examine how Goffman (1991) defines a 'total institution', and this is examined in section 2.1.1.

Having a greater understanding of how the contemporary airport evolved into the structures that we see today, it is prudent to undertake a brief historical investigation, as this may assist us in determining how and why the spaces developed as they have through the past century.

1.2 AIRPORT HISTORY

1.2.1 *Background*

Christian Schonwetter (2005:6) notes that as "aviation history is only a century old….
no definite style has yet evolved for airport terminal buildings". One fundamental
design difference between airport buildings and, for example, the late 19th and early
20th Century larger railway stations, is that the railway stations served as monuments
or showpieces to the companies who ran the trains and operated the rail network,
whereas the airport terminals served somehow to showcase the country or state in
which they were situated, and not the operators who were based within them (Blow,
1996). This theory is supported by Kazda and Caves (2000), who note that the
"terminal is often the first point of contact with the country for the arriving passenger.
It is a shop window of the country and makes the first and, upon departure, also the
last impression on the passenger. From the architectural point of view the terminals
have always been and still are a showpiece representing the best of a particular
country" (Kazda & Caves, 2000:245). Whilst it is acknowledged that the term 'shop
window' is used figuratively, it is interesting and non-coincidental in the context of
this study that such a consumption-related term is chosen here. Both Russia and China
maintained a design for their airports based upon 'heroic classicism' (Pearman, 2004);
buildings designed to reinforce images of power and opulence, long after the United
States and Western Europe had opted for increasingly functional buildings, although
visitors to Beijing airport for the 2008 Olympic games were treated to a striking, yet
modern example of the 'shop window' design. The desire to build bigger, more
expensive and more opulent airports attracted a significant amount of opposition,

largely due to the huge costs of such projects to the taxpayers. Gordon (2008) notes the public objections to the building of La Guardia airport in New York, highlighting that the request for $27 million was seen by opponents as unnecessary and "too grandiose and well beyond the needs of a community that had a perfectly serviceable airport at Floyd Bennett" (Gordon, 2008:109). Mayor Fiorello La Guardia was not distracted in his pursuits to build New York's statement airport that took his name however, as he believed "the city needed an airport that was worthy of its importance" (Gordon, 2008:107). Airport terminals are a far more complex network of functionality, profitability, security and architectural design than a simple impression making tool. There are a wide selection of texts dealing with the specifically architectural design features of the airport terminal building (Kazda & Caves, 2000, Blow, 1996, Horonjeff, 1962, Pearman, 2004, Horonjeff & McKelvey, 1994), and much of this literature focuses upon the external requirements for holding aircraft, and the technical data relating to venting, ducting, mechanical and technical minutiae, and the physical construction data seen in all architectural drawings (Blow, 1996). Many of these texts discuss the levels of 'space' required for the variety of functions that must be performed in such a building, but few publications acknowledge that the concept of space may be multi-faceted, and that space has social as well as physical characteristics and consequences.

1.2.2 *'The worlds most revolutionary structure'.*

In *Naked Airport* (2008), Alastair Gordon details the evolution of what he argues is, the world's most revolutionary structure, a similar view to that shared by Pearman

(2004:9), who states that "by the year 2000, the airport terminal had become, strategically, the most important building type in the world [which] had come to symbolise progress, freedom, trade, and the aspirations of their host nations". Gordon (2008:11) notes that soon after Wilbur Wrights demonstration of flight in 1908, "visionary planners and modernists began to see the airport as the key to the city of the future". By the 1920s, passenger flight was viewed by many as science fiction, and the visions for airports reflected this. Futuristic designs showing cities being built either within or astride airports were common, and yet the reality remained that many air fields were just in fact little more than muddy fields. Le Corbusier, architecture deity to some, social commentator to others, and "modernist factotum" to Kowinski (1985:273), took a great deal of interest in the design of the airport, and its geographical positioning in relation to the city. Le Corbusier famously performed a u-turn regarding his vision for the future of air travel, having in 1925 created his vision for the city of the future, which was built with an airport at its heart, and then by 1946 proclaiming that the modern airport should instead be built away from the city, out of sight and should in fact be 'naked and minimal' (Gordon, 2008). This proclamation was befitting of the design trends at that time, as more and more air-fields were being developed on marshlands on the outskirts of the city; for example Botany Bay in Sydney and Idlewild Field in New York (Fuller and Harley, 2004).

Hounslow Aerodrome hosted Europe's first regular international service, operated by Aircraft transport and Travel Limited in 1919: 1922 saw the building of the Konigsberg Airport in Prussia; the first purpose-built airport building in the world, and the terminal most readily recognisable as such (Adey, 2004). By 1928 however, Croydon aerodrome was the largest in the world, and the passenger booking hall

provided a model for others around the world to follow (Gordon, 2008). The Croydon Airport of 1928 was a purpose-built replacement for the previous converted military station, and this began a trend of building bespoke facilities (Learmonth et al., 1977). Christopher Blow (1996) notes that airport development and design as we may now recognise it, actually only began in the 1950s; highlighting the fact that the world's first duty-free shop opened in Shannon airport in Ireland in 1951, also stating that the reason for this was an extension of " maritime habits for the benefit of the flying public" (Blow, 1996:8).

The primary function of the airport terminal, as noted by Kazda and Caves (2000), is to provide a link between 'air-side' and 'land-side'. They also write that "the building must provide fast and the shortest possible transition of the passengers from the means of surface transport through the check-in process up to the planes upon departure and in the opposite direction upon arrival" (Kazda & Caves, 2000:249). Hugh Pearman (2004) notes that the precedence have now changed for airport operators, and that the speed with which passengers are moved from one part of the process to another, landside to airside, is no longer a priority. Due in part to increased security measures, alongside the physical increase in both passenger and aircraft numbers passing through the airport, the flying public are now kept within the confines of the airport terminal for a significantly increased amount of time. Pearman (2004) acknowledges that this creates a captive market for those wishing to take advantage of the retail outlets and the consumer opportunities made available for them, also noting that the increase in retail opportunities is welcome from a security point of view, which is a highly pertinent observation, but one which he does not further examine. Another point of great interest made by Hugh Pearman relates to the

'malling' of the terminal: "the land-side malls of bigger airports are increasingly destinations in their own right, much used by people who do not necessarily fly at all. Distance from the city centre is not regarded as a drawback when people are used to driving some way to a conventional out-of-town mall" (Pearman, 2004:10). An interesting point to note here however is that whilst America is generally credited with the birth of the 'modern' way to shop, with Victor Gruens designs for the shopping mall, the United States were behind Europe in the opportunity to provide retail opportunities to its flying public. Although the first duty-free shop may have happened in Ireland, it is reported that the 'tented terminal' at Heathrow in 1946 housed a W.H.Smith newsagents, and that this was in fact, the real birth of terminal malls. Denver International airport in 2003 contained 50 cafes and 70 shops, illustrating how the trend for such retail outlets has actually caught on in the 57 year interim period. Whilst this research provides a deeper understanding of the social implications of airport malling, and examines the spatial praxis of such places, it is clear that such 'temples' to the consumer society provides profit for those who own or operate such enterprises. Pearman (2004) notes that by the 1990s, "airports, particularly in Europe, were earning more money out of retailing than they were out of charging airlines fees to land and take-off there" (Pearman, 2004: 213). Christopher Blow (1996) makes an interesting point regarding the growth of airport malls, when he argues that whilst airport designs should accommodate space for retail and entertainment, retail does appear to be the preferred form of entertainment as chosen by the paying public. Perhaps this is an indicator of why airport terminals contain many shops, but fewer art exhibitions or music recitals, or theatrical performances, although art is visible at many airports. Reid Architecture, a prominent firm of airport architects, believe it is important that airport consumers want more

than good shops, instead wanting experiential luxuries. "We might not all be able to afford first class but we still want to be pampered and looked after. The design of the airport terminal needs to make passengers feel special. It needs to calm them, provide comfort for them after their stressful journeys to the airport and through check-in and security" (Airport International, 2009).

This study aims to determine whether the role of the airport terminal is indeed to 'calm' those within, and if so, how this is achieved. Those who work within these spaces cannot be ignored either, as the function and design of the space could potentially impact upon them too. It is true, that as consumption has become such a prominent part of the airport design, but also of the cultural practices of those who use them, this has developed into a complex and multifaceted space. The key point here however, is the extent to which the evolution of the airport has contributed to it being institutional in nature, or whether in fact, institutional practices have shaped the airport to a greater or lesser extent.

1.3 THE IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The contemporary airport terminal is clearly a site of great social significance as it has been likened to other sites of sociological interest, and this alone provides the validity for further study. The fact that access to the airport is now commonplace for some of the world's population, but very much not so for others, also provides the necessary starting point for social investigation. Airports seemingly have far greater significance than the people-sorting hubs they are in practice, and it is this concentration of style

over function that requires greater enquiry. This is of course, something that the city, the mall, and the theme park share as a common feature: elements of the fantasy and hyper-real. Airports are however, clearly spaces of people management and manipulation, and to this end, it is vital to first examine the body of literature that not only discusses what the airport terminal 'is' or 'might be' in terms of it's practical, physical or architectural functionality, but also to examine the literature surrounding the institutional and controlling uses of space, and the development of the 'docile' or 'compliant' users whom will be subject to their both overt and covert forces.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE EXISTING LITERATURE

Before focussing on the literature that deals specifically with the airport, it is necessary to set out precisely how Goffman (1991) defined the 'total institution'. It is clear that he was never intending to refer to the airport terminal whilst putting this work together, but interestingly his opening paragraph discusses the difficulties in classifying space, and even more relevant that he cites Grand Central Station as part of this discussion. The New York railway terminal is chosen for its openness here, highlighting that some institutions have an open access policy, whereas others have a strict criteria for entry. Grand Central Station is a fascinating choice here, because despite the fact that it is not an airport, it is possibly the single most 'similar' space, particularly for the period in which Goffman was writing. What is more interesting here however, is that the airport has become fascinating to many scholars precisely because of its lack of openness

2.1.1 The airport as a 'total institution'

Throughout the research process, it has become clear that there is a sociological concept that seems to somehow underline all of the situations and settings: the way in which the contemporary airport terminal demonstrates the characteristics of a Goffmanesque total institution (Goffman, 1991). The passenger spends relatively small amounts of time in the airport, and even allowing for the longest delays, the nature of the space is not 'total' in the same sense as stated by Goffman (1991). There is however, something seemingly institutional surrounding all airport terminal buildings and processes, and taking this on board, it is vital to investigate the concept as proposed by Goffman, and in undertaking this, it is prudent to highlight each of the

characteristics of the total institution in turn, beginning with; "all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority" (Goffman, 1991:17). As with the majority of the characteristics of the institution, this seems self-explanatory, in that everyone within the boundaries of the institution, are governed by a single body, and these rules encompass every activity within. The second feature is that " each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together" (Goffman, 1991). The third characteristic, as noted by Goffman (1991:17), suggests "one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials". The final feature of the total institution is that these various enforced activities are "brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aims of the institution" (Goffman, 1991:17).

Goffman (1991) makes a clear distinction between the 'inmates' and the 'supervisory staff' who work to manage these characteristics in the total institution, and he makes the suggestion that each group is wary of the other. This connection, although potentially transferrable to the airport setting, is not quite so transparent. This disconnect between inmates and staff, comes partly as a result of the need for the flow of information between groups to be limited and specific; in other words, the supervisory group only pass down the information to the inmates that is necessary for the smooth operation of the institution itself. Again, whilst this may be seemingly metaphoric in relation to the contemporary airport, this cannot be seen as sufficiently robust without empirically driven investigation into the spaces themselves.

Goffman (1991) also notes how beyond the total institution, individuals earn wages through labour, often in bureaucratic and institutional organisations, but are then free to spend these when and where they wish at liberty; however, in the total institution, inmates generate the fruits of their effort, although often not financial, and then only have the institution itself to spend it back in. This again may strike chords with any reader who has been forced to purchase food and drink in the airside terminal, directly as a result of the practices and regulations of the airport operators, but in itself, is not evidence of the institutional nature of the terminal.

Finally, but not exhaustively, Goffman (1991) highlights that the total institution can act as a "good or bad force in civil society', and contemporary debates surrounding the environmental impact of flight and the concentration of technology that this causes at the airport, versus the positive effects of air travel to globalised travel and commerce, once more bring the association between the two places to the fore: again, this is without foundation if not adequately supported through research.

2.1.2 The airport as a 'city'

It is having read Gottdiener's (2001) book Life in the Air: surviving the new culture of air travel, that this research was proposed: Mark Gottdiener, professor of Sociology at the University at Buffalo and one of the United States leading urban sociologists, as an introduction to his work on flight, discusses being at the airport terminal prior to boarding. In this discussion, he suggests that the terminal building is like a city, a shopping mall, and a theme park. This discussion is not based upon having studied the site empirically, but instead upon personal experience and theoretical appreciation of urban sociology. It is key from themes highlighted previously in this thesis, that the

airport terminal has become, if indeed it has not always been since its inception, a significant structure beyond architectural merit. Gottdiener (2001) takes this significance to a different level however, by making such claims for the terminal as city-like status, particularly given the wealth of literature and research into the city, the mall, and the theme park. "The contemporary air terminal is like a city. As it became a multifunctional site, it also developed an urban culture. The implosive articulation of a many-purposed pedestrian crowd creates a critical mass of social density, much like the busy downtown district of a large central city". Gottdiener goes on to justify his use of this particular metaphor, by suggesting that because the airport supports such a large and diverse group of individuals, the majority of whom are strangers, yet are all interacting with each other in some manner, then the building ceases to be a backdrop, and instead becomes a significant "independent character in the public melodrama" (Gottdiener, 2001:22). Gottdiener continues this Goffmanesque dramaturgical analogy (Goffman, 1991), by suggesting that not only is the terminal a part of the drama, it is also the stage upon which many personal dramas are played out, for example the seeing-off or welcoming of loved ones. The suggestion is that whilst the terminal may be nothing more than a transit space for individuals, the setting and the scene collectively is one of significant interaction. Gottdiener examines how the terminal is city-like in other ways, specifically in the sites it contains within. These sites include shopping and dining facilities, hotels and even fitness centres. The analogy that Gottdiener is trying to draw, is that as suburbanites reluctantly go to cities for shopping, leisure and exercise, so too this is the experience at the airport. Gottdiener highlights that the terminal is city-like as a result of the physical numbers of people whom pass through each day or year, and notes that whilst the dwell time of these individuals will be considerably less than in

most cities, the numbers are significant in themselves. He also argues that the very fact that the terminal has a designed built environment such as boulevards and tree-lined walkways, again make it akin to a city: "people live, love, and sometimes even die in airports. Babies are born there: children are abused or abandoned [there]" (Gottdiener, 2001:23). Gottdiener describes the airport as having an economy of its own; again, of significant enough importance to warrant the city analogy; "in short, airports process people and commodities for profit. So do cities" (Gottdiener, 2001:25).

Similar arguments have subsequently been made by numerous other authors (Adey, 2004, Auge, 1995, Fuller and Harley, 2004, Gordon, 2008, Pearman, 2004), where airports are conceptualised as other sites, where the common feature is consumption, but where little or no empirical method is evident. The desire to conceptualise the airport terminal as a city, has even led to authors creating new words and phrases; 'aviopolis' (Fuller and Harley, 2004), 'terminopolis' (Pearman, 2004), 'terminal city' (Gordon, 2008), and 'homo aeroportis globalis' (Salter, 2008).

Hugh Pearman (2004:201) appears to suggest that physical geographical size is almost enough to justify the use of the city analogy, stating that "as soon as an airport becomes twice the size of Manhattan, with buildings to match, it is tempting to state that these complexes are cities in themselves – cities of flight". Pearman does note however, that whilst many of the newer 'mega structures' in airport design may have the vastness of a city, they differ significantly from older airports, which perhaps share more in common with the city in terms of their organic growth and development. Alongside this argument, Pearman (2004) suggests that like cities,

airports are not static in design or function, and are forever in a constant state of change, "as they adapt to changing circumstances" (Pearman, 2004:13). Unsurprisingly, given Hugh Pearman's background as an architecture correspondent, the city/airport analogy drifts into design, and he notes that "designing an airport is much more than a matter of designing buildings. It is a matter of designing a city-state, which has distant echoes of utopian thinking about it but which always carries the risk of turning into a dystopia instead" (Pearman, 2004:13). Martha Rosler (1994) notes how Singapore's Changi Airport describes itself as a "city within the airport" (Rosler, 1994:69); however she prefers to conceptualise it as " a city on a hill, an enclave amid wastelands".

Alastair Gordon (2008), an architecture critic of some repute, suggests that airport terminals gave "urban planners a new template for the modern city – one that would resolve the problem of the old city centre by ignoring it altogether" (Gordon, 2008:184). Gordon goes so far as to suggest that terminals "were no longer like cities, but were real, self-contained urban nodes, servicing millions of passengers a year and hiring thousands of employees" (Gordon, 2008:184). Gordon offers a quote from Newsweek, with an article entitled 'Airport City USA, which was published on the 5th April 1965, which states that "the drab and drafty barracks-like airports of a decade ago have mushroomed into sprawling, self-contained urban complexes where travellers can sleep, shop, imbibe Scotch and status at a VIP lounge, fill a tooth, or dance the frug" (Gordon, 2008:184). The American media were still offering the same analogy 38 years later, as the article in USA Today by Haya El Nasser (25/09/03) stated that "airports are becoming like downtowns, and terminal concourses their Main Streets where people shop, eat and work. They're influencing society and

culture the same way that cities have" (El Nasser, 2003). What is most interesting in this article however, is that it offers a statement from Mark Gottdiener in which he argues "I wouldn't say that an airport is a city" (El Nasser, 2003).

It is vital to note here however, that the idea of a 'terminal city' did not necessarily arise from the development of the airport, but was a term used as early as 1903, during the design and build of the Grand Central Terminal in New York; a railway terminal that preceded airports by at least a decade. Belle and Leighton (2000) describe how the addition of hotels and shopping arcades to the designs for Grand Central Terminal, led to the adoption of the term 'Terminal City Project'. What does seem apparent though, is that whilst this term was used, Grand Central was never designed to be a city within the city, but instead more of a haven from the city, within the city. It is clear though, that Grand Central Terminal has been viewed over the years, in much the same way as Mark Gottdiener views the modern airport terminal; a self-contained space in which life-dramas are played out in front of thousands of others. Belle and Leighton (2000:67) note that "in the 1940s a honeymooning couple had arrived at the Terminal to take a train to Niagara Falls when a violent storm struck the city, disrupting all service. The couple took a room in the Biltmore [hotel], had their meals at the Oyster Bar, shopped in the Terminal's stores, and spent the weekend without once venturing out into the hostile weather".

It seems evident that if the airport is such an influential site that urban scholars, architects, and geographers feel the need to provide new terminology to describe it, and this language infers control and people management, then this should be studied further.

Fuller and Harley appear to be so convinced on the city-like status of the airport terminal, that they titled their book 'Aviopolis'; a word that is meaningless in reality, but that suggests the airport city by appropriation. They also take a slightly different view of why they believe the airport to be city-like: "airports are a type of city designed to facilitate global mass-movement as efficiently as possible. This city exists in no single location. It is dispersed and distributed in much the same way as most global information networks, and yet it is inhabited by real people and things (not just data). To access this city one needs to buy into a very particular set of procedures and rules" (Fuller and Harley, 2004:11). Again, the adherence to rules is paramount to their central argument here; however the rules are specific and governed by the requirement to movement within the space: the airport "is a machine for capturing and controlling flows in the most literal manner imaginable" (Fuller & Harley, 2004:14).

Adey (2004), Fuller and Harley (2004), Salter (2008) and Pearman (2004) make reference to the airport as being a 'space of flow', and this draws on the work of Manuel Castells, whom by the mid-1980s had shifted from his Lefebvrian position on space, and had instead begun to focus upon the impact of globalisation on the urban. Castells (1989) began to see the city not as a place in its own right, but instead part of a global process; a networking process more precisely. Castells (1989) sees this networking process as one where information flows globally through cities, and this forms the basis for post-industrial industry. This is enabled and necessitated through increasingly technological innovation. Castells views on the nature of space are that they are not mere reflections of society, but are in fact part of social processes, which

in turn, influence space, and this is often reflected in the built environment. Castells (1989) argued that society is constructed around the constant flow of capital, technology, information, sound, image, and organisational interaction. A distinction is also made between spaces and places, where places can transcend spaces, and it would be in such places that society would recognise permanence and stability. In this sense, Castells conceptualisation of airport space would be akin to that of Auge; simply a space of informational and people flows, with no other societal significance. Felix Stalder (2001:nd) suggests that the space of flows is "a space that is organized for, and created by, the constant movement of people, goods, and information over large distances.... not so much organized to move things from one place to another, but to keep them moving around". This explanation alone would seem to undermine the use of the concept by all those whom cite Castells in their work relating to the airport, as there appears to be a constant to this flow, where for many airports, the flow is stop and start, and for individual passengers, the flow is often simply outbound followed by inbound. Stalder (2001) does though go on to argue that the airport is the a tangible symbol of a space of flows, in so much that the current trend to expand airports into reclaimed land, demonstrates a process of flows creating places, as opposed to places creating flows. This does appear to be a more pertinent use of Castells concept than that utilised by Adey (2004) for example, who draws the analogy based upon the 'flow' of passengers into and out of the airport, which does somewhat pervert the full and original intention of Castells, or so it appears. This study acknowledges the airport as a space of flow in the Castellian sense, but aims to investigate beyond the movement of people and commodities in and out of a space, as this appears to be more of a mobility issue than one associated with spatiality.

2.1.4 The airport as a 'transitional' space

Chris Hacking (2010) begins to explore the concepts of the manipulation of space, and highlights the nature of the individual as a 'social animal'. He provides us with a significant link, to the fantastic world of 'Disney' in relation to the ability to manipulate a space, more importantly the ability to manipulate the users of such spaces. Once more, this examination of the airport as a theme park begins with the work of Mark Gottdiener (1997), who cites the airport terminal as being an example of the emergence of 'imagineers'. "Walt Disney Imagineering is the master planning, creative development, design, engineering, production, project management, and research and development arm of the Walt Disney Company and its affiliates. Representing more than 150 disciplines, its talented corps of Imagineers is responsible for the creation of Disney resorts, theme parks and attractions, hotels, water parks, real estate developments, regional entertainment venues, cruise ships and new media technology projects" (Disney Corp, 2008). As this clearly states, the imagineer is the invention and indeed the copywrited property of the Disney Corporation, and yet the term has become synonymous with architects and designers who design and build themed environments outside and beyond the realms of Disney. Gottdiener's (1997) reference to the imagineer clearly infers that the physical design of the terminal building assists in creating the theme park effect. This is in part a reflection of the work of Baudrillard, who suggests that in late capitalism, the intrinsic value of commodities are replaced by symbolic connotations attributed to them: "Businesses are increasingly building environments as themed spaces…..people increasingly enjoy these themed milieus…..for their own sake as entertaining spaces" (Gottdiener, 1997:76). The real attraction of such places lies in their ability to provide

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the consumer with the hyper-reality of the global and commercial; the image of society that is broadcast constantly, but that is actually rarely available beyond their boundaries. The 'real world' in which the majority of the population live and work, bears little resemblance to this vision of supposed normality. Gottdiener (2001) explores this a little further in his analysis of transitional spaces as noted in a previous chapter. The crossing of the border from routine to 'imagineered' space, inevitably leads to a significant change in the individuals sense of self. To a certain extent, the flight is a secondary activity that occurs once within the airport, and to some, may even mark the departure from the fantasy of tangible consumption to the banality of public transportation.

Many of the world's leading architects have craved the opportunity to design an airport, and in the 1950s, Frank Gehry, architect of such buildings as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, collaborated with William Pereira, architect of the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco, and the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California, to design and build the Theme Building at Los Angeles airport. The Theme Building is a restaurant and observation deck, and was allegedly inspired by the film, The War of the Worlds (Pearman, 2004). Neither Gehry nor Pereire were Disney 'imagineers', and yet both independently created works for the Disney Corporation.

Whilst it may be argued that the Theme Building is simply an example of 'Googie architecture', a trend that developed in the United States in the 1940s that involved designing buildings to resemble science fiction, or the space-age cultural fascination of that epoch, the Los Angeles airport restaurant was different in one key way: it was

not on show at the side of a highway, but was instead an integral part of an airport complex, accessed by those whom were fortunate enough to fly during the 1950s.

Pearman (2004) suggests that the name for the building has arisen from a working title that simply stuck, whereas it could be an intentional reference to the theme park environment that Gehry and Pereira had planned all along, and in much the same way that Manchester has a museum to the future of air travel, the Theme Building was a deliberate heterotopian homage to the jet age.

It has been highlighted that the architectural design of an airport can play a role in both calming the passenger, and creating an environment in which passengers feel obliged to indulge in consumption practices, conspicuous or otherwise (Pearman, 2004). As highlighted by Gottdiener (1997, 2001), the themes can vary, but the effect upon the passenger is almost always the same. Denver International airport is an interesting example though, because its tented ceiling, is homage to the Haj Terminal in Jeddah, a space that is not synonymous with consumption, but instead the shelter for thousands of Mecca pilgrims annually. It is also suggested that the Denver ceiling is designed to invoke images of the snow-covered Rocky Mountains that provide a natural backdrop to the airport (Pearman, 2004). Whichever is correct, or closest to the truth, neither image appears to fit the transitional model set out by Gottdiener, and yet, this is clearly a themed space. Certain airports were actually designed to be visitor attractions, for example Idlewild International Airport, New York, now better known as JFK airport. The architect, Wallace Harrison, included a 220 acre public space called Liberty Plaza, and this was to be a strictly pedestrian area, designed to "relax the tensions of travel by enchanting the eye" (Gordon, 2008:189). Liberty

Plaza, no longer in existence following the need for increased car parking, was modelled on the gardens at Versailles. "The glass hall of Idlewild's arrivals building replaced Louis's chateau in its position of honor. The long transverse axis of the 'canal' at Versailles became the 'lagoon' at Idlewild. The Basin of Apollo became the Fountain of Liberty, and in place of the Petit Trianon there was a little glass temple to technology: the Central Heating and Refrigeration Plant that contained the airport's mechanical heart" (Gordon, 2008:190). This feature was visited by thousands of sightseers for some considerable time.

Sorkin (1992) identifies much of the theme park design within certain of the larger American airports, not singularly for their ideological make up, but more for practical or logistical reasons. Sorkin (1992) describes how the Disney theme parks are surrounded by a perimeter ring road system, that allows access, but also creates a satisfactory land border, and that this is also true of Kennedy airport in New York. This however, is an outdated system for airports, and the more modern terminals of Chicago, Atlanta and Dallas have more of an emphasis on moving passengers around once inside, than penning them in. Sorkin (1992) does identify this though, and describes how the Disney models for passenger movement are employed within these more contemporary sites, more akin to the Disney monorail.

Mark Gottdiener (1997) makes many references to the fantasy or theming elements utilised by the Disney corporation, and makes it clear that he believes the space in the airport to be 'transitional' in the same way. People are transformed or 'manipulated' into becoming something they would not inherently become in any other type of environment. The nature and form of this manipulation introduces the work of

Goffman (1991), in that the total institution he describes in depth, is also a space where the individuals' sense of self is manipulated. This is an area explored in greater depth later in this chapter. The single most important question here therefore, is whether the passenger's sense of self is somehow manipulated for the purpose of consumption, or for other, perhaps more controlling means. Chris Hacking of Reid Architects (2010) sees this as 'people management', and this may well be the case from a security point of view, but also it appears to be the case with regard to 'encouragement' to shop, eat, sleep or whatever the operators of such spaces require the public to do. He claims this can be achieved by presenting consumers with an element of 'surprise'. This is confusing, as there can only be a minority of individuals in Western Europe or the United States of America using an airport terminal, who have not experienced a shopping mall of some kind, and it is difficult to imagine anyone in 21st Century Western society being surprised by what they find behind the gates of 'Disneyland'. Airport spaces, and specifically those designed for consumption, are deliberate and contain a great deal of social significance, much in the same way as the shopping mall or the theme park. This may, in part, be the explanation as to why commentators have conceptualised the airport thus, and is a key driver in this study.

2.1.5 The Airport As Shopping Mall

The contemporary airport has been frequently described as being akin to a shopping mall; it must be noted that whilst some existing retail spaces within airport terminals have been described in these terms, some airports are now deliberately building malls within their facilities. For example, in an article about Abu Dhabi International

Airport – Terminal 3, Luigi Vallero writing in Airports of the World (July 2009) suggests that "T3 hosts 19 retail boutiques arranged around a court that can easily be considered as a high-end luxury mall" (Vallero, 2009:71). In contrast to this existing facility, Frankfurt airport are building the 'Airport City Mall' in Terminal 1, which is clearly a purpose-built mall set within the terminal environment. Rob Verger, a freelance writer and photographer who frequently writes for the Travel Channel's online blog, entitled 'World Hum', spent 24 hours in the new Terminal 5 building at the JFK Airport in New York in June 2009. He writes that "the central ticketing lobby – described in a press release as 'lofty' and 'light-filled' – is an attractive, crescent-shaped edifice, but too low-slung for any real grandeur. The rest of the interior looks, feels, sounds and smells like a shopping mall. For years, the distinction between airport and mall has been steadily blurring, and now JetBlue has pretty much closed the gap" (Verger, 2009).

Returning to the work of Mark Gottdiener, prior to his 2003 comments previously quoted in the El Nasser article, he suggests that the birth of the airport mall was a direct result of the redesigning of the terminal in order to accommodate a greater number of planes, thus creating the corridors that lent themselves to becoming malls (Gottdiener, 2001), and that "since that time, the merger of the mall with the terminal has become the principal innovation in airport design" (Gottdiener, 2001:15). Citing Frankfurt and Schiphol airports as prime examples, Gottdiener lists the different types of goods that are available, noting that they are all products of increased global consumption practices throughout the world; "they are the normative gifts of our emergent world culture, just as they are the material anchor points for the new modes of desire created by the simulated media/advertising environment" (Gottdiener,

2001:16). One of the distinctive features of the airport mall, that actually promotes the 'airport as mall' analogy, is that whilst at one time, the airport shops sold related travel goods, along with the traditional newsagents shop, now it is commonplace to find shops within airports selling seemingly unrelated goods, such as electrical items, flowers and plants, clothes, and at Pittsburgh, even a pet store. In the same way that malls offer far more than opportunities to shop, then so does the airport, with Gottdiener suggesting that the gambling facilities at Schiphol make it more like a mall, if not a theme park (Gottdiener, 2001). Mark Gottdiener argues that the best exemplar of malling of the airport is British Airports Authority (BAA), in their operations not just in the UK, but in their contract to develop an air-mall at Pittsburgh International Airport in the 1990s. BAA wanted to assert their status as mall operators by ensuring that all goods purchased in the airport were as cheap as they were in local stores outside of the airport, which they called the 'No Rip-Off Guarantee'. This ensured that airport shopping was no longer a matter of convenience, but also competitively priced against other malls and the High Street. Another distinctive feature of the mall and the airport terminal is the food court. Once again utilising Pittsburgh as the example, Mark Gottdiener notes that its "internet site listed 42 [food] stores seeking new employees on November 7th 1998" (Gottdiener, 2001:17). Denver International Airport is often most cited as being the archetypal air-mall, with several concourses of typical mall-franchised stores present. One issue that has so far been overlooked, is the distinction between mall and airport in relation to the attraction of customers; people go to airports to fly, but shop whilst there, whereas they visit malls to shop and then return home. Gottdiener (2001) does however examine the concept of 'airport as destination', noting that the development of airport

terminals as a destination for shoppers and leisure consumers is now far more common, and he cites Janice Okun, writing in the Buffalo News:

"The colorful Wolfgang Puck Express in the LA airport, for instance, some of the dishes the well-known chef is famous for − his thin sourdough crusted pizzas and elaborate salads. There's also Rhino Chasers, a microbrewery based restaurant with an adjacent Daily Grill…..In Tucson, the airport features an outpost of the El Charro Café; El Charro is said to be the oldest Mexican restaurant in Arizona and has been ranked as one of the top ethnic restaurants in the country. In the Denver International Airport, [there is] the Northern Trail Bar and Grill, a neighbourhood pub [that serves Denver-style-steaks]" (Okun, 1996).

This celebrity dining experience is still a feature of the modern airport terminal, to which Gordon Ramsey's new restaurant situated in Heathrow Terminal 5 is testament. By way of a summary to Mark Gottdiener's contribution to this debate, he surmises that "the fully developed international airport mall functions as a mall like any other" (Gottdiener, 2001:16).

Alastair Gordon (2008) notes that the move towards malling the airport terminal is evident in architectural design as much, if not more so, than in commercial trends, stating that the "theories of commercial developers like Victor Gruen and John Portman became more important than those of Gropius or Le Corbusier" (Gordon, 2008:250). The commercial aspect cannot be ignored however, and Gordon also states that "sales per square foot at airport malls were reported to be three or four times higher than those at normal shopping malls" (Gordon, 2008:251). It must be noted

though that Gordon's evidence for this comes from a media and not an academic source.

Sonja Sulzmaier (2001:42) suggests that the success of the airport mall is a result of it being a "Functional magnet", whereas the conventional High Street or mall has to attract customers, the airport has a ready-made customer base, that is guaranteed to a certain extent for the future, in spite of recession and changes in the nature of air travel. Sulzmaier's approach is very much based upon business and commerce, and as such examines the issues of dwell time and impulsive purchasing, but does acknowledge that there are distinct similarities between malls and airports. She also investigates the concept of 'consuming leisure', and concludes that the consumption of leisure space is similar between the airport and the mall. "Shopping has become vacation by dramatizing the day-to-day behaviour to an extraordinary sensation" (Sulzmaier, 2001:45). This is particularly relevant within the airport setting, as many passengers view the airport experience as an intrinsic part of the holiday or leisure activity.

Klauser et al (2008) view the malling of the terminal from a different perspective: one of security. They argue that airport retailers do not see their customer base as border-crossing individuals, but instead view them simply as commercial opportunities. This creates a dilemma for the airport authorities, for whom, the integrity of the international border and passenger safety are of paramount importance. Once a space changes from one of transit to one of destination, then the priorities change, and yet the airmall has created an issue for authorities and retailers to address. This challenge is one of spatial design. Le Corbusier envisaged the airport as being defined by its

space, and yet as Klauser et al (2008) highlight, commercial interests have changed the nature of this space entirely, deliberately removing rest-space and promoting movement, as is the case in the standard out-of-town mall design. "Another issue is the lack of seating in an overcrowded….airport, which results in people sitting wherever they can, blocking the narrow gangways between high-end shops selling overpriced goods ranging from Rolex watches to caviar – but there are no seats to be had at the cramped self-service restaurant! The problem is that they have so many shops that there isn't enough space for passengers to sit, and there were over a hundred passengers sitting on the floor" (Klauser et al, 2008:119). One major issue of note here, is that security in a commercial setting is always different to that at an international border, as the priority changes from admission and protection to profit.

As with the examination of the airport as a city, when investigating the malling of the terminal, the case of Grand Central Railway Terminal in Manhattan cannot be ignored. Belle and Leighton (2000) begin their chapter exploring the terminal as a bazaar, with a quotation from Whitney Warren, the Chief Architect of the terminal, that was published in the New York Times in February 1913, in which he states that "the up-to-date station resembles a bazaar, as much as anything, in view of the one thousand and one accessories people now find agreeable and necessary to have at hand when travelling" (Belle and Leighton, 2000:165). The terminal was built with shopping as one of its primary functions. Interestingly, Grand Central did not simply aim to provide the usual travel necessities that we talk of with regard to early airport retail, but intended from the planning stage that the terminal would become a destination shopping venue. This has been maintained since the renovation of the terminal was completed, with the added attraction of the Grand Central Market and the food court. The terminal is potentially busier at lunchtimes with temporary visitors

than with those departing or arriving as a train passenger. It must be noted that whilst Grand Central was very much the focus of New York for arriving passengers, it has never been an international border, and as such, does not have the same security issues. It must also be noted that despite the original design and aspiration for the terminal, and its subsequent renovation, for many years, the terminals retail area was very much diminished and run-down.

It is interesting that the malling of the airport terminal does not appear to depend entirely upon a buoyant economy. Manchester Airport has recently undergone extensive renovations to their retail areas in Terminals 1 and 2. Alongside this, Marco Finelli, writing in Airports of the World (Sept 2009) describes how Recife-Guararapes/Gilberto Freyre International Airport, Brazil, has undergone a substantial redevelopment of its airmall despite the global recession. "Aeroshopping is big business here. The terminal includes 156 retail outlets, a huge amount given its size" (Finelli, 2009:56).

2.1.6 The airport as a site of 'immobility'

Peter Adey, currently Professor of Geography at Royal Holloway, The University of London, has written extensively on the topic of the airport, and his work is cited within this study many times. Having published on the airport as a site of mobility (2004a, 2004b,2006), his focus changed in 2007, as he researched the airport as a site of immobility. Adey (2007:515) suggests that 'the airport is rethought as a space not

merely to travel through but one which is designed to hold people in specific spaces'. Adey begins by making sure that the reader is aware that this immobility is not an accident of design or process, but instead 'dictated by the forces of airline and airport regulation and economics' (Adey, 2007:515). Adey's study focusses upon the concept of spectatorship, and draws detail from historical as well as contemporary airport terminals. The immobility of the space is emphasised with a quote from Ursula Le Guin (2003:2), which states that 'the airport is not a prelude to travel, not a place of transition: it is a stop. A blockage. A constipation'. Adey (2007) highlights the notion that airports have been seen traditionally as either places of fluidity, or spaces of observation and control, and suggests that his study sets out to demonstrate evidence of both. The fundamental principle here, is that the spectator is static, whether within the panopticon or in other less obvious sites of 'watching'; the cinema, the theatre, the sports arena for example. If we are to view the airport terminal building as some kind of inversed panopticon, where the focus is on the watcher, as opposed to the watched, then this too takes on this element of immobility and static observation. One key notion explored by Adey (2007) is that of 'dwell time'; a situation borne from the logistics of aircraft turnaround and increased security. It is dwell time that is most important here. An unnamed airport architect, interviewed by Adey as part of his (2007) study, stated that a "primary part of [his] brief is to try and create spaces where people will linger, and to surround those spaces with shops [laughs] and obviously you know then the sort of airport side of it is secondary" (cited in Adey, 2007:523). Adey goes on to explore the nature of this dwell time, in the context of space of spectatorship, and as site of fascination, both for travellers and for non-travellers; although it is made clear that the ability to spectate within the airport is now limited to

those who are there with the purpose of flight, due to security and the potential threats associated with people lingering near international borders.

A further tool for the creation of dwell time identified by Adey (2007) is the flight information display (FID). These are the TV screens that are situated in strategic parts of the terminal building, that provide real-time departure information within the airside terminal, and arrival information in the arrivals hall. Adey suggests that these are strategically positioned so as to dictate zones of congregation for passengers awaiting gate and boarding information. There is also the assertion that the current trend for 'silent terminals', where announcements are kept to a minimum, creates an even greater reliance upon the FIDs, forcing passengers to wait around the areas with the screens, in order to establish vital flight details. Adey (2007) suggests that this fits the agenda of consumer spending and profit maximisation.

This (2007) study provides a desire and fascination to understand more about dwell time and the use of spectatorship and FIDs in a wider context of control and panopticism. Adey states throughout the Foucauldian foundations of this study, in that spectatorship is panopticism turned on its head; unfortunately however, this paper fails to fully explore the differences between spectator and observer. The motivation behind the 'watching' is vital here in fully understanding the nature of the terminal building as a space or place. There is an element here of the terminal creating a 'docile body' (Foucault, 1991), but to what end? The notion of dwell time seems fundamental here, but in order to establish whether this is simply as a means to dupe people into shopping, or if in fact there is a wider and more cynical desire for control requires further investigation. It is also important to examine the motivation of airport

operators and security agencies, in order to establish whether airport consumption practices are the desired effect, or simply a financially beneficial side effect.

2.1.7 Airport dwell time as a 'pleasurable pastime'

Following on from Adey's (2007) study on immobility in the terminal, Justine Lloyd (2003) published an essay focussing on 'travellers space', and how this is now part of everyday life. Drawing on the work of Benjamin and Kracauer, Lloyd (2003:94) reflects on the practices and the character of the flaneur, and notes how the "formerly non-productive act of loitering in the street and mall is encouraged, mobilized, and transformed into a form of economically useful activity". Relating more specifically to the contemporary airport terminal, Lloyd (2003:94) argues that waiting zones have been given a "level of homeliness" in order to promote reduced passenger anxiety and increase surveillance opportunities; although it must be noted here that 'homeliness' is not something that springs immediately to mind for the author with regard to personal experiences of airport terminal buildings. Lloyd suggests that contemporary spaces such as the terminal provide a distraction from 'supermodernity', as proposed by Auge (1995). There is a suggestion here that the distraction from what is unimportant; however this must be challenged, as the distraction may be the vital component of terminal space, if this is an issue of control or people management. Despite this apparent lack of regard for the 'distraction', Lloyd (2003:99) goes on to argue that consumption is a "debilitating malady….. [and the] adversary of community", and it seems pertinent to suggest that if consumption plays a part in the dwell time and 'flaneurie' of the contemporary terminal building, then the distraction could indeed be related to maintaining anonymity within the space, and preventing the

formation of community or alliance, however temporary. The principal tenet of Lloyd's (2003:101) essay, is to demonstrate the "refashioning of non-place", and this is an interesting concept, but sadly one which brings us no closer to an understanding of the true nature of airport terminal space, as the suggestion that increasing dwell time and consumption in some way counters the effects of supermodernity is something of a paradox, as Auge would suggest that these were the very catalysts for bringing about non-place.

2.1.8 The airport as 'Omnitopian' Space

Andrew Wood (2003) moves away somewhat from the utopia/heterotopia debate, by introducing the notion of the airport terminal as being an omnitopian space. This begins with the simple concept borrowed from Patton (1997) which succinctly defines omnitopia as 'wherever you go, there you are'. In common with the work of Auge, Wood (2003) chooses the contemporary airport terminal as his exemplar of omnitopia, and thus utilises this as his case study here. Wood (2003:326) suggests that as we are increasingly living in a "globalised McWorld", where cultural and geographical borders are becoming dissolved and blurred, we find ourselves more and more not in a non-place, but instead in a universal place; hence omnitopia: "When one explores terminal space, one discovers an interconnected matrix of hotel shuttles, atrium lobbies, elevated walkways, food courts, theme restaurants, and enclosed malls that permit one to read a city as a coherent narrative, unperturbed by local politics or characters. As such, terminal space shall not be defined as non-place as Marc Auge (1995) would term it, nor as a small space as Jamaica Kincaid (1989) more vividly illustrates. For an increasing number of people, terminal space is the only space"

(Wood, 2003:327) Wood (2003) does engage somewhat with Auge's concept of non-place, by focussing upon the moving walkways within the terminal building, which typify the transitory nature of supermodernity for Auge, and he does this by noting that 'once the moving walkway becomes a place, a location, something worth remembering, it fails in its central task' (Wood, 2003:334).. Wood (2003) conducted research in several American airports, and utilised 'thick description' as his primary research tool: "rather than beginning with a set of observations and attempting to subsume them under a governing law, [one] begins with a set of [presumptive] signifiers and attempts to place them within an intelligible frame" (Geertz, 1973:26). This method permits a much more manageable and ordered approach, allowing the researcher to pigeon-hole what they're observing; however conversely, the adoption of thick description can limit the scope and imagination of the observer.

Wood (2003:332)) suggests as a principal tenet of his paper, that the omnitopian 'Terminal Space' invokes 'continual movement'. It is clear that the ultimate aim of the terminal is to move passenger from landside, to airside to plane; however this contradicts other studies, such as that conducted by Peter Adey (2007), that offer immobility as the feature of the contemporary terminal building.

Whilst the terminal provides Wood with his omnitopian exemplar, the research delves deeper into the implications of such space for contemporary society: 'the study of terminal space is really an inquiry into the state of the modern project and the ability to construct a sense of power so complete that it becomes almost monolithic' (Wood, 2003:338). There are reflections here of the work of Simmel, and his work on the

Metropolis and Mental Life (1903), although this is not either recognised or acknowledged by the author here.

This study provides a meaningful insight into the nature of the contemporary airport terminal; however it somehow stops short of providing a clear and informative picture of the space and place, instead it appears as if omnitopian space is satisfactorily demonstrated, but then this becomes a matter for investigation itself, which is not fully investigated. There are suggestions and allusions to the work of Goffman and Simmel, but this is scant and unexplored. This may be as a result of the research method here; however these are the fundamental issues that this specific research aims to examine, and which Wood (2003) only touches on.

2.2 CONCLUSION

Much of the literature reviewed here points to the airport terminal as being one thing or another, but little of this tackles the more underlying question of 'why' this might be the case. Reading the literature together in this way however, does enable the reader to draw together some key themes, and there is the possibility to reflect the material in sociological concepts which do provide some unifying ideas relating to the nature of airport space. The first point to make here is that the nature of the terminal space is indeed worthy of study, as so many scholars appear to have already recognised this. The second interesting point is that terminal space must indeed be

complex in nature, as all of the literature varies in approach, epistemology and conclusion.

The key theme that runs through the literature, whether focussing on mobility, immobility, place, non-place, or where the terminal building is offered as metaphor or exemplar to other space, is that of control and people management. It is true that consumption is a large element here that cannot be ignored, and this should rightly be investigated; however in the sense that consumption can be viewed as a form of contemporary people management (Lloyd, 2003, Adey, 2007), then the primary focus should be just this. It is important here however, to note that this should not simply be an examination of footfall or wayfinding, as the management of people here appears to go much deeper than this. The key theme that is seemingly present throughout all of this literature is that of institutionalisation, specifically in a Goffmanesque manner. Ever mindful of Davies' (1989) warning to scholars not to misinterpret or misrepresent Goffman's work on the total institution, there are far too many elements of the institutional nature of the airport to ignore here, and therefore this will be a considerable focus within this study throughout.

Chapter 3

Method

3.1 RATIONALE

Hollway and Jefferson (2000) suggest that social researchers should always be mindful that their research subject is 'fluid' by nature, and as such, the chosen method must also allow for flexibility and revision. This specific study is primarily concerned with the nature of a space, and this, it could be argued, becomes even more fluid and flexible. This highlights the very roots of this study however, because the literature on airport spaces examined in the preceding chapter does not reflect this reflexive and reactive spatial praxis. This provides the foundation for this research, in that the use of specific method should provide the researcher with an understanding of the research subject.

Much of our knowledge of the airport terminal is *a priori*: we know what the space is because we know the nature of the place. We know from a variety of sources that airports are border controls; are subject to surveillance; are spaces of consumption, and so on. Most people who have never even been through an airport would probably be able to provide the researcher with this picture of the space. What this research needs to ascertain however, is more empirical *a posterior* information, and this can only be drawn from methods that explore the spaces themselves, and not simply reflect on preconception or media-driven perception. The fundamental ontological dilemma which arises here is one between constructivism and subjectivism: whilst it may be reasonable to suggest that airport spaces are constructed, gaining their relevance from the interplay between subject and space, this study is aiming to identify the more subjective comprehension of the meaning of space for the end-user. However this is itself problematic, as spaces such as those found in airports or

shopping malls, which are private spaces, are designed not necessarily for an end-user; but more for an operator. As highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, contemporary research requires a flexible approach, and as such requires the employment of interpretivist methods, which will incorporate constructivist and subjectivist ontological concerns. This will result in interpretivist methods being utilised in this study: predominantly ethnographic and phenomenological in design.

Much of the fieldwork conducted within this study was in situ within airport spaces, or as Giddens (1991) describes it, the 'locale'. This marks the introduction of lived visual data (Emmison & Smith, 2000) as a pertinent research tool. This provides the researcher with far more than two or three dimensional images of the subject under scrutiny, and instead turns our attention towards the location itself as a 'total environment', as opposed to concentrating on the objects or subjects within. Shields (1994:203) suggests that "places like shopping malls are ensembles of objects which are not artefacts in the traditional sense but are environments which, once entered, enfold and engulf us". Airports are environments containing a vast array of objects and subjects we interact with; however they are also environments we interact in. Emmison and Smith (2000) suggest that such environments can be coded as text, just as still or video images. It is also important to note that the interactions between subjects, and between subjects and objects within this space are also key in this enquiry.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

The various literature reviews set out in this thesis do not provide a neat and tidy hypothesis, which could then be tested and analysed in a prescribed or conventional manner. The aims and objectives discussion in Chapter 1 indicates that there are a variety of data gathering techniques required in attempting to seek anything like a meaningful conclusion in this study. To suggest that this study utilised 'grounded theory' would be misleading, and would demonstrate a lack of appreciation of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) original approach of building theoretical frameworks from empirically gathered data. The study does however build upon the notion of concept formation, as the methodology allows "concepts to be generated in the course of empirical research" (David & Sutton, 2011:110). This flexibility inevitably leads to the collection of some data which proves to be of little or no use in the final analysis, although rich data has been generated here, and besides, this is an acceptable challenge in qualitative research methodology. Each of the research methods are discussed in greater depth later within this chapter, however the principle methods utilised here are observation and semi-structured interviews.

3.3 THE RESEARCH SETTING

As noted by Blaikie (2000), regardless of the source of the data, the setting for social research influences the nature and design of the research, and consequently, it is important at this juncture to define the setting in which this research will take place. As already highlighted, the locale for this study is as key as any potential participant happening within it. It does still seem that the airport is a natural social setting

however, and this study conducts investigation at the three key levels of analysis: micro-social, meso-social, and macro-social (Blaikie, 2000). This research examines individuals, some of who are in an everyday setting, and some for whom the setting is less familiar or previously unknown. The group most familiar tend to be those employed in the airport setting, whilst those for whom the airport is less well known tend to be passengers. As noted by Blaikie (2000), this micro-social investigation focuses upon their experience within the particular space, as opposed to focussing upon the individual *per se*. This study is concerned with the interactions that take place between individuals in the space, and between the individual and the space itself. According to Blaikie (2000), one type of micro-social relations is the 'social episode', which occurs when individuals interact in crowds: this is a feature at all airport terminal buildings at certain times of the day. The meso-social level encompasses organisations, groups, crowds, and as suggested by Blaikie (2000), communities. As this study is investigating the airports conceptualisation as a city, where Gottdiener (2001) cites the community feel of the airport, then this seems wholly appropriate. Gottdiener (2001) talks of 'membership' of the crowd or the community, and it is this membership that is given attention here. The organisation is assumed to be the airport operators here, who represent the ownership and management of the space. It is as necessary to gain an insight into the plans for space, as it is to ascertain what individuals at the micro-social level perceive it to be. The macro-social setting traditionally refers to a more abstract notion of structure or society itself according to Blaikie (2000), yet the airport still meets this criteria for a natural setting, as it has adopted a structural status within an increasingly globalised planet, and again, this is demonstrated by the wealth of conceptualisations for what the airport is, talking of it in terms of it being akin in importance to a city.

3.4 SAMPLING

One of the primary concerns in designing this study was that of sampling: in 2006, there were approximately 46,000 airports around the world, of which in excess of 14,000 were in the United States (Airports of the World, 2009 – Issue 23). It is recognised by the researcher that this is not a statistically reliable figure, however this was the only source for anything resembling the required information. These airports are divided into International terminals, International hubs, domestic terminals, domestic hubs, and local airfields and aerodromes, and the trialectic typology created for this study is noted in the opening chapter. On this basis, it was never going to be physically possible given the time and financial restraints, to attempt to study a fully representative sample; hence the intended survey population was to be a selection of International airports, both terminals and hubs, and domestic terminals. Airfields and aerodromes were deliberately omitted as they do not in the main have terminal buildings that contain retail outlets. 28 airports around the world were chosen as sites for this study, and were all identified through the following procedures (set out below). Interviews, as discussed further in section 3.6, were all conducted in one particular airport, for reasons of ethics as discussed later in this chapter, suitability, and parsimony.

The sampling in this study has been directed by the following criteria, as set out as good practice in Sarantakos (2005). Firstly, the sampling has been driven by typical cases, and not by large numbers of sites or respondents, and a selection of International Hubs, International Terminals, and domestic terminals deemed typical were utilised here. The sample is also flexible in its size, setting, and numbers and

types of respondents. Settings and respondents have been chosen through means other than statistical or random procedures, and much of this is decided upon during the fieldwork process itself. Finally, and potentially most importantly, the sample is chosen because of suitability and accessibility, and not necessarily through representativeness.

The final sample was eventually drawn utilising non-probability sampling. The researcher adopted purposive and accidental sampling procedures in putting together the sample, and this is normal for a qualitative study of this type (Kuzel, 1992). As noted by Sarantakos (2005), Blaikie (2000) and David and Sutton (2011), as this is a qualitative study, sample size will not be as significant a factor in the research, as it is not determined statistically, it is more flexible, and it is chosen prior to, and during the research process itself. As Sarantakos (2005:168) notes, it is incorrect to say that qualitative research does not employ sampling, but it is "more accurate to say that they employ sampling that correspond to the philosophy of this type of research".

It has been noted that one of the sampling procedures utilised here was purposive in nature. Sarantakos (2005:164) suggests that this is usually adopted when researchers "choose subjects who, in their opinion, are relevant to the project". The purposive element in this study was twofold however; the sample were all relevant in the sense that they were all airports containing consumption spaces, but the researcher was also offered the opportunity to have access to a specific airport for a period of a year, with full security clearance, in the role of independent researcher. The decision to purposively choose this site is clear, as the airport was part of a larger group, and was itself an International airport. The research was also purposive, in relation to the

identification of individuals within the airport setting relevant for interview. Certain key groups were deemed suitable and appropriate for this study, and the selection of respondents within these groups was purposive in the main, although it must be noted that certain respondents were the result of accidental sampling. As previously noted, certain groups were purposively chosen, and yet during this process, other participants accidentally came into contact with the researcher. This accents the 'typical case' nature of the sample, and was the case with airport sites, and interview respondents.

3.5 INTERVIEWS

The primary issue here regarding the interview, is the purpose it may serve whilst attempting to study the nature of a space; what clearly is important here however, is the comprehension of the space of those whom use it, work in it, own it, and so on. Those whom have previously written about this subject, such as Mark Gottdiener for example, have written about the nature of the space based upon their observations, and often this is not a deliberate observation, but more often conjecture and memory. What every author who has written on this subject to date appears to have failed to do, is to actually ask those who use the space about experiences, expectations, emotions, and similarly to ask those who work or own the spaces questions of a similar nature. Alain de Botton (2009) comes closest to this approach, during his week-long stay at Heathrow Airport Terminal 5; however his role was one based upon 'writer in residence', whom people chose to approach, rather than any formal attempt at interviewing. What de Botton (2009) fails to do in his method, is what Silverman (1997) terms 'prospecting'. As previously noted, this specific study aims to both

observe and ask; asking being primarily aimed at those who work within the space and those whom dictate the nature of, and activity within the space. In order to satisfactorily gather this data, it is believed that the 'probing' nature of semi-structured interviews is the most appropriate. As noted by Gray (2004:217) this is fundamental when the objective is to "explore subjective meanings that respondents ascribe to concepts or events". Issues of validity and generalisability, whilst certainly not irrelevant here, are less of a primary concern, due to the quest for independent and subjective interpretation of responses. In the interests of reliability, and the need to dismiss allegations of interviewer bias, key themes are explored, and these remain the same within similar groups, but may differ between groups; for example, the key themes for exploration with those whom work within retail in the airport setting will be identical, whereas those for terminal operators and managers will differ from these, yet remain constant for that specific group. It must be highlighted here that any differences in the lengths of interviews conducted are a result of the requirement to conduct the interview in an active and somewhat unpredictable setting, and not as a result of interviewer bias allocating more or less time to certain groups. The nature of the interview setting also demonstrates what Wengraf (2001) would argue is inadequate preparation, as interviews are conducted during the working day, within scheduled breaks, and within any available space, and it is frequently the case that there is little time to prepare prior to interviews, or debrief following them. This also provides little opportunity for small talk or to embark upon 'impression management' (Oppenheim, 1992). All potential respondents were made aware in advance of the study, and were aware of the procedures and processes necessary to conduct research of this type in this setting, and this overcame some of the issues regarding interviewer

credibility, and as such, minimalised the impact of not engaging in creating an impression with respondents.

3.5.1 The interview schedule

As previously noted, the chosen interview style was semi-structured as the researcher aims to adopt a more reflexive, naturalistic, non-standardised, and flexible approach. As also previously highlighted, whilst it may be contentious for research to aim for subjectivity, when objectivity and generalisability is the usual goal, it is believed that the concept of space is primarily a subjective one: even those who design spaces will have a subjective view as to its role and nature, and this is equally true for each individual who passes through or utilises this space in some way.

The researcher produced a crib sheet of desired topics for discussion with each group. The grouping of respondents was broken down into (1) airport operators, and this group included individuals in senior management positions within the airport operating organisation itself, specifically non-retail airport staff, staff working in retail outlets and (2), customers of the airport. As an example, the topics for discussion specifically aimed at airport operators are listed below, and the detailed crib sheets can be found in Appendix A:

- What, in your view, is the primary function of the airport terminal building?

- What role does consumption play in this function?

- Are consumption practices within this airport in any way influenced by the airlines or the destinations available etc?

- In what ways does this airport terminal emulate a city?

- In what ways does this airport terminal emulate a shopping mall?

- Would you suggest that this terminal is more like a city than a mall?

- When was this airport built, and has the consumption space been redesigned since?

- Do you believe that the design of the retail space within this terminal building makes shopping here a pleasurable process?

- It what ways could the space be changed to improve it in your view?

- What are the short and long term goals for this airport in relation to consumption?

The Manchester Airport Group were approached for access, as the Manchester terminals are a combination of domestic and international, and they represent a 'typical' terminal building. Manchester Airport also facilitates business and holiday travel, providing a representative mix of passengers. MAG were engaged in a programme of redevelopment at the Manchester terminals at this time, however did suggest following numerous correspondence and meetings with the MAG legal team, that access would be made available at the East Midlands Airport (EMA), owned by them. Whilst EMA is a smaller airport per se, the range of flights is still representative to scale, and thus the access was gratefully accepted. All of the interviews were conducted within East Midlands Airport (EMA). I was assisted by many kind members of the team at East Midlands Airport, from the Chief Executive Officer, to staff working within the in-house research unit. In accordance with ethical protocol, all respondents are anonymised, and their specific role within the airport remains confidential. Ethical considerations are discussed more fully later in this chapter.

A total of 21 interviews were conducted within the airport setting, and an example transcription can be found in Appendix B. The 21 respondents were selected due to

their role within the terminal, and included employees of franchised retail outlets, management of franchised retail outlets, airport terminal support staff, and management from the airport; this group included the Terminal Operations Manager, the Retail Manager and the Airport General Manager. The respondents were selected because of their roles within the airport and not based upon their time working in their roles, although it must be noted that the amount of time spent working in the terminal varied amongst the research participants, providing a range of experience. The numbers of interviews conducted were limited due to time and availability restraints on behalf of the respondents, and also because the access to the airport was limited to one year. All interviews were recorded, and the storage of the electronic data and the transcribed interviews is in accordance with the ethical protocols set down by the University of Salford, and advised by the British Sociological Association code of practice. As already highlighted, the setting for the interviews was very organic and natural, and many of the interviews had to take place within the work setting, with certain of the interviews with retailers, taking place at the till in the store between serving customers. The very nature of this specific research setting, resulted in few or no backstage areas away from the shop floor, largely as this creates a security hazard. This resulted in retail interviews taking place in the store, in the CCTV monitoring room, a public food and drink area, and within the smoking area during a respondents break. Interviews with members of the EMA Management team took place in their respective offices within the airport. All interviews took place between the 3rd September 2009 and the 10th March 2010, and several required rescheduling following a change in the respondents circumstances. These changes in circumstances were the result of cancelled breaks, sudden increase in customer numbers, requiring the staff to remain on the shop floor, and a security alert. Non-retail airport staff were

interviewed landside, although as with the respondents working in retail, these were scheduled to take place during breaks, and all took place in public areas. The interviews with operators were more pre-planned, and took place in offices away from the main terminal building itself, although scheduling was equally as complex, and meetings did need to be rescheduled on several occasions with certain staff members, and others were cancelled completely due to operational issues beyond the remit of this research. Opportunities for interviews with customers of the airport were limited, due in part to the Manchester Airport Groups in-house research team conducting footfall surveys at the same time, although 2 airport customers were interviewed within the same time-frame as the others. These interviews were by necessity conducted within the airside terminal building, waiting at the departure gate.

3.6 OBSERVATION

As Gray (2004) notes, observation is not simply a process of looking at things and then making notes of 'the facts', but is also "a complex combination of sensation (sight, sound, touch, smell, and even taste) and perception" (Gray, 2004:238). There are of course, advantages and disadvantages to all methods of data gathering; however observation is often cited as being the most contentious in this regard. This is primarily as a result of the seemingly arbitrary and subjective nature of observing, and the even more contentious issues of values, beliefs, and judgements involved in the process of interpreting the 'meanings' of observations. Within the sociological discipline, there are a number of perspectives, all with varying opinions regarding the validity of observation in social research, yet all of these recognise the benefits of observation as a contemporary research tool (Hammersley, 1992). The process of

observation is frequently associated with ethnographic research, and the researcher takes a role on the scale from participant to non-participant, overt to covert observer: observation in this sense involves the researcher observing participants. This study differs, as its primary focus is upon the space within which, primarily transient groups, interact for short periods, but more importantly, how the space itself dictates action and interaction amongst those whom constitute these groups. This requires a process of more direct observation (Emmison & Smith, 2000), creating a signifier of the locale for the purposes of coding. Whilst it is acknowledged that the contemporary airport terminal is a very different space from a domestic dwelling, where Pierre Bourdieu (1990) was able to code the individual spaces of the house. Bourdieu (1990) codified the house of the Kabyle, and established that it was possible to decode space within the domestic setting, and theoretically ground observed practices within these spaces. This research aims to generate theoretically grounded field notes, based upon observations of codified spaces within contemporary airport terminals. This is possible, as Emminson and Smith (2000:158) suggest, the "architecture of such places typically reflect[s] forms of knowledge". Fiske et al. (1987) warn that the researcher should not make the mistake of over-concentrating on the woods, and thus ignore the trees: the airport terminal being the woods, and the shops within the terminal being the trees here using Fiske *et al*'s. (1987) analogy. Within this specific study, it is vital that observations of the constituent parts of the terminal, as well as the terminal itself, are given due consideration.

As stressed by David and Sutton (2011), observation needs to be undertaken under controlled conditions, and whilst this is not experimental in the laboratory sense, equal rigour has been applied to the processes of observing within the airport setting.

It is acknowledged that as an organic environment, the level of exact control maintained within the laboratory, can never be replicated fully in the social field. The researcher has ensured that the sample is appropriate and sufficient for the study, see section 3.4 for more detail regarding sampling within this study. The researcher has then established a schedule of dates, times, and durations for visits, with these taking place between the 7th April 2009, and the 10th March 2010 at the primary research site, and then other visits to various sites around the globe taking place within this same time frame. It is vital that the study has a subject as its classification, and a focus within this, and this is apparent here: the airport terminal is the classification, and the focus within the terminal is all areas of consumption space. According to David and Sutton (2011), it is key for the observer to also plan for data recording, and in this study, fieldnotes have been recorded in hard-cover journals, photographic images have been self-generated to supplement the text, and audio recordings of various audio soundscapes have been included. The inclusion of the visual and the audio are by means of overcoming the issues regarding researcher-capability. It is clear that the observer cannot observe, make clear and lucid field notes, and maintain maximum focus across long periods in the field, and therefore the inclusion of the visual and the audio provides a supplementary research tool. The researcher recognises that the research setting, particularly in this study, is not a constant and unchanging environment, and in order to overcome any issues that may arise from this, has planned to observe at different times of the year, different times of the day and night, and where possible, in different sites across the UK and beyond. There were no issues for the researcher regarding the production of field notes, as the setting provided a great deal of space and other requirements such as seating, and indeed time in which to write up events as they occurred. David and Sutton (2011) note that covert

researchers may encounter issues regarding writing notes in situ within the research setting, however this was never an issue here. Firstly, the observation was not covert in this sense, as the focus for observation was space, and thus removes the requirement for individual consent, although this issue is discussed in greater depth in section 3.10 which looks at ethics in detail. Where audio soundscapes or visual images were being produced, the researcher carried a sign informing everyone of this, and again this is examined in more depth in the section on ethics, later in this chapter. Finally, with regard to the rigour with which the researcher prepared for observation, fieldnotes were reflected upon throughout the study, and thus proved an invaluable tool in assisting the process of theorising, and thus influence the agenda regarding further observation, or interviews for example.

3.7 THE VISUAL IMAGE IN OBSERVATION RESEARCH

The use of visual images in research is not a new practice. As noted by Harper (1998), using the photographic image as a research tool dates back to the earliest days of the camera, and was utilised primarily by anthropologists. The images utilised can take several forms: researcher-generated still image photographs, pre-existing still photographic images, researcher-generated or pre-existing video film, hand drawn sketches, maps, and technical diagrams. Early anthropologists such as Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, utilised the photograph due to the fact that they were "finding words inadequate by themselves" (Harper, 1998:25). This is contrary to the claims often made in the social sciences, and noted by David and Sutton (2011), that images are superficial, and that the important material is deep within the text, and not sitting on an image. Within anthropology at least, the vast number of images utilised

by Bateson and Mead in *Balinese Character* (1942), were viewed not as superficial, but instead as being a key part of the observation process. The issue that arises most frequently, and has done since Bateson and Meads work, is one of the validity of the use of the image, whilst attempting to seek scientific legitimacy. The most pertinent rebuttal comes from Pink (2001), who argues that the purpose of observation-based ethnographic research is not simply to translate the 'seen' into the 'written', but suggests instead that context is truly apparent when the two are used together. This seemingly moves away from an anthropological perspective, and shifts instead to a more media driven paradigm. Harper (1998) suggests that early sociologists, who were pioneers of visual ethnography, were not informed by anthropology, but actually inspired by documentary photographers: "aspiring visual sociologists drew inspiration from the liberal humanist tradition of documentary photography which dated to Jacob Riis's (1971 [1890]) examination of the poverty of the urban immigrant, the Farm Security Administration photographic documentation of poverty during the 1930s, and more indirectly, Robert Frank's photographic portrait (1969 [1959]) of an alienated, materialistic American culture in the 1950s" (Harper, 1998:28). Harper (1998) goes on to suggest that this is born from the relationship that the observer has with the observed, and argues that the sociological ethnographer develops a "deep involvement with their subjects" (Harper, 1998:28), and this is akin to the documentary photographer. Pink (2001) argues that the suggestion that subjective experiences of the researcher can then become objective knowledge through the process of writing this down, is in itself problematic. She suggests that any attempt to 'translate' images into text is equally problematic, and that in fact, images are used to articulate the context of the observation, and not simply support it. Howard Becker (1974) offered his support for the use of photography in social research, by suggesting

that sociologists and photographers are concerned with the exploration of society. Becker did note however that sociologists who study and practice photography make the association between the image and theory, and this is not the case with photographers who have not studied sociology.

Harper (1998) takes up the issue of the 'partial' nature of ethnographic research, as opposed to a 'complete' truth, and suggests that social research is only ever going to be a snapshot of society at any given time, and therefore suggests that the visual image is no less pertinent as a research tool, as the result is the same. This belief is also one shared by Marcus and Fisher (1987):

> "Post-modern ethnography.... does not move towards abstraction, away from life, but back to experience. It aims not to foster the growth of knowledge but to restructure experience; not to understand objective reality..... nor to explain how we understand for that is impossible, but to reassimilate, to reintegrate the self in society and to restructure the conduct of everyday life" (Marcus and Fisher, 1987:135).

Harper (1998) suggests therefore that "ethnography is most usefully thought of as a created tale which describes reality more successfully if it does not attempt to fulfil the impossible and undesirable (for ethnography) standards of science" (Harper, 1998:31). Pink (2001) argues that reflection on visual images provides an invaluable exploration of experience, which allows the researcher to make sense of their fieldwork. David and Sutton (2011) note that some critics of quantitative methods

suggest that this nothing more nor less than is done with statistical tables. Whilst de Certeau (1984) does not focus specifically upon the use of the visual image in social research, the central tenet of his work is that we can only gain a meaningful understanding of our society, by actually 'being' part of it, and reflecting upon this act of 'being', and this is what Pink (2001), Harper (1998), and Prosser (1998) emphasise as being the true essence of visual images in social research: a reflexive appreciation of the representation of 'being'.

In this specific study, the use of the visual image permits the researcher to capture the essence of the spaces, which would otherwise being complex, if not impossible to do, without becoming overly poetic or unnecessarily literary; the focus here is not upon how well the space is described as text, but how well the researcher and subsequent readers can interpret the nature of the space for themselves. This also permits a prolonged period of analysis, as the image captures the space in a snapshot of time, but then equally permits further images of the same space at other times, and provides the researcher with the luxury of contemplation time, where the observer without the image would simply have less time, or an over-reliance upon memory, which reduces further the objectivity and reflexivity of the written account. It must be noted here, that images are not utilised in this study for content analysis in the quantative sense, in that there are not vast numbers of images included in order to provide visible evidence of the existence of specific phenomena. Gillian Rose (2001:32) suggests that the difference between the connoisseur and the content analyst is one of the quality of the eye, distinguishing between the "good eye of the art critic, and the squinting eye of the content analyst". It is hoped that the readers of this study will appreciate the images, as opposed to wish to quantify them.

3.8 THE AUDIO SOUNDSCAPE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

As highlighted by Hurdley (2010) and Hall et al. (2008), qualitative research, particularly that which is focussed upon space and/or place, often overlooks one significant factor within the setting context: noise. Smith (1994) suggests that if social researchers fail to acknowledge how a space or a situation sounds, then this is indeed neglecting the role that all of our senses play in assisting us to comprehend our social and built environment. The relevance of the soundscape goes far beyond simple 'noise' however, and as Rychtarikova *et al*. (2008) note, measuring the volume of sound is not enough in social investigation, and neither is a solely statistical measure of frequency, volume or pitch. What is important in social investigation is instead a more qualitative appreciation of how the sound that accompanies any given setting or situation, can assist in providing a 'thicker' and deeper contextualisation of what is actually going on. Hall et al. (2008:1020) state that "we are concerned here with the ordinary, audible world at its broadest extent, encompassing all manner of sound..... whether intended, accidental, or incidental". Smith (1994:233) titles this as "audio ethnography", which given the recent introduction of visual ethnography into social research, seems to be an obvious and appropriate label. Smith (1994) also highlights how social and cultural research has been dominated by observational detail, and how this has led to many publications introducing the visual image as text, and yet we "generally *hear* very little about the content and meaning of everyday life" (Smith, 1994:233). The significance of ethnography here, is that the ethnographer has the opportunity to listen and analyse soundscape material in the context of their research setting. The same is of course true with the visual image; however recognising a

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potentially significant soundscape during fieldwork suggests a sense of the situation beyond that which can be seen. Smith (1994) states that this makes sound an integral part and function of the sociological imagination. Hurdley (2010) contemplates the walking and listening techniques espoused by de Certeau (1984) as noted earlier, and confirms that for her study of corridor interactions, the audio recording of the mundane and ordinary are fundamental. Hall et al. (2008) suggest that noise is relevant not only in itself as background where nothing formal is happening, but also as a 'backing track' to interviews. This backing track is something that scientists are trained to 'tune-out from' according to Hall et al. (2008), in order that they may maintain distance from the focus of the study. Rychtarikova *et al*. (2008) highlight that even a qualitative assessment of soundscape has five key acoustic characteristics. Firstly there is the keynote sound: unconscious background noise that is almost ever-present. Next there are sound signals, which are designed to stand out; such as bells, alarms, horns and so on. The third characteristic here is the soundmark: a unique sound which identifies the space. Rychtarikova *et al*. (2008:4) add that urban spaces have a distinctive rhythm; one which can change with time of day, season, and so on. Finally, spaces have a harmony: this is defined here as "acoustical comfort" and includes sounds such as traffic starting and stopping, or talking and laughter. Whilst much of this is technical from an acoustics perspective, it is important here, as this is what will assist in analysing audio data, by being able to demonstrate keynotes, rhythm and harmony for example, within the airport terminal setting.

This study however, specifically seeks to tune-in to the sounds of the spaces within the airport setting, as this provides an added dimension to the written and the visual as previously discussed. The researcher does not make a claim that this is a ground-

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breaking study of public spaces utilising audio recordings of background noise, and it is in no way a primary research tool here, however it is utilised to supplement what is written and discussed. There are ethical issues with utilising this technique, and these are discussed at a later point in this chapter, and these form much of the basis for Hurdley's (2010) research. Ambient background noise was recorded within the airport space, specifically focussing upon the same space, but with temporal recording variances. These recordings have been transferred to MP3 format, and are stored as per all other electronic audio recordings. The recordings were made specifically within the gate areas, and more specifically, the gate area adjacent to the bar area.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

3.9.1 Interview data analysis

As noted in Blaikie (2000), Sarantakos (2005) and David and Sutton (2011), data in a qualitative study such as this, does not fundamentally take place following fieldwork, but does instead take place throughout the data gathering process. This procedure then informs the fieldwork process, and can lead the researcher to other sources, settings or respondents. The analysis of interview data however, involves the transcription of recorded conversations, which in itself is time-consuming, and which has not been possible whilst in the research setting. For these reasons, the interviews were analysed at the end of the data gathering exercise. This is also essential in order to conduct narrative analysis, which is the chosen method in this study. The narrative here is not the interview itself, but the written text that has been produced as a result of the transcription process, and the documentation of the conversation itself (Frank, 2000):

"narrative enquiry attempts to understand how people think through events, and what they value....[through a] close examination of how people talk about events and whose perspectives they draw on to make sense of such events" (Riley and Hawe, 2005:229). Riley and Hawe (2005) go on to suggest that narrative inquiry provides data regarding how people make sense 'their world', and this is exactly what the researcher wished to glean from this study. It is important here to gather data that provides such subjective data regarding an individual's perceptions of space and place, as it is this that sits at the crux of the research; however an architect may design a 'space', its truth exists in the perceptions of those whom inhabit that space, irrespective of how often, or for how long, for this is how the space will become ultimately defined.

The analysis of the interview that has taken place in this study fit broadly with the Schutz model, as set out by Sarantakos (2005). The first step of the process of analysis was to 'clean' the text; dividing the text into sequences which placed responses into various categories. For example, the creation of a hierarchy of responses based upon the strength of feeling or time spent on a specific topic. The second phase of the process was to structure the text: defining which categories are linked, or emphasised through the use of tone or language. This exercise highlighted the most and least important parts of the narrative. At the next stage, the researcher began to draw abstract inferences regarding the narrative *per se*, and this was achieved by allowing the text to highlight the key important sections within each transcription, and to provide connections, both weak and strong, to other sections of the narrative. According to Sarantakos (2005), the next stage of the analytic process is to move from the abstract to knowledge; metaphorically putting flesh onto the bones

of the abstract analysis. As a relatively inexperienced researcher, this was the most complex part of the analysis process; not because the knowledge is absent, but primarily because the abstract was not as developed as it would be with a seasoned researcher. The abstract and the knowledge phase of the analysis were blurred into each other. The next stage of the process was to make generalised comparisons between sections of the text, thus creating elementary categories. The final element to the analysis is to generate a theoretical framework from the narrative. Elements from the interviews and the subsequent analysis are placed within the following chapters.

3.9.2 Observation and fieldnote data analysis

David and Sutton (2011) highlight that qualitative data can be gathered in a variety of ways, and one such method within this research was field notes. According to Burgess (1984), field notes includes interview transcripts and photographs; however for the purposes of this section, field notes refers to the comprehensive notes made in hard-back journals whilst observing. Burgess (1984), David and Sutton (2011), Blaikie (2000), and Sarantakos (2005) all make reference to the complexities of ensuring that field notes are speedily and accurately recorded, the rigidity of coding and analysis, the failure to record everything, and the way in which the information gathered is reported. In this study, the researcher, whilst observing, made written notes in hard cover journals. As previously noted, there were no ethical issues regarding note-taking whilst in setting, and neither were there logistical issues for the research. The airport as a site, is a melee of people, activity, sound, and vision, and because of this, an individual sat writing into a journal is neither an unusual or unnerving sight. There are many areas of the airport where many travellers will sit and either write, read, or

use more technological data, thus affording the researcher the time and space in which to observe and write. Much of what is written in the journals is done so from a sociological theoretical perspective. The researcher is familiar with the work of Wright Mills (1959) regarding the Sociological imagination, and is practiced in the process of defamiliarising the familiar, and as such, was able to make notes accordingly. It is from this position that the analysis of field notes commences, as the notes themselves are driven by sociological theory. Burgess (1984) suggests that the researcher should make separate methodological notes, signposting specific issues of method during the study; again, the researcher in this study has included these within the field notes themselves, as this often provides a focus for larger issues within the study more generally. For example, specific situations that create methodological challenges can influence the study, and become a part of the observation. Whilst observing at EMA, there was a minor security alert, which created an issue for my presence, and this is discussed further later in this chapter, however the resulting actions within the setting created events worthy of making notes, and provided an alternative observation perspective. Burgess (1984) suggests that many qualitative researchers do not discuss the ways in which they analyse their data. In the interests of transparency here however, the researcher is obliged and content to note that much of the analysis of the field notes was conducted utilising a very similar method to narrative analysis utilised with interviews. Substituting field notes for the interview transcript, much of the same procedure for formal textual analysis, structural description, analytic abstraction, knowledge analysis, comparison, and theoretical construction (Sarantakos, 2005) was carried out, and again, the results of this analysis are evident in following chapters.

3.9.3 Visual data analysis

If the researcher is to accept Sarah Pink's (2001:96) rejection of the Wright Mills belief that the role of the visual ethnographer is to "translate the visual into words", then there needs to be a different way of analysing the visual image. There is certainly a usefulness in utilising the image as a support to the written, and in this sense it can be argued that the translation from picture to text has occurred. Any attempt to describe or relate the image renders it nothing more than a delayed observation. An alternative method of image analysis, would be to utilise it as a supplementary quantitative tool, where it is viewed as content analysis; a vast number of images portraying a coded event could be deemed thus. As previously noted, Rose (2001) argues that images can be viewed as a connoisseur or as a content analyst, although it appears through examination of existing visual ethnography (Hoffman, 2007, Moore et al., 2008, Steinmetz, 2008) that a great deal of analysis includes a measure of critical expertise, descriptive translation, and content analysis. This research too analyses visual data utilising a combination of methods. Images are examined semiotically, images are utilised to supplement text, images are on occasions translated into text, and images are also included to exhibit the existence of phenomena. It is appreciated that this is somewhat a bastardisation of the art of visual ethnography; however each form of analysis is appropriate and valuable in the context in which it is used. This is supported by David and Sutton (2011:443), who argue that "visual analysis is important as image cannot be reduced into text; yet visual analysis cannot stand alone, as an understanding of its production and its reception require an awareness of more than simply what is in the image". It is seemingly the case that the visual image, produced and considered by the practitioner of the sociological

imagination, can provide a wealth of data for the social investigator, and in this research, it is believed that this is the case.

3.9.4 Audio data analysis

As with the visual image, there are different approaches to the analysis of audio soundscape data. Hall et al. (2008) refer to 'rhythmanalysis', a process put forward by Lefebvre (2004) in which it is possible to analyse the noises of the city. This theory is very much about the repetition of sounds, such as traffic for example, but also about the researcher listening beyond the ordinary, and in this sense, is again about listening with a sociological imagination. Hall et al. (2008) suggest that this is not a suitable method alone for systematic enquiry, but Amin and Thrift (2002) believe that Lefebvre's audio analysis provided a "welcome attention to (mundane) detail more often missing from 'big picture' urban theory"(Amin and Thrift, 2002:18). It is hoped that the inclusion of audio data analysis here proves equally as beneficial to the overall conclusion. The soundscapes were specifically recorded in the same locale within the airport setting, but were recorded at different time intervals. The researcher has attempted to adopt rhythmanalysis in order to establish the minutia of the environment that was otherwise overlooked during the observation process. Highmore (2005:145) argues that Levebvre's study was "as much about listening as seeing", and this cannot be argued to be the case here, where the observed still has primacy.

3.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

"Ethics is the science of morality: those who engage in it determine values for the regulation of human behaviour" (Homan, 1991:1). Ethics, more pragmatically, is the construction of rules and regulations that guide the pragmatic actions of the researcher. David and Sutton (2011) make the association between 'ethics' and other concepts such as morals, principles, norms, values, and behaviour. The debate that surrounds the acceptance of what is right or wrong in social research is organic and fluid; it can be argued that indeed the fluidity matches the nature of society itself. There are numerous examples of studies that were conducted in the last fifty years which we now consider beyond ethical approval, and yet which been invaluable in our efforts to study society: Milgram's 1961 study of obedience to authority, Humphreys 1970 study of homosexual acts within public toilets, Zimbardo's 1971 study of acceptance of roles, to name but a few. Sarantakos (2005) highlights however, that the process of research has now become far more systematic and accountable, and the key factor here is that the researcher has become more accountable, but so has the institution to which they are affiliated, and so too have the professional bodies or associations to which they belong. This has resulted in academic institutions and professional bodies alike, producing codes of conduct, within which researchers can identify the boundaries of their behaviour and method whilst in the field. These codes of conduct are primarily focussed upon the welfare of the researcher, the respondents, and the setting, and preventing 'harm' to researcher or participants; welfare includes issues such as privacy, anonymity, consent, confidentiality, deception, coercion and concealment (Sarantakos, 2005). The challenge for research lies in the defining of harm though, as this is subjective on the

one hand, and utilising a more utilitarian perspective, harm to one or a few, may result in benefit for many. Wider and more critical questions arise during considerations of ethics, such as who has the authority to state what is good or bad, right or wrong, ethical or unethical, and more importantly, where does their authority come from, and who legitimises it?

3.10.1 Seeking ethical approval

The University has a strict code for ethical research, and each proposed study is discussed and approved, or otherwise, by an ethics committee. Before fieldwork could commence, the ethics approval pro-forma was submitted for approval, and the final revised application was approved by the University ethics committee.. The committee deliberated at length, and requested several revisions of the application, before finally granting ethics approval for the fieldwork to commence.

3.10.2 Overt or covert fieldwork?

Because the fieldwork took place within a space such as the airport, where a large transient group arrive and depart, with the exception of those for whom the terminal is employment, one ethical issue that arose was that of whether the researcher is an overt or covert participant, and if it was to be the latter, then what, if any, ethical issues arise from this? Whilst observing within the terminal at EMA, the researcher was overt, in the sense that in compliance with airport, Civil Aviation Authority, and The UK Border Agency regulations, the researcher was wearing an identity badge, proclaiming him as a 'Temporary Researcher'. The researcher had to undertake the

General Security Awareness Training (GSAT); a requirement for all staff working in an airport in the UK. The researchers badge permitted landside and airside access to the terminal building at EMA, and was restricted for a period of 1 year. Conditions of the badge for all staff, is that this must be worn where it is visible to all, including other staff, whom are encouraged to challenge the role and legitimacy of other staff if this is not the case. Whilst simply observing, the researcher would stand or be seated in an area of the airport, where others would also be at that time. Observations were never of individuals specifically, and the focus of the attention was on the nature of the space and the ways in which it was being utilised by unidentifiable groups. Whilst the researcher was taking images within the terminal building, a laminated sign was attached to his bag via detachable hook and loop fastenings. The bag would then be worn so that people within the terminal could identify the photographer as a researcher, and the sign invited people to stop the researcher and enquire about the study should they have fears, objections, or simple curiosity.

Figure 1

The researcher utilised the same system when recording audio soundscapes, although on these occasions the bag was not worn, but placed in clear view next to the recording equipment for people to see.

During the course of this study, the researcher has spent a great deal of time in airport terminals around the world, other than EMA, including Newark Liberty, Palma Majorca, Manchester International, Tenerife (South), and Dublin to name but a few, where his actions were more covert, but only in the sense that the researcher was observing as a travelling member of the general public. Photographs were only taken of non-sensitive sites security wise, and were never taken where individuals could be identified. Written field notes were made in exactly the same way as during the time spent at EMA, but as noted previously, there is nothing harmful or suspicious of someone writing in a journal sat in an airport terminal, as this is just one activity that takes place there frequently.

3.10.3 Organisational and individual consent

The researcher spent time negotiating access to EMA with the senior management within the airport itself, but also with the legal team representing Manchester Airport Group (MAG). Discussions and meetings were held between the researcher and the airports solicitor, and eventually mutually acceptable access was negotiated, and

organisational consent was obtained from MAG. Initial insistences by MAG to retain intellectual property rights to the thesis in return for access were removed, and the written consent was received. This consent included permission to take images within the terminal so long as they remained within the guidelines set out within, regarding anonymity of individuals, non-sensitive areas such as security check zones, and no image that would bring the airport into disrepute.

Research participants were all provided with a research brief, and asked for written consent. Separate consent forms were designed for each group of respondents, and these can be found in Appendix D. The consent forms outline the intention to audio record the interview, and the respondents are asked to provide written consent for this to take place.

3.10.4 Ethical issues with visual and audio research methods

The principal ethical challenges to the proposed research made both by the Universities ethics committee, and the legal representatives of MAG, were due to the planned use of the visual image. The importance of the use of the visual in this research has been previously stressed, and it was key that these challenges were met and overcome. The primary concerns over the use of the image related to privacy, and to the more contemporary moral panic surrounding the safety of children and issues surrounding images of children and young people. Whilst the researcher was clear that this study was not interested in individuals images, and specifically not those of young people, ethical approval was a stumbling block. The researcher sought

guidance from both the British Society of Criminology and the British Sociological Association's code of practice. The preconceived notion that social researchers could take visual images in places where the public would ordinarily be having their images monitored by CCTV for example, no longer applies. Wiles et al. (2008) have produced the closest to a definitive guide for social researchers when using visual research methods, and this has been produced by the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, and this states that "still images or videos of private or public places or locations (such as inside houses, schools, in parks and on streets) also present a threat to anonymisation of individuals whether or not individuals are portrayed in images" (Wiles et al., 2008:29). As the population of the airport is a transient one however, no individual or group of individuals will be associated with a space, and thus will create no issues relating to anonymity. For those whom work in the terminal buildings, any images of their specific space is only taken after written consent has been sought, or is covered by the consent agreement drawn up with MAG. The primary issues of anonymity within this study are most important in relation to interviews, and the images pose no harm or threat to the organisation or its staff, the University, the researcher, or the public who use the spaces.

The recording of audio soundscapes took place within areas where none of the ambient noise was distinguishable as an individual or a group of individuals. The researcher was also mindful not to utilise recording equipment with enhanced recording facility, thus the recordings provide ambient background noise, and not specific conversation.

<u>3.10.5 Data storage</u>

Audio, visual, and hard-copy data from the study is stored in locked cabinets, with audio files being stored on an external hard-drive storage device. This is in accordance with Article 36 of the 'Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association' (British Sociological Association, March 2002).

Chapter 4

Findings: Airports as Institutionalised Consumption Spaces

4.1 SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE MALL

Before it is possible to conduct any form of analysis into how similar, or not, the modern airport terminal is to a shopping mall, it is prudent to establish precisely what the mall is in theoretical terms. It appears to make good sense to examine the shopping mall from the theoretical perspectives most akin to those whom have conceptualised the airport in this way.

4.1.1 Henri Lefebvre and retail space

Despite the undoubted complexity of Lefebvre's work on space, and without wishing to misrepresent it here, it is necessary to provide a brief description of Lefebvre's spatial praxis. The first key concept of note is what Lefebvre himself describes as a 'spatial triad'. At its most basic, this suggests that Lefebvre has broken down 'space' into three distinct fields of space: physical space, mental space, and social space. Interestingly, this process of spatiology appears later in the work of Soja, although he prefers to use the terms first, second, and thirdspace. This differentiation between the various fields is fundamental in Lefebvre's work. Physical space is natural, mental space is perceived, social space however, is a combination of the previous two, and is the actual lived space of the population. The second, and actually the most fundamental concept regarding 'space' to be put forward by Lefebvre, is that all space, whether conceived, perceived or lived, is in fact produced. More than this, space is a fundamental part of the production process. Lefebvre goes as far as to suggest that space has become fetishised in much the same way as commodities have

in capitalist societies. To this end, and as noted by Merrifield (2000:175), "unrestrained capitalism always and everywhere gives primacy to the conceived realm". This is vital in this particular analysis, as what we actually experience, is held as less important than conceptions made up for us, by other groups. Space then becomes abstract for Lefebvre, but not in the mental understanding of the term. Lefebvre actually takes the Marxian concept of abstract labour, but then expands this in relation to space. For Marx, abstract labour was the generic term for labour that generated income, for example, whilst jobs may be individual and varied, under a capitalist economic regime, all jobs are reduced to the money they can command. For Lefebvre, space too is abstract, where it can be reduced to its value, regardless of its design or purpose, and it must be noted that Lefebvre saw this as a bad thing. For Lefebvre however, space is only truly meaningful to the individual once it is internalised: "everyday life in other words, internalizes all three moments of Lefebvre's spatial triad; it's a space – the only space - which brings 'wisdom, knowledge and power (la sagesse, le savoir, le pouvoir) to judgement" (Merrifield, 2000:176). When the conceptions of others take primacy over our own abilities to think and to dream, then what is it which we are actually internalising? Merrifield (2000) notes that within the suburbs and the New Towns of South Western France, Lefebvre saw for himself the physical effects of this spatial control, and "witnessed the end of romance and uncertainty", but also that he heard "the death knell of the spirit" (Merrifield, 2000:176). As Merrifield (2000) notes however, this by no means infers that Lefebvre would agree with Auge's suggestion that such sites are non-places, and equally he contradicts the work of Castells regarding spaces being reduced to a space of flows.

Margaret Crawford (1992) identifies how within the shopping mall, the nature of its content is based predominantly upon an extensive set of equations pertaining to the demographic of its potential customer. She cites the 'Values and Life Styles Program', produced by the Stanford Research Institute (Crawford, 1992), in which an entirely new stratification scale is produced, based not on ones income solely, but including factors such as noted with the stratum titled "sustainers (struggling poor; anger toward the American system)" (Crawford, 1992:9). If the owners of the real estate perceive there to be 'sustainers' within their demographic, then this will directly influence the shops that are invited or encouraged to situate within their specific mall. This illustrates perfectly the notion of the predominance of the conceivers over the perceivers and livers within Lefebvrian thinking. Malls, by their own admission, are designed and built as leisure spaces. Whilst Lefebvre did not specifically comment upon malls, he did examine the paradoxical subject of leisure spaces. "Such spaces appear on first inspection to have escaped the control of the established order, and thus, insomuch as they are spaces of play, to constitute a vast counter-space. This is a complete illusion……leisure is as alienated and alienating as labour; as much an agent of co-optation as it is itself co-opted; and both an assimilative and an assimilated part of the system (mode of production)" (Lefebvre, 1991:383). For Lefebvre, the mall would epitomise the pervasion of everyday life by social and economic control. They cease to be organic or differential spaces, and instead become spaces in which society can be programmed into fashion, trend, leisure, enjoyment: in short, exploited. The mall not only perpetuates exploitation at a physical consumption level; the worker returning hard earned wages to the owners of the means of production, as a result of the shear proliferation of stores within such close proximity. The mall also markets itself as a space of individual escape and

experience, which of course, it is not. As consumers, we are satisfied not simply by the purchasing of goods and services, but also by the consumption of the artificial, fantastic or the romantic (Falk, 1994). Crawford (1992) highlights how this has occurred through a process of 'indirect commodification'; "a process by which nonsalable objects, activities, and images are purposely placed in the commodified world of the mall" (Crawford, 1992:14). A situation arises where the expected use value of an object or service is temporarily suspended, which in some way decontextualises it and thus mystifies it to some degree (Sennett, 1976). For example, if a fashion show takes place within a shopping mall, the clothes on display become viewed temporarily not as individual commodities with specific exchange value, but instead become viewed as part of a wider spectacle, which is commodified in its own way. This too is a brief reference to the work of Guy Debord, who for a period was a scholar of Lefebvre. Debord (2005) examined the capitalisation of spectacle within society. Whilst focussing on the fantastic or surreal, we are no longer focussing on the real. The real may well suggest what is needed not what is desired. It is the intention of the shopping mall developer and retailer to place the visitor in a state where want overpowers need, "designing into the retail built environment the means for a fantasized dissociation from the act of shopping" (Goss, 1993: 19). In the West Edmonton Mall, "confusion proliferates at every level; past and future collapse meaninglessly into the present; barriers between real and fake, near and far, dissolve as history, nature, technology, are indifferently processed by the mall's fantasy machine" (Crawford, 1992:4).

The first enclosed shopping mall to be opened in America, was in Edina Minnesota in 1956. Southdale, designed by Victor Gruen, "an Austrian-born architect who had fled the Nazi invasion in 1938, and arrived in the United States with eight dollars in his pocket and some architects tools" (Kowinski, 1985: 118), and became the forerunner to the hundreds of malls that now exist worldwide.

Having established that a two level model would work, and that two departmental stores could co-exist within the same space, a theory that brought claims on his sanity from others, Southdale was built (Kowinski, 1985). Gruen took the idea for the closed mall from the elaborate arcades he had seen on trips to Europe. The enclosed model proved ultimately more economical to build than an open shopping centre. Gruen was careful to include an elaborate central garden court (Kowinski, 1985). It soon became apparent to those in the retail trade, that this temperature controlled and pleasant environment was conducive to more than simply shopping, "they saw that people went there not only to make specific purchases but just to be there" (Kowinski, 1985: 120). This concept of 'a place to be' as well as 'a place to shop' is now fully visible in the West Edmonton Mall (WEM) in Alberta, Canada (Hannigan, 1998). WEM is now the worlds largest shopping mall, developed by the Ghermezian brothers (Hannigan, 1998), and incorporates as much of a theme park as a shopping centre. "WEM contains a 15-acre amusement park, a 10-acre water park, a full size ice-skating rink, the Fantasyland Hotel, a faux version of Bourbon Street in New Orleans, and a 2.5-acre artificial lagoon complete with a replica of Christopher Columbus' ship the Santa

Maria, several mini submarines and electronically operated rubber sharks" (Hannigan, 1998: 91).

Gruen's designs for the mall were very much born from his ideals as an architect to remain not simply contemporary, but instead to always be ahead of the current trends. His reputation as a store and retail architect meant that he was always attempting to push the boundaries. Because of these associations with retail however, his designs could not simply be flights of architectural fancy, they instead had to be commercially profitable. Victor Gruen had identified how the ever growing figures for car ownership within the United States of America in the 1950s were changing the face of the Main Street, and for him, the out of town shopping mall seemed to be the logical next step in retail development. He argued that town centre department stores were places for the elite, whereas the shopping mall would instead be somewhere that could provide "services for the entire community" (Hardwick, 2004:101). One of these services was increased parking, as the difficulties in parking within the town centre were cited as just one of the reasons for the decline in the town centre shopping districts. Increased parking spaces were not simply the solution however, as Gruen had already built several large edge-of-town retail complexes, which he felt to be "one-stop retail spaces" (Hardwick, 2004:95), but these were not malls. As previously noted, the element that was missing at this stage was the 'place to be' factor. Kowinski (2002) describes the mall as 'theatre', and he suggests that this is the case because of the set design, the choreography and the stage management that is to be found in every successful shopping mall. This is a well thought out and highly appropriate analogy to use, particularly when comparing the mall to the town or city centre, where there maybe is not the same level of staging that goes into each days

'performance'. One further reason is defined best by Kowinski himself, who suggests that "for a space to be a theatre, the outside rules of time and space must be banished" (Kowinski, 2002:93). It is true to suggest, following on from this theatrical analogy, that what also defines mall shoppers from town centre shoppers, is the level of audience that they are experiencing. Again, referring back to Debord's work on the capitalisation of the spectacle, the mall shopper is a member of an audience, and a privileged and exclusive one at that.

4.1.3 *Mark Gottdiener and the mall*

When attempting to define the mall, Gottdiener (1995) considered it to be a representative space as follows:

> "The mall experience is partly the finding of a self which is the self as conditioned consumer in the ludic, amusement sphere of commodity capitalism. This consumer self is only primed by TV and the advertising media. It becomes actualized within the consumption and quasi-public ludic space of the mall. This sphere is a commodified utopia where the vagaries of daily life and the inhumanity of the production process exist as but faint echoes of the economy. The mall presents a material, built environment that is an amusement space, a carnival centre. The self, which is actualized as a consumer self, transports to the mall, encounters the disorienting design features of its

architecture, and searches out the region of clear light past the parking stalls, the gangways, escalators, stairs, entrance doors, and into the grand avenues of consumption and consumerist communion" (Gottdiener, 1995:96).

To this end, the airport terminal is very much akin to Gottdiener's mall; the space only becomes something other than a waiting room once the passenger's self is manipulated into one of consumer. I note that in my field notes from the 8th April at EMA (10:45am), that those passengers who clear security and then simply sit at the gate waiting for the flight to be called, are not engaging in any form of consumer behaviour. For this group, the terminal experience is one of waiting predominantly. This group are still subject to security and manipulated flow along with all other passengers; this group are not consuming however, and as such, this gives significant credence to Gottdiener's perceptions of the 'consuming self'.

The primary difference with the airport terminal and the mall however lies in the initial reasoning for being present within the space. It is not inconceivable that individuals within a mall willingly undergo this change in their sense of self, even if their visit to the mall was for pleasure or some other reason. Airport users on the contrary, who perceive their place in the terminal as strictly waiting to travel, may not engage in this same change.

4.2 THE SOCIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS OF A MALL

Having briefly examined a small, but relevant amount of the literature, to enable an understanding of the mall, against which, the previously noted scholars have conceptualised the modern airport terminal, it now appears necessary to formulate a working definition of the mall, in order to best analyse whether the musings of such aforementioned scholars is in fact valid. It would, for example, be inappropriate to simply utilise Mark Gottdiener's understanding of what the mall is, as his is not the only work which has chosen to cite the airport as a metaphor for the mall in this fashion. The following list of characteristics appears throughout this sociological investigation into the mall, although not all features are suggested by all of the scholars whose work has been cited.

- Controlled environment – (such as temperature, light etc)

- Commercially profitable

- Inclusive space for all of the community

- Leisure / amusement space

- Perceived space of safety

- Choreographed pedestrian movement

- Fantasy architecture

- Private & public transport links

- Catering facilities

- A fetishised space

- Site where individual sense of self undergoes transition

Each of these individual characteristics will be analysed in turn, utilising the methods highlighted.

4.2.1 *Controlled Environment – (Such As Temperature, Light Etc)*

Whilst it is difficult to capture a concept such as 'controlled temperature' as a still visual image, it is hopefully possible to establish from the following images, that in each environment, mall or airport, the indoor climate is both moderate, controlled and pleasant, whilst the lighting is maintained at a constant throughout.

The Trafford Centre - Manchester

Figure 3

Source – J. Coulton

Figure 3 shows the Orient Food Court within the Trafford Centre in Manchester, and the first clear observation is the lack of natural lighting in this large space. Interestingly, the lighting on the artificial sky ceiling does change from a sunrise to sunset several times every hour, but this creates a disorientation for visitors here, as you can never be certain of what time of day or night it is beyond the boundaries of this space.
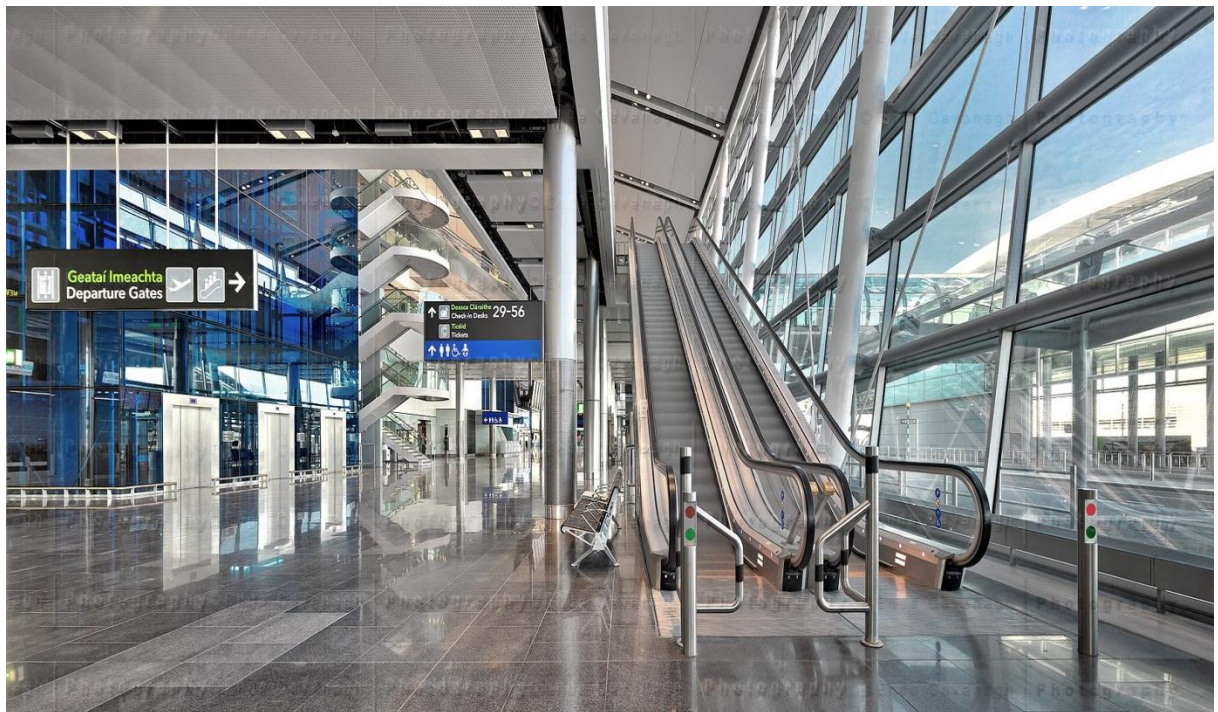
Dublin Airport Terminal

Figure 4

Source – J. Coulton

The obvious difference here lies in the amount of natural light that is being encouraged into the space. As noted in other sections of this study, the vast glass walls within the terminal create a significant spectacle at different times of the day, creating a literal window out onto the activities of the apron and runway, or providing a huge darkened mirror as darkness falls, as the artificial interior lighting reflects

images back from the walls, providing a great deal more reflection of what is actually occurring in the terminal building, than that which is happening without.

In the course of this research, I have been in both airports and malls at various times throughout the day and night, and also at varying times of the year, and the one constant throughout, is the heat and light. One notable difference however, in almost every airport terminal I have visited, is the amount of light that is natural. Whilst many of the world's shopping malls have glass ceilings, the light very often has the appearance of being artificial, or in some way the natural light that is present has the illusion of being 'topped up' by artificial light, so as to diminish the importance of natural light. As noted by Goss (1993) and Kowinski (2002), this 'illusion' is often a deliberate attempt to ensure the consumer remains within the mall; the seamless shift from daylight to dusk with little or no obvious light change will create a temporal vacuum for the consumer, as opposed to alerting them to the passing of time. Within the airport terminal environment however, architectural design often involves one side wall being made of glass, in order to build in the spectacle of the apron, runways and beyond. This use of glass has a particularly interesting effect at certain times of day; however with regard to controlled light, the significant difference is that the consumer is able to identify once daylight has disappeared. This is relatively unimportant for the retailers though, as the consumers within an airport terminal are not going to leave and go home simply because of the time, but instead they leave once their flight is called to the gate.

In the interview with Respondent J (10/03/10), a member of the EMA airport operations management team, the issue of light and controlled environment was discussed:

> JC   Is the airport a different place in the early morning or the evening once the daylight fades?
>
> J   Yes, it really is. The view from the gate is important here, as it provides everyone with the reason why they're here. Planes taking off and landing during the day is quite a spectacle, but this is almost more so in the dark. It's probably just a drama thing.
>
> JC   Is this drama emphasised then?
>
> J   Not really. What's more important is that the terminal is lit adequately for health and safety, so we don't mess with this.

This is some way highlights the difference between the airport terminal and the mall: the drama of the space is not emphasised in the airport, whereas this seems to be true in the majority of malls visited during this study.

4.2.2 *Commercially Profitable*

As with the previous characteristic, it is difficult to represent 'commercial profitability' visually; however these images demonstrate the commercial profitability and viability of certain malls and airports alike. At the time of writing, a global economic recession is clearly having an impact on certain commercial environments, and retail and air travel are possibly two of these such environments.
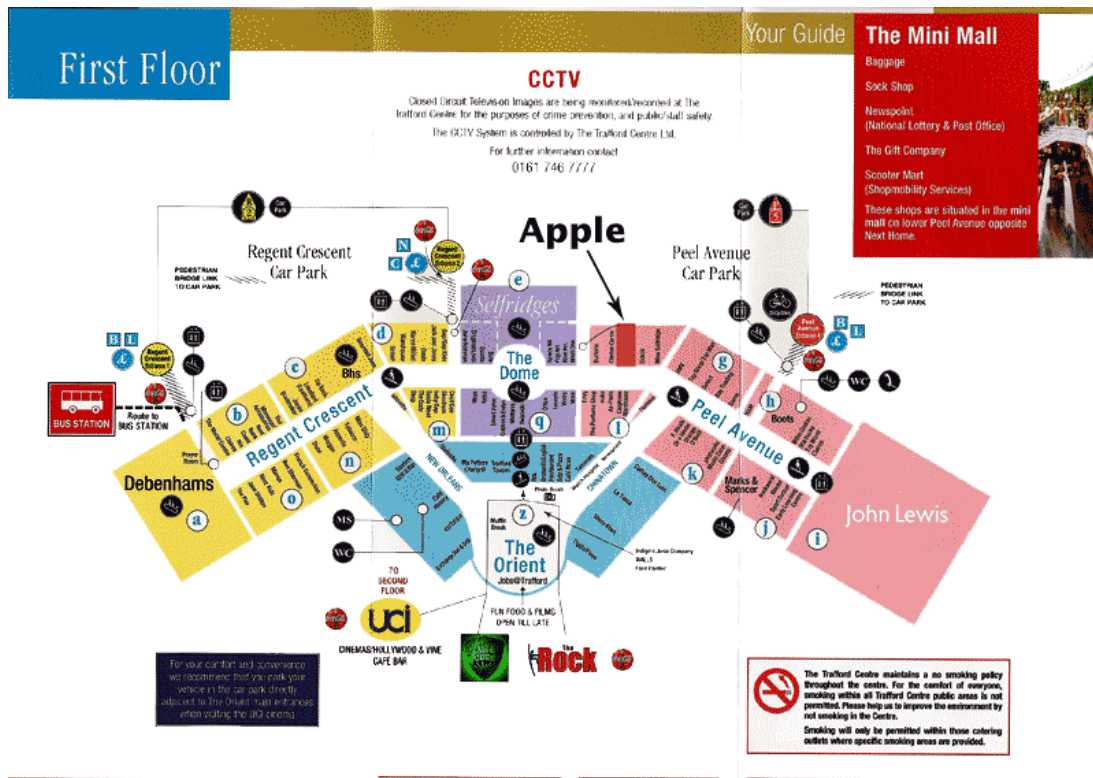
Trafford Centre Floor Plan

Manchester Airport – Terminal 3

Manchester Airport – Terminal 1

One clue as to the commercial profitability of both shopping malls and airports, is in the fact that 'The Peel Group', who own the Trafford Centre in Manchester, also own Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Durham Tees Valley Airport, and Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield. "The Peel Group is one of the leading property and transport companies in the UK with assets valued at over £4.5bn" (Peel Holdings, 2009). This very much reflects Lefebvre's work regarding the second circuit of exploitation; namely real estate. Peel Holdings are not retailers in their own right, but simply generate income through the building, sales, rental and management of commercial space, predominantly in the North of England.

In an interview with Respondent A, who is a retail manager at *Central Airport*, it was stated that "we've talked about how many people we convert, so pre-abolition of duty free it's about 36%. Up to last year, we were running about 14% and this year we're

only converting 10%, and it's our domestic travellers that are not buying, so that proportion that are flying perhaps on business or on leisure breaks to meet family, they are the guys that are not buying at all" (Respondent A, 09/07/2009:3).

This compares with statistics quoted by The Peel Group cited on their website; "£1.4bn shopping and leisure destination, 230 stores, 60 restaurants and cafes, just under 35 million visitors in 2008, 71% of visitors ABC1, over £100 average spend per visit" (Trafford Centre, 2009). As previously noted within this study, airports since 2004 have primarily generated more profit from retail than from airline related operations (Pearman, 2004). In the world of commercial property, if profit were not being made, then the spaces would cease to operate.

Figure 8

Source: J. Coulton

Figures 8 and 9 emphasises that the commercial edge enjoyed by the airport retailers is the opportunity for consumers to purchase tax free goods, although it must be noted that this is not available for domestic passengers purchasing goods to keep in this country.

One important factor regarding the commercial profitability of airports as compared to malls, is that there is no commonality with regard to the emphasis placed upon retail. In the larger international terminals, retail plays a big part in terminal operations, whereas in smaller regional airports, whose demographic differs greatly, retail, and fundamentally, the type and variety of retail, plays a lesser role in the airports overall income generation. It could be argued that this is also evident in malls, with some opting for designer stores, whilst others choose lower cost outlets. The significant difference here however, is that whilst in the mall, the number and style of stores may vary, the primary source of income will still be from retail space.

Airport terminals have a variety of functions, with retailing being only one such function.

In the interview with Respondent A cited previously, it was noted how the retail and airline operations are not without association:

> "Yes, (pause) the *West Central* passenger, you've got a very, especially with the split in terminals that they had, you had a very high level of business travellers, (erm) and although we still have a business traveller here, not in the volumes we had at *West Central*. I think it would be fair to say you have long haul out of *West Central* in a higher number, and therefore perhaps, you have a more affluent passenger going through *West Central.* There is a (erm) bigger base here (erm) on our low-cost carriers, and the passenger profile reflects that…..it is dependent upon the carrier, (erm) you know, with BMI Baby and Easyjet, they're actually the people who travel on those are still fairly affluent, and (erm) we manage to still get quite a good yield from those passengers, with the introduction of Ryanair a few years ago, it was very much a different passenger type or a different mentality and the spend on those flights are dramatically less than the other low-cost carriers, and yes, the impact of the one bag rule, (erm)

has had a negative impact on our business" (Respondent

A, 09/07/2009:2)

Whilst there appears to be a body of literature which is directly concerned with the impact of the introduction of low-cost airlines to the financial viability and profitability of routes, there is little that focuses upon the airport itself. Francis et al. (2003) does examine the impact of low-cost carriers on two specific anonymised European airports. They highlight the necessary change in the relationships between airports and airlines, airlines and passengers, and airports and passengers as a result of the introduction of low-cost airlines in Europe. "Airports are increasingly seeing the importance of viewing passengers as customers because they generate non-aeronautical revenue, but depend on the airlines to bring in the passengers" (Francis et al., 2003:267). Francis et al. (2003) utilise 1999 to 2001 data, which clearly defines an increase in passenger numbers at those airports where low-cost airlines operate. More recent observations seem to suggest that this may have been a peak, which is now declining into the second decade of the Twenty-First Century;

> "According to official statistics from the UK CAA the
> country's airports have recorded an average fall of 10%
> in passenger numbers for the first six months of the year,
> with none of the top 25 facilities reporting positive
> growth….outside of the top 25, some airports
> experienced even more dramatic drops, most notably
> Durham Tees Valley where passenger numbers more than
> halved from 323,182 in the first half of 2008 to just

148,888 in the same period this year" (Airports of the

World, 2009, Issue 26:4).

During my fieldwork in various airport terminal buildings, I observed an informal

demarcation between passenger types, and the direct influence this has upon the types

of retailer who will choose to site a store within a particular airport terminal. Francis

et al (2003) note that low-cost operators occasionally opt to base their services out of

smaller, often more provincial airports, who will often provide financial incentives

for their patronage, and this impacts upon retail, and the mall-like status of the

particular airport terminal. For example, they cite the example of Ryanair's

relationship with Charleroi Airport, Belgium (Figure 10).
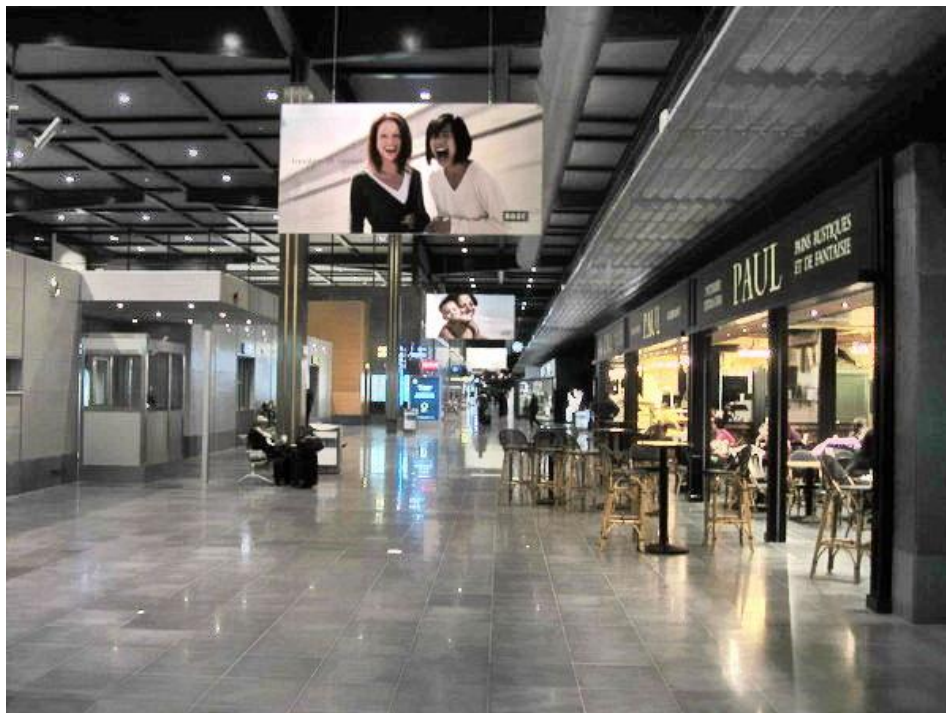
Figure 10

Source:

K. Sampławski, 2008

Figure 10 highlights the stark nature of the terminal at Charleroi Airport, where the

prominent facilities are catering. This is very much in keeping with EMA, and more

specifically, the area by gates 1-5, where the majority of the cheaper airlines have

their gates, and the stark nature of this area is highlighted in Figure 11.
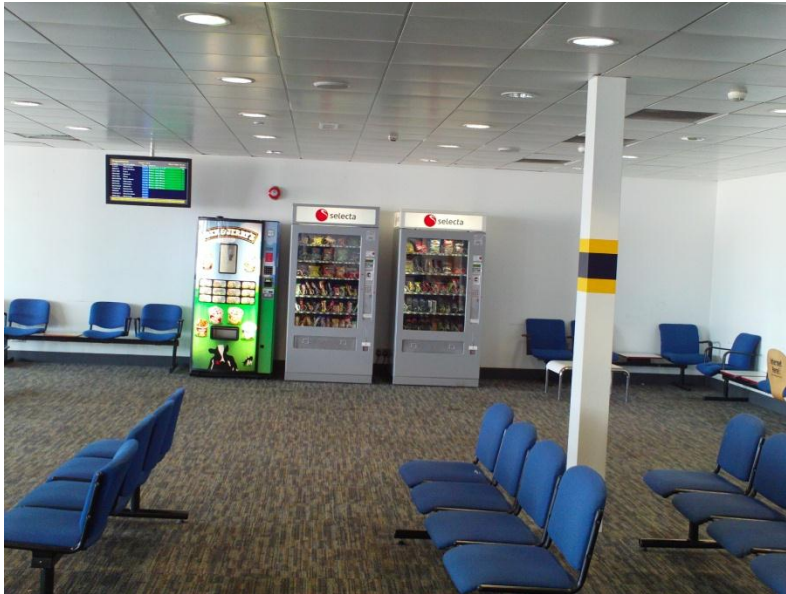
Evidence suggests however, that within Belgium, it is Brussels Airport (Figure 12) that has greater ambitions to be a mall; "Brussels Airport opened a new shopping centre on September 25, providing travellers with 20 additional retail outlets, bars and restaurants in Pier A" (Airports of the World, 2008, Issue 20:8).
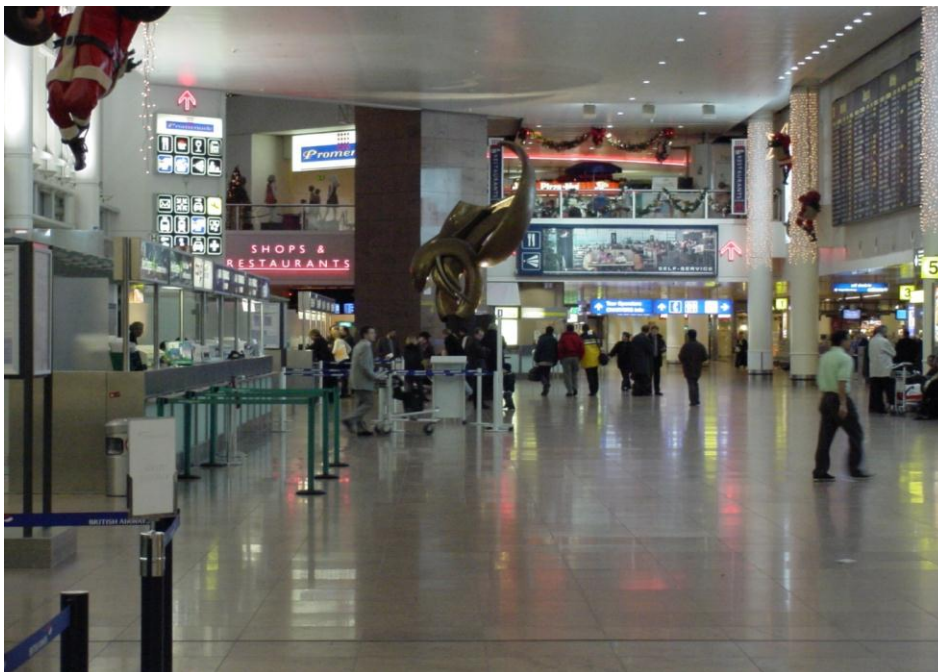
As highlighted by Respondent A (09/07/2009), different airlines have varying policies regarding luggage allowances for example, which will have a direct effect upon what people will buy. Such restrictions do not apply within the mall. Similarly, within the mall there are few time restrictions, with the obvious exception of opening hours, although within the larger mall, these tend to be longer, whereas airline passengers will only ever spend a specific amount of time in the terminal prior to boarding, and without delays, this is usually quite a limited length of time. Once again, Respondent A (09/07/2009:2) stated that they had been involved in research previously, which assessed just how short this period of 'dwelltime' actually is: "research that I was involved in a few years ago over at *West Central*, actually denoted that passengers, once they've cleared security, spend on average about 35 minutes in the departure lounge, and of that time they'll probably decide to eat, go to the toilets and decide to shop". It must be noted here, that this research does not appear to be available for scrutiny, and as such its validity cannot be assured. It will also be interesting to establish how this time period may or may not have been affected by increased security checks.

The characteristic of commercial profitability is key here, despite it seeming to be obvious in an epoch of dominant capitalism. If this is being utilised in order to determine the 'mallness' of the airport terminal, then it is clear that they are similar spaces indeed. They certainly share the need to be profitable, but this is true of the majority of commercial ventures in contemporary society, but their drive for profitable income is driven by the demographic of consumers who utilise the space. In the same way that certain consumption spaces contain a majority of budget stores as indicated in Figure 13, then the same is true of airport terminals.

Figure 13

Source: J.Coulton

Malls who attract a wealthier demographic of consumer, such as the Mall of America, or the Trafford Centre for example, contain more up-market stores, and this is reflected in airport terminals. The key sociological interest here relates to access and exclusion, in that whilst the mall is inclusive in theory, they are not in practice (Goss, 1999, Kowinski, 2000); the same is true of the airport. Many passengers will access certain provincial terminals taking budget or holiday charter flights, but far fewer will ever experience Chicago O'Hare or London Heathrow Terminal 5.

4.2.3 *Inclusive Space For All Of The Community*

It has to be stated at this stage that neither the mall nor the airport terminal could be considered as being an inclusive space for all the community as envisaged by Victor Gruen in the 1950s. It is certainly prudent to examine the inclusiveness of both spaces however.
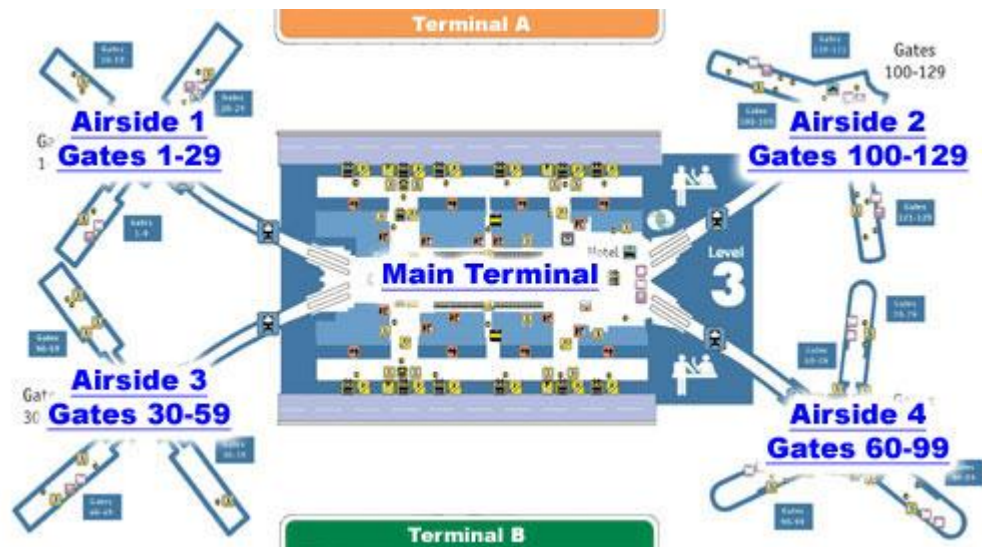
Figure 14

Source – www.orlandoairports.net

Floor Plan – Orlando Airport

Figure 14 clearly shows what is the exception to the rule here, with Orlando Airport's landside and airside shopping mall. This is not to suggest in any way, as previously

noted, that a mall of any type is inclusive; however there is the creation of the airport as a destination in itself. It is equally important to note however, that being in the landside mall at Orlando airport, does not mean that you are in the airport; there is a distinct proximity barrier here and this can be seen clearly in Figure 14. The Florida Mall, Orlando Airport is more akin to the Westfield Mall at the London Stratford Olympic Park in terms of feel and appearance (see Figures 15 and 16), and access to the mall does certainly not result in automatic access to an airside shopping experience

Florida Mall – Orlando Airport

Figure 15

Source – www.tripadvisor.com

Westfield Mall – Stratford Olympic Park

The rationale behind Gruen's desire to develop an inclusive consumption space was very much based upon the perceived exclusivity of the 1950s American department store (Hardwick, 2004). This perception was however built upon the suggestion that the excluded group were those whom resided within the suburbs. It may well have been the case that within certain of the larger department stores, there was an elitist or exclusionary atmosphere against the lower middle classes, but to image that creating a space that accommodated this social group is in itself, still neglecting to acknowledge the large section of the population for whom, even life in the suburbs is unattainable. Gruen's designs did achieve his aims, but this does not amount to anything close to 'inclusivity'. Malls the world over are policed by forces of private guards, and this is not just in the hope of preventing crime, but is also part of maintaining a certain 'exclusivity'. The Trafford Centre prides itself on its demographic of ABC1, and this is by definition excluding a significant percentage of

the population. As we will note more closely in further reading, the placement of malls on the edge of the town or city in many cases, is not accidental or arbitrary. Malls tend to be situated in places where only those with transport or significant resources can get to. Whilst the mall prides itself on its attraction and tourist qualities, it does not encourage unprofitable lingering. The private nature of the space is also enforced, by ensuring that undesirable groups are refused entry, or removed from the site if entry is gained. Such groups are unaccompanied children, large single sex groups, the homeless, and any group whom may cause discomfort or concern for those ABC1 consumers, for whom the space is actually designed. Despite Gruen's desire for inclusion, Shields (1992) suggests that the "genealogy of the mall has two roots, the luxurious arcades built for the European bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century and the emporia or department stores in which mass produced household commodities and clothing became available in settings designed as palaces of consumption" (Shields, 1992:3).

Given that the mall appears to be exclusive rather than inclusive, can the airport be any more inclusive? Despite claims that the recent prevalence of cheaper airlines has opened up global travel to the population, there is still a significant percentage of the population who can and will not travel via air, and not necessarily through fear. Whilst certain airlines may offer 'cheap' flights, the definition of 'cheap' is particularly subjective. It may well be the case that the cheaper the cost of the flight, increased opportunities to fly may be available to those on lower incomes, however this view appears to ignore the fact that few people fly with no other purpose than the flight itself. The flight is more of an integral part of some other event, such as a holiday or a meeting, and without this, any flight seems meaningless. I have been

unable to determine if any study has been conducted into the social stratification of airline passengers, in the same way that the Peel Group appear to have carried out within the Trafford Centre. Conducting a study of this magnitude is also beyond the realms of this research; I would predict that the ABC1 demographic of the mall is not too dissimilar to that in the airport. Where there is a prevalence of cheaper airlines, there is evidence of a different consumer, as noted previously from the interview with Respondent A. *Central Airport* has flights offered by Ryanair, Easyjet, BMI Baby, and Jet2.com as its majority. As a result, it has fewer shoppers and subsequently fewer shops. It is therefore possible that by increasing inclusivity, it becomes less like a mall.

It is evident that both malls and airports exist as highly stratified spaces, with clear demarcations as to who, or more pertinently who is not welcome within such a space. The airport demonstrates a greater level of this division within its terminal buildings however. Both malls and airports appear to have limits of inclusion set at specific levels, which exclude certain sections of society outright. This is not akin to a Charles Murryesque underclass, but is more apparent and less divisive than this; this is a group in society whom are not able to join in with this capitalist economic activity, not a group who choose not to partake. As already noted, the introduction of cheaper air fares did not suddenly bring the poorest within society into the bracket of 'potential passenger'. This is true in Europe and the United States, and is therefore even more appropriate in other developing nations around the world. The key difference between the mall and the airport however, is that once one achieves the status of being a mall user, obvious stratification ends. It is certainly true to suggest that the shops that individuals will patronise during their visit may differ as a result of

income and social status; it may even be true to suggest that the mall one chooses to visit may vary depending upon similar factors, but those whom enter a mall, and are identified by the mall owners and operators as desirable, have achieved a particular status. Those whom are seen as undesirable are ejected. Within the contemporary airport terminal though, there are clear divisions within the terminal building itself, which classify passengers into specific stratified groups. The obvious division occurs at the 'concourse or executive lounge' level.

Figure 17

Source – J. Coulton

The Etihad Lounge – Heathrow T4

De Botton (2009) goes so far as to imply that the airport terminal demonstrates the existence of a meritocracy, based upon whereabouts in the terminal you are seated. "The question of why, if one was in any way talented or adept, one was still unable to earn admittance to an elegant lounge was a conundrum for all economy airline passengers to ponder in the privacy of their own minds as they perched on hard plastic chairs in the overcrowded and chaotic public waiting areas of the world's airports" (De Botton, 2009:69). This elitist and blinkered view is sadly akin to

Margaret Thatcher's statement in the 1980s, alluding to the fact that men of a certain age, still reliant upon busses, could consider themselves to be failures. De Botton (2009) is suggesting that the inability to engage in the VIP departure lounge represents the same failure as the reliance upon public transport. It is more appropriate to talk of the airport as a stratified space, in which even the economy passengers on low-cost airlines, can consider themselves to be successful.

4.2.4 *Leisure / Amusement Space*

Metroland – Metro Centre, Gateshead

Figure 18

Source – J. Coulton

The Mall of America – Minnesota USA

The previous images above indicate that a design feature of some of the world's largest and most notable malls is leisure and amusement. The malls identified here actually contain theme parks. It must be noted that not all malls include a theme park, quite the contrary. A design feature of all malls however is leisure and amusement space. This may take the form of a themed food court, an entertainments and events programme, or may simply involve the inclusion of a multiplex cinema within the mall itself. Airport terminals however, as noted in Chapter 1 on airport history and design, are often designed around the concepts of function and form. Despite the fantasy and futuristic nature of some of the more recent airport developments, the terminal space still has a requirement to act as an international border, a waiting room, and more pragmatically, as a passenger processing centre. This appears to prohibit the inclusion of roller-coasters for example. On a practical level, passengers

within the terminal are required to hear flight and security announcements, and this seems unlikely in a theme park setting. Many airport terminals have small areas containing gaming machines, such as the one shown at East Midlands Airport (Figure 20) and Gatwick Airport (Figure 21).

Figure 20

Source – J. Coulton

Figure 21

Source – J. Coulton

Even in these areas, the machines are generally more sedate, and certainly have limited volume. In this image, a dancing game is visible, and such machines tend to be somewhat louder in volume than other games, and yet within the airport terminal setting, it remains relatively sedate and quiet. I observed several of these amusement areas in a variety of airports, and surprisingly they appear to be under-utilised by customers: surprising because waiting alongside anxiety would present an ideal setting for gaming. It did appear that many passengers carried hand-held gaming machines for the flight, and thus were content to use these instead of paying for the arcade machines, although it must be noted that throughout the fieldwork observations, the use of video games of any type was limited. What was equally as common, was the engagement with a puzzle book. It has not been possible to confirm the reason for this satisfactorily, but one reason for this favouring of pen-and-paper puzzles over hand-held gaming machines may be due to the restriction on the carrying of electronic equipment onto aircraft.

From a consumption perspective, the mall provides a controlled and secure environment for shoppers to dwell at their leisure. Conversely within the airport terminal, consumers have a limited time for shopping. It is clearly the case that some passengers will browse or shop as a means of passing the time that they have prior to boarding, but this is not the same. In this case, it may be more appropriate to see the airport shopper as amusing themselves rather than indulging in a leisure activity. Alain De Botton (2009:61) in his recent week spent at Heathrow Airport, had a very interesting comprehension of airport retail:

> "It was only after several days of frequenting the shops that
>
> I started to understand what those who objected to the

dominance of consumerism at the airport might have been complaining about. The issue seemed to centre on an incongruity between shopping and flying, connected in some sense to the desire to maintain dignity in the face of death".

This seems to indicate that shopping is in fact far from a leisurely pursuit, but instead some vulgar necessity which should not be undertaken in the potential event of death. This is far too nihilistic a view of air travel, and rather too pompous an attitude to consumption. It would be more appropriate to examine the use of consumption by the airport operators as a means of anxiety relief, or more pertinently, to question why the airport operators choose to capitalise on the fear of airline passengers. Interviews with the Operations Director, the Terminal Operations Manager, and the Retail Operations Manager at EMA failed to provide a suitable answer to this issue of the airport utilising consumption as a tool for stress management amongst passengers. Each of these principle decision makers within the airport highlighted the fiscal benefits of consumption, and they unanimously suggested that they had never considered airport retailing in this way.

To adopt a more Lefebvrian approach, those whom exploit real estate, specifically airports, are also adding a third circuit of exploitation: fear. There must be more than fright that leads passengers to shop however, as we now see increasingly large consumption spaces appearing in large railway stations around the world. This too is not a new practice, as shopping was an integral part of the design for New York's Grand Central Terminal, which was built in the 1930s. Belle and Leighton (2000) note that at the time of building Grand Central, it was noted that "there is nothing like

travel to stimulate the gland of expenditure" (Belle & Leighton, 2000:165). Leisure and amusement were also the key factors for the inclusion of bars and restaurants within the terminal, and this is even more evident today, with the terminal being a destination in its own right for eating and drinking (Figures 22 and 23).

Figure 22

Source – J. Coulton

Figure 23

Source – J. Coulton

Airside departure lounges can never be destinations in their own right though, as access is not possible without a flight, and as such, cannot be designed to be leisure spaces, particularly due to security and border restrictions noted previously.

It appears that whilst airport terminals are not leisure spaces in the way that a mall may be considered to be, they are indeed conceived spaces, designed to further the

capitalist exploitation of society. Malls and airports are not sites of commodity transfer which happened to adapt or reproduce into a leisure space as Castells may argue, but are instead spaces produced for such practices. Within the airport terminal however, there is the potential for the added dimension of the capitalisation of fear. If the aim of airport operators was to reduce anxiety for waiting passengers, this could be achieved through the use of music, art, or other non-profit making exercises, however consumption appears to be their 'leisure' activity of choice.

4.2.5 *Perceived Space Of Safety*

Figure 24 can hopefully demonstrate the 'perceived' nature of safety, as it is unethical and irresponsible to take images of live security operations within such sensitive spaces at this time. It is also illegal to take images of airport security clearance spaces, thus accounting for the lack of such images. The exception is the following image of East Midlands Airport, which is of a secondary security zone, situated between the security area and gates 1 to 5. This area is specifically designed for use by the local constabulary, and not passport control or airport security. This area is rarely utilised currently, as it was intended to add a secondary level of security for certain specific flights which no longer operate out of East Midlands Airport.

Figure 24

Source: J. Coulton

The notion of 'perceived space' here is not fundamentally a Lefebvrian one. The shopping mall attracts consumers on the basis of safety; from parking ones car to the absence of 'undesirables', and the comfort of knowing that parties can be safely reunited in the event of separation. Much of this safety comes at a cost; exclusion. The modern airport terminal is immeasurably more exclusive than any mall in this sense. Safety within the airport is multifaceted, in the sense that there is constant surveillance as we would find within the mall, but there is the added factor of the rigorous personal security checks which are conducted on every individual who is airside; passengers, staff and operators. The airport terminal often also serves as an international border, and as such is particularly strict as to whom it admits.

Throughout my observations (09/07/09, 10/11/09 & 14/02/10), I identified three key characteristics about individuals within the airport airside terminal building. Firstly,

most people are who they claim to be. Without drifting into a fantasy world of secret agents, or into the realm of global terrorism, we can rest assured that people who are forbidden to depart from a specific country, are not within this space. This also applies to all staff regardless of their role. Having endured the strict security procedures to obtain airside clearance as a staff member, or in my case, a researcher, I can state with certainty that this is far more rigorous a check than any passenger endures. This is not limited to the application process either, as the security screening is always far more stringent through the staff channel, than through passenger channels. This creates an issue for those whom are employed at the airport, and this will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter. Irrespective of the tight security at a mall, this level of safety can never be assured, in both the customers and the staff employed at or by the mall. The second characteristic relates to purpose. Everyone without exception in the departure area of an airport has a clear and distinct purpose; passenger, retail employee, ground staff, air crew, or management. All of the staff, regardless of their position, are legally bound to display their passes unobstructed at chest height at all times whilst airside. Passes of different colour denote the areas to which they are allowed access, and on the reverse of each ID holder, there is a separate card giving clear instructions on how to challenge the validity of any badge holder. Not only do people have a purpose, their movements are predictable, to an extent. For example, you know when someone's flight is departing, thus they are deemed to have left the building. Passengers who have checked in for a flight, and then subsequently do not board that flight commit a serious security breach, and this is identified instantly through the double-checking of each flights passenger manifest. Staff are not only predictable because of their employment status, but passes are always swiped in and out of each zone, thus alerting the authorities as to who is

where and when. My position as a researcher was possibly the least predictable of all of those within the terminal. Much of my research has been carried out via the status of passenger; spending time in the terminal before and after flights. At EMA however, where I was a badge wearer, I could be anywhere within the terminal. My position would be known, but my purpose was often unclear. This level of security is again not evident in the shopping mall. Finally, increased passenger and staff scanning results in confidence that others within the terminal are not in possession of anything that could be construed as a threat to their own or others safety. At the time of writing, this is a topic of particular interest, following an alleged attempt to conceal explosives in undergarments by a passenger on a flight to the United States at Christmas, 2009. This has led to the widespread introduction of the full body scanner at certain airports around the world, in an attempt to increase this level of certainty. Whilst it is perceived that the mall does not pose as significant a terror threat as an aircraft, it is true that malls are often placed on alert as being potential terrorist targets. Despite this, such invasive security measures have not been introduced at malls, and the reasons for this appear to be clear; people would avoid shopping at the mall because of inconvenience, invasion into personal privacy, and fear of attack. This does not seem to apply to airports in the same way, because if people wish to travel, particularly globally, there are fewer options. It is true to suggest however that there were significant reductions in those choosing to fly following September 11th 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre.

The question that must be asked in both the mall and the airport, is for whose benefit is the security? It appears that the prohibition of those labelled as 'undesirables' is more in the interest of those with commercial interests. The issue of state borders and

international terrorism are far too extensive to cover here, but nevertheless, there are questions surrounding the legitimacy of such harsh restrictions governing the entry and departure of individuals into certain countries. The distinction between the mall and the airport in this case comes down to the contrasts between covert and overt surveillance and security; a distinction which differentiates them entirely.

4.2.6 *Choreographed Pedestrian Movement*

Pedestrian movement within the mall is very different to the 'sidewalk ballet' observed by Jane Jacobs on the organic streets of New York, if for no other factor than the level of choreography involved. Whilst Jacobs may have observed a grace, poise and aesthetic beauty to the movement of people on the undisciplined pavements of the city, the movement of people around the shopping mall is far from accidental or undisciplined; it is in fact fervently choreographed. The dangers of having many stores in such large spaces and with many levels, is that there is a risk of unequal or indeterminate footfall, and this would never be acceptable, as store owners would not be prepared to take such a risk.

The Trafford Centre, Manchester

Meadowhall Mall, Sheffield

Westfield Mall, Olympic Park, Stratford

Figure 27

Source – J. Coulton

As previously noted, mall design incorporates an intricate plan to ensure that all areas of the mall are visited by as many consumers as possible; strategically placed benches, cafes, elevators, escalators, and fountains to name but a few. The previous images demonstrate this in the mall, but also identify that similar choreography is evident within the airport terminal too. The Manchester Airport group, who own Manchester, East Midlands, and Bournemouth airports, have recently instigated internal design changes to their airside terminals to maximise footfall, particularly through the larger Duty Free stores. This was first achieved at East Midlands Airport with the introduction of the 'yellow brick road' through the duty free area. The terminal has undergone renovation in 2008, and now passengers making their way from security to gates 16 to 23 must pass through the 'Biza' duty free shop (Figures 28 & 29).

East Midlands Airport

Figure 28

Source – J. Coulton

East Midlands Airport

119

Figure 29

Source - J. Coulton

The only exception to this is at busy periods, when East Midlands are forced to operate a second security checking area, which bypasses this entire section of the terminal, bringing passengers out closer to the gates, and adjacent to only a few shops. Passengers making their way to gates 1 to 5 do go through a small retail area, but do not necessarily pass through the 'Biza' store, unless by choice. Interestingly, these stores are the more utilitarian of those found in the airport, selling books, bottled water, holiday essentials and so on. This can be seen in Figure 30. Gates 1 to 5 are primarily used by Ryan Air, Easyjet, and BMI Baby; note the earlier discussion of commercial profitability. Whilst this redesigning of the terminal retail space has significantly increased the choreography that exists at East Midlands, it did not come without its challenges. Initially passengers would reach the store and be unsure as to which direction they should follow. This was addressed by increasing the amount of signs indicating the route through to the gates.

East Midlands Airport

Figure 30

Source – J. Coulton

This however was still insufficient, as passengers were still apprehensive about entering a store as a through-route. This brought about the introduction of the 'yellow brick road' in order to clarify the route. This model has now been copied at Manchester Airport in Terminals 1 and 2. There is still evidence that the operators feel that this choreography is insufficient, and they bolster this with large amounts of wall and floor advertisements (Figures 31, 32 and 33).

Figure 31

Figure 32

Airport departure lounges must always be choreographed to some extent. Passengers must always pass through security and border check, and then depart from specific gates, and their ease of movement through and towards these is of paramount importance. It is important to note however that these are not spaces of flow in the Castellian sense. Firstly, Castells refers to the flow of information and not people, but there are indications that certain publications have adopted this concept, and replicated it in relation to passengers within airports. Fuller and Harley (2004) argue that "at the airport we move from point to point (immigration to departure gate), from sign to sign (Gate 76 to Seat 43K), link to link, and node to node, never really seeing the end – just new destinations" (Fuller & Harley, 2004:81). It is true that at the airport, we are bodies in transit, but within the airport terminal, we are choreographed to linger as well as move. Fuller and Harley do make an interesting point about the ways we move through airports, however we must recognise that they are not spaces produced simply for movement. They may have been once, but not anymore, and this

is almost universal. Airport terminals are now spaces produced for consumption, at least in part. This makes them more akin to the mall. Airport operators rely upon revenue from consumption, and in a space where specific movement is required in order to board the flight onto which one is booked, it is necessary to delay the process of 'immigration to gate'. This is achieved through careful planning and choreographic design.

4.2.7 *Fantasy Architecture*

The fantasy nature of mall architecture is part of the appeal, particularly in a postmodern society, whose tastes appear to favour fake over form. As noted by Kowinski (2002), "Alte Faust, promotional director for Tysons Corner Centre in Virginia, personally dyed baby elephants pink for the mall's Christmas parade. Her job, she told a reporter, is show business" (Kowinski, 2002: 106). The mall is now show business, and capitalism has succeeded in bringing about reliance upon hyperreality, or to cite Umberto Eco's 1998 work, has facilitated a 'faith in fakes'. Venturi et al. (1972) noted in relation to Las Vegas, although this works equally well here in a discussion regarding the mall, "essential to the imagery of pleasure-zone architecture are lightness, the quality of being an oasis in a hostile context, heightened symbolism, and the ability to engulf the visitor in a new role: vacation from everyday reality (Venturi et al., 1972: 53).

Trafford Centre, Manchester

Westfield Mall, White City. London

Trafford Centre, Manchester

Figure 36

Source – J. Coulton

Manchester Airport

Figure 37

Source – www.facebook.com

Whilst many contemporary airport developments have exhibited fantastic

architecture, in all meanings of the word, it appears to be far less vital for the airport

to provide this escapism noted previously with regard to malls; with the notable exception of the chandeliers within Manchester airport up until 2003 when they were removed and placed into storage (Figure 37). It is clear that airports are significant buildings, particularly for architects, who have chosen to utilise airport projects as their 'signature' style.

Denver International Airport

Figure 38

Source – J. Coulton

Los Angeles Airport

Figure 39

Source – J. Coulton

JFK Airport, New York

This is part of a historical progression, as railway stations in Europe and America were equally as architecturally significant in twentieth century history, as noted in Chapter 1. The architects desire to create a 'postmodern' masterpiece does not equate to the number of consumers who will visit however, as is more the case with the mall. In fact, the airport does not need to try too hard to become a 'vacation from everyday reality', as it is often for many an intrinsic part of that vacation. This is not to suggest that the effects upon consumption are reduced in any way, because we have already explored consumption as a leisure activity.

Irrespective of the external architectural design, the interior of an airport terminal has to satisfy a variety of functions, including border security as already noted. Similarly, again as already discussed, the internal design forms part of the choreography of

passenger movement. The important and often noticeable distinction at the airport is between the internal design of landside and airside areas. Most fantasy airport architecture greets the arriving passenger, and yet then immediately throws them into a hanger-like hall, with few or any notable design features. This is likely to be functional, as this is where there is the greatest concentration of passengers in any one place; however, the architectural features once through the check-in and security process are markedly different. Ceilings become lower, lighting becomes dimmed, corridors are narrowed whilst often being lined with stores, and once the departure lounge itself is reached, most airports reveal their key architectural feature: glass walls. Despite all previous suggestions that the airport terminal is consumption oriented space, this is the one key feature that sets the airport apart from the mall. Mall literature talks extensively about the use of glass, as previously highlighted, and yet this is almost always referring to the glass roof. Many airport terminals around the world, instead utilise glass for walls, and often this provides far more than natural light or a subliminal direction indicator to other stores. Whilst observing in airport terminals, I have noted on many occasions that the glass window which so often divides the terminal building from the apron, the area between the terminal and the runway, and beyond, serves as a distraction to other more consumption related activities. It is fair to accept that for those whom have a fear of flight, the glass wall serves to heighten any sense of anxiety, and also conversely that the sight of the planes themselves, can increase the vacation mood, and thus promote consumption as a leisure option. What goes on outside of the terminal building however, provides for some passengers, an interesting and less costly alternative to pass the time whilst waiting to board.

I suggested in my field notes (Wednesday 8th April, 09.30 hrs, EMA) that the scene beyond the glass resembled a live episode of 'Thunderbirds'. This was due in part to the strange nature of many of the vehicles visible on the apron, such as the tugs, step-trucks, the luggage tractors, catering vans with high-level boarding platforms and so on; even the coaches that transfer arriving passengers from plane to terminal are very different from those we witness on a daily basis.

Figure 41

Aircraft Tug Vehicle

Figure 42

Catering Vehicle

Airside Transfer Coach

The choreography that goes on within the walls of the terminal building is severely limited when compared to that going on beyond the glass. When the taking-off and landing of planes is added to this scene, it becomes fascinating. Respondent J informed me that despite their years spent working within the airport, it is almost impossible to resist looking at a plane which is about to take-off (Figures 44 and 45).

Figure 44

Take-off, East Midlands Airport

Apron – Manchester Airport

Apron – Tenerife South Airport

Source: Figures 44 - 46 - J. Coulton

The glass differentiates the airport from the mall far greater than any characteristic

examined thus far. Malls do not provide distractions from the fantasy they work so

hard to create; quite the contrary. It must be noted that in certain airports, notably Dublin and Palma International Airport, the shopping areas are not flanked by one glass wall, but are instead situated on the way to the gates. Within these two terminals however, the consumption space could not be described as a fantasy space.

Figure 47

Source – J. Coulton

Dublin Airport

4.2.8 *Private And Public Transport Links*

Malls rely heavily upon private and public transport links, particularly as most of the larger malls are situated away from residential areas and town or city centres. For the mall operators, the favoured mode of transport is the private car, and this is for several reasons. Firstly, ownership of a private car implies, although admittedly not always, a certain level of wealth. This hints at a discussion of the mall being a site of social inclusion. Secondly, the ability to drive to a mall suggests that at least one group member is of a certain responsible age, thus minimising the risks of groups of young people, whom may not only disrupt but who may also be less able to afford to consume. Thirdly, consumers with cars can purchase far more, as they have the facility to convey their purchases home far more easily than those on public transport who are unable to buy more than they can carry. Fourthly, consumers with their own

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mode of transport, are not restricted to timetables, and therefore have the ability to stay longer and later than those relying on public transport schedules. It is for these reasons that many malls offer free parking in order to attract car owners to visit. Public transport links are visible in malls, because for one example, not all staff employed within the mall are necessarily car owners. It does appear with many edge-of-town or out-of-town malls however, that whilst public transport links are present, they are not as convenient or cost-effective as they might be. For example, in Manchester (UK), there is a tram network that operates around not only the city centre, but also to various parts of the surrounding area, yet the tram does not run to the Trafford Centre.

It is essential for the smooth operations of the airport that people can be move to and away from the site with ease. As previously noted however, anyone at the airport without a purpose poses a potential risk to safety and security, and this is reflected in the precautions taken around airports to prevent vehicles from being used by terrorists for example, such as the attack on Glasgow airport in 2007 (Figure 48)

Figure 48 –Media Image

2007 Attack on Glasgow International Airport

This accounts for often very good rail, bus, taxi, and other public transport links to and from airport terminals.

Newcastle International Airport Metro Station

London Underground – Heathrow International Airport Terminal 4

Parking a private vehicle at the airport though, is very different from malls, in that whilst there is always adequate provision, this is a source of income for the airports themselves, and has become an ancillary business around airport sites.

East Midlands Airport – onsite Parking

Purple Parking – Heathrow International Airport

Airports generally have excellent road links, particularly if they also have significant cargo and freight operations, such as East Midlands and Manchester airports in the U.K. Airports, like malls, require excellent public and private transport links, and yet it appears that public transport plays a significantly more utilitarian role at the airport than it does at the mall. The similarity is that private cars equate to profit, either through those who own them purchasing more and for longer in the mall, or parking them within the airport terminal for large fees.

4.2.9 *Catering Facilities*

Introduction of the food court into the mall was almost instantaneous; food and drink provide the energy that consumers need in order to carry on shopping. Themed food courts are congruent with the rest of the mall environment, although the themes do not necessarily have to run through from the mall to the catering area. For example,

the Trafford Centre in Manchester, U.K is a mosaic of themes, with the food court being based upon a cruise ship (Figures 54 & 55), complete with a ceiling which changes from daylight to darkness every hour.

Figure 54

Source – J. Coulton

Figure 55

Source – J. Coulton

A large number of individual food outlets, many of which are part of large multinational franchise brands, are situated around the 'lower and upper decks'. This has since been extended, seeing the creation of the 'Great Hall', sited directly behind the 'Orient' (Figure 56). The two themes are unconnected, however this appears not to interfere with operational matters or profits.

Figure 56

Source - J. Coulton

The Trafford Centre, like many other malls, also boasts several other themed 'street' areas dedicated to catering, including a New Orleans and Chinatown area. This once more is perpetuation of hyperreality. The food courts of the larger malls have now become destinations in their own right.

Catering within the airport plays an equally important role, however tends to be less themed, and from my observations, is more of a dynamic process. Many passengers take the opportunity to eat and drink prior to flight, and it appears that many do this either to fill the time consuming food and drink as opposed to other available goods. There are also more practical reasons why people choose to eat or drink pre-flight,

and these range from providing an alternative to aircraft food, which is now increasingly an option that passengers are rejecting, either due to quality or pricing issues, to providing artificial courage for those with a fear of flight. The fundamental differences between mall catering and airports however, are twofold. Firstly, the outlets within malls operate more predictable opening and licensing hours, whereas in the airport, there are opportunities to purchase all manner of foods and alcoholic beverages from very early in the morning, until just after the last departure.

On my first morning of observation at East Midlands Airport (Wednesday 8th April, 2008), I witnessed individuals drinking beer, wine and whisky before 05.30 hrs. There had been an international football match the previous night in Manchester, and it was clear that some fans from this match were boarding an early flight back to Dublin. It was unclear whether the group of gentlemen drinking so early in the morning were continuing from the previous night, or whether this was simply an early start to a new days celebrations. This leads on to the second distinction between mall and airport catering, in that mall outlets maintain a similar status and ambiance constantly; this is in fact an essential part of being in the mall, and is all a constituent part of the hyperreal illusion. In the airport however, I spent a great deal of time observing near the main bar and food area in the main departure area close to Gate 16 (Figure 57),

Figure 57

Source: J. Coulton

And one noticeable feature was the changing nature of the space. This change resulted primarily from the range of flights waiting to board, and the types of passengers that were in the area at any one time. I classified the pending departures into four types; young holiday, cruise flights, strictly business, and low-cost stag and hen. These are clearly observations, and passenger manifests were not statistically analysed to verify this data. Young holiday flights were tour company operated, to destinations such as Majorca, Tenerife, Alicante and Faro. The majority of passengers on these flights were families with children, or younger couples, with obvious exceptions. Cruise flights were also tour company operated, to destinations such as Barcelona, Madeira and also Majorca. The passengers on these flights were predominantly older couples. Strictly business flights were scheduled flights, often on smaller aircraft, to destinations such as Geneva, Paris, Stockholm and Oslo. Passengers on these flights were predominantly individuals dressed in business attire and travelling alone. Low-cost stag and hen flights tended to be operated by cheaper carriers, such as Ryan Air, Easyjet and BMI Baby, and were to destinations including Prague, Dublin, Budapest and Warsaw. Passengers on these flights included larger single-sex groups, clearly on stag or hen party vacations. These observations were made increasingly possible due to the smaller number of flights and passengers at East Midlands Airport, however I have since observed the same processes at other larger airports. The differences this made to the terminal, were based upon which types of group were prevalent within the bar area. In the time period running up to a stag and hen flight, the television sets within the bar would play music television, and the volume would be relatively high. This gave the entire area of the departure lounge a sound and feel of a city centre on a busy weekend evening; loud music, raised voices, clinking of glass and so on. Once this flight has boarded, peace descends upon

the area, due to the fact that the next departures were cruise flights. The televisions change to news channels and the volume is dramatically reduced, the raised voices disappear, replaced by a dull hum, and the clinking glass is now the sound of cups upon saucers, giving the entire area the feel of a motorway service station. When a young holiday flight is due, the sound of children and children's television fills the space. These changes happen suddenly, and the change repeats itself many times during a twelve hour period. The change also appears to be accidental, almost as if the decision to change the television from news to music is automatic. It is not, but no staff member can account for it.

Catering within the airport is a key part of how the nature of the space is determined, although it will never become a destination in its own right. Theming of the food areas is not always obvious, at this is potentially because the airport departure lounge is a 'real' space that needs no further simulation.

Figure 58

Source – J. Coulton

East Midlands Airport – Upper Floor Food Court

For Marx, commodities were fetishised once their utility value was exceeded by a higher value based upon desire; once things are seen as being of greater importance than their use. Lefebvre (1991) suggests that the same process occurs with space. The mall is an exemplar of such spatial fetishisation.

Figure 59

Source: J. Coulton

Figure 60

Source – J. Coulton

The Mall of America, Minnesota USA

Shopping malls are sites for selling commodities, and yet the mall is far more than this in reality. Kowinski (2002) talks of the mall as a place to 'be' as well as a place to 'shop', and this has occurred because of the fetishisation of space. The primary function of the mall however, is to be an area where goods can be purchased. The fetishisation of commodities ensures that malls thrive in times of economic boom. Even in times of economic recession, the mall maintains its appeal for many, despite the closure of many stores.

The airport terminal is also a fetishised space, but more so by those who design and build them. As previously noted in the examination of fantasy architecture, architects worldwide aim to design the latest airport as a signature to their style and achievement. This design rarely enhances the process of passing through an airport, in terms of baggage check-in, security clearance, boarding the aircraft and so on, so is it correct to suggest that the airport is fetishised by the passenger? It is certainly the case that many holiday passengers will perceive that their holiday begins once they are at the airport, and it is of interest why this should be so. In the following section relating to the airport as a transitional space this concept will be examined further. The airport is no longer, and has not been for many years, simply a space that facilitates a border security check, and processes potential passengers, and this was surely its utilitarian aim. On this basis, it is clear that the airport is fetishised by more than simply the architects who plan them. They are truly perceived spaces which exist beyond the abstract, where the possible can be realised. The following section will examine whether the airport is a transitional space as the mall is suggested to be, however part of the process of fetishisation, particularly with reference to the airport, derives from the anticipation of how one will experience it once there. For many,

specifically holiday or leisure travellers, the airport provides a 'gateway' to elsewhere, and for this reason, becomes a space that offers far more than luggage check-in, and international border facilities. Few if any air passengers are ambivalent to flight, even the frequent fliers, as noted by Gottdiener (2001 a) anticipate flight with heightened emotions of anxiety, fear, excitement, anticipation, and so on. The airport has taken on the air of the space with such emotions commence. The mall is a fetishised space because of what it actually delivers in real terms; consumption but in a hyperreal, themed, assimilated environment. The airport is fetishised because of the heightened state of reality it creates, however subjective that reality may be.

4.2.11 *Site Where Individual Sense Of Self Undergoes Transition*

The thesis contains an examination of the concept of the airport as a transitional space; however in context here, the airport is being examined against the mall as a site of transition. We have also, previously within this chapter, noted Kowinski's (2002) mall and theatre metaphor, which provides a good starting point for this examination. Attending the theatre only really works on the level that one immerses oneself in the story, and this involves a removal of oneself from reality. The same is true of the mall, and according to Mark Gottdiener (2001a), the theme park and the airport also. The concept of transition implies that there is more than a simple crossing of a threshold, from work to shop for example, but that instead there is a change in ones sense of self as this threshold is crossed. To use the same example therefore, suggests that one moves from being a worker to a consumer. This transition is fundamental for the shopping mall to be successful. It is indeed this transition that allows the fetishisation of the space, as previously argued. Unless the individual

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undergoes the transition to consumer, then the mall becomes a utilitarian space in which to purchase goods. This also works on the same level within the theme park, where roller-coasters simply become fast and meaningless modes of transport that return you to the point of departure, unless you are transformed into a consumer, or in this case, a thrill-seeking consumer. For consumers who do not experience such a transition, the mall would be the worst place to purchase goods, as it would be overly busy and unnecessarily convoluted to be a fully functional and utilitarian space. Gottdiener (2001a:11) suggests that this transition also occurs at the airport, suggesting that an airport can "effect a change in existential status from people being immersed in the complex roles of everyday life to that of being a traveller, of someone escaping not only the bonds of earth but of daily existence as well".

During extensive periods of observation at many airports during this study, it appears that many passengers do undergo this change, as for many there is a pattern of behaviour that is not common to simply waiting for transport, in the way that one might wait for a bus or a train. It is also true that consumption of goods, or of food and drink is the key to this transition. Groups and individuals drinking alcoholic beverages at 6am is not a common activity, and even in some of the more developed railway terminals, where shops and restaurants are as prevalent as at some airports, waiting passengers are not indulging in this fashion. The fundamental difference at the airport however comes down to options. The individual who requires goods, but who chooses not to indulge in mall shopping, has alternative options as to how this consumption can occur; on-line, in a more traditional town centre setting to name but two alternatives. For the individual wishing to fly however, there are no alternatives to the prescribed airport necessary for their flight. This suggests that whilst the mall

can be avoided by those not wishing to undergo this transition, the airport can not be avoided in the same way. This is not necessarily to suggest that a transition in the sense of self has not occurred in those passengers choosing not to indulge in consumption practices whilst waiting to board, but does suggest that this transition can be manifested in a variety of ways. Passengers sitting quietly, may be fearful of flight, and may be experiencing turmoil, and this could well be described as undergoing a transition in ones sense of self; questioning ones mortality perhaps. The fundamental difference between the mall, the theme-park and the airport here, is how this transition is managed by the individual, and by the airport operators.

4.2.12 *Conclusion*

Whilst it is fair to suggest that malls and airport terminals share many characteristics, it is also clear that there are fundamental differences between the mall and the airport. Both sites are controlled environments in terms of heat and light, and yet the control that appears in the airport appears to be less manipulated. The glass walls allow daylight to flood into the terminal, and yet the controlled lighting of a mall is designed to maintain a level. Airline passengers leave at prescribed times, however malls want consumers to stay, and forget time. Changing natural light is too strong a reminder of passing time; a problem to be solved for mall owners, an irrelevance for airport operators. Airports and malls must be commercially profitable enterprises in twenty-first century capitalist society. Deregulation, private airline ownership and increased competition have resulted in the need for airports to compete or fail. Airports do still however generate income from flight operations, and do not rely on retail and leisure income to the extent that is often implied. Low-cost airlines have

created many issues for airports with regard to profitable operations, however this impact once more, has been exaggerated. The main difference between the mall and the airport with this regard rests upon the reliance upon income from real estate; airports perform other notable functions. Neither airports or malls are as inclusive as Victor Gruen would have wished, however whilst both are exclusive sites, airports are far more exclusive, despite the elitist popular myth that now anyone can fly. Airports exclude on many levels, predominantly through citizenship status, wealth and purpose. Malls and airports are both leisure sites, but it must be noted that airport terminal spaces are not designed, or in fact permitted to be primarily such spaces. Mall are now leisure destinations, whereas the airport, is often merely a site between leisure spaces, to adopt an approach more akin with Marc Auge (1995). Whilst both the mall and the airport are perceived spaces of safety, the difference lies in the level of safety, the type of surveillance, and the overt/covert nature of this operation. Airports are usually international borders, and as such operate a far stricter security regime than a mall, which often is concerned with protecting profit and not citizens. Both spaces are intricately choreographed, but yet again for different reasons. It is true that airports manipulate passengers towards consumption areas; however, much of the choreography within the terminal is for reasons of mass people-movement. Mall choreography is far more covert an operation; subliminal almost. Fantasy architecture is present at many malls and airport terminals, but once more, there are significant differences. Airports tend to have their fantasy architecture on the outside, with greater emphasis upon functionality within, whereas malls extend this fantasy into their interiors. This is a constituent part of the creation of illusion and simulation, designed to increase fetishisation and promote hyperreality. Transport links to malls and airports differ in terms of priority and function. Airports need people to get in and

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out quickly, whereas malls wish for consumers to arrive, purchase a great deal, stay a long and unprescribed amount of time, and then leave. The key similarity for both is the way in which the private motor vehicle is the source of profit, despite the differences in ways in which this revenue is achieved. Food courts appear in airports and malls, but once more, the primary distinction between the two is in relation to whether they become destinations in their own right, which of course, the airport con not accommodate. The other main difference, as noted previously, is the manner in which the nature of the clientele within the airport can significantly alter the nature of the space. Malls and airports are both fetishised spaces, taking on a far greater significance than their utilitarian function would imply. Airports do not appear to promote this fetishism quite so actively however, and the process seems to be more accidental, with malls being more reliant upon this. Whilst both sites can be seen as transitional spaces, not liminal, the distinction between them is subtle, as both set out to deliberately bring about this change. Changes in the sense of self within an airport may be the result of a recalling of fond holiday memories, or conversely because of a fear of flight. The Shift to consumer within the mall is pre-planned, deliberate, and essential for the successful mall to operate.

This does however promote an interesting discussion regarding the institutional nature of both spaces. Clearly neither are total institutions as set out by Goffman (1991), although both demonstrate the ability to 'transform' the individual into a manipulable, if not docile body. This does make the airport and the mall institutionalised spaces, but does not make them the same kind of institutionalised space. In many ways, the inclusion of shopping within the airport terminal is multi-faceted: the practices of the mall bring about changes in many who frequent them, both in terms of their consumption habits, and their transformation into passive

participants, and this is key to the success of the airport terminal. Passengers within the confined space of the terminal, are required to be passive and non-confrontational, and whilst the processing nature of the airport may promote agitation and impatience in many, the mall-like experience in most terminals leads to the required level of compliance and agreement. Fundamentally however, the mall is a site of profit and commodification, and this is also true in the airport terminal.

Chapter 5

Findings: Airports as Metaphors for the City

5.1 WHAT IS A CITY?

In order to begin to examine the ways in which the airport terminal may or may not be a metaphor for the city, it is deemed necessary to determine what a city is, and perhaps as pertinently, is not. Is it possible to define cities in terms of their physical geographical surface area, or the total population, or their cultural or historic significance? Are cities the same throughout all continents, and if not, how do they differ, and are these differences of fundamental significance for this study? As noted by Amin and Thrift (2002), "cities have become extraordinarily intricate, and for this, difficult to generalize" (p1).

5.2 CITIES AS SITES OF 'BELONGING'

Pile (1999) suggests that cities are distinguishable as spaces because of three specific characteristics: their density, as a result of the physical concentration of people, buildings and institutions; the heterogeneity of life that exists in such close proximity within them, and the variety of virtual and actual communication networks that flow through them. Pile believes that this 'spatialness' in some way makes cities legitimate sites for study. Orum and Chen (2003) somewhat paradoxically, suggest that cities are important sites for social scientists to study because of their 'placeness' and not their spatiality. As with the previous examination of space and place, and in fact, the concept of non-place, it is clear that space and place, while intrinsically connected, are also very distinct concepts. Orum and Chen (2003) argue that cities represent places, "that is, specific locations in space that provide an anchor and a meaning to who we are" (Orum & Chen, 2003:1). This notion is further examined by exploring

the associations between place and human nature. "Our sense of placeness only becomes meaningful through these connections. There are four of them: (1) a sense of individual identity, of who we are; (2) a sense of community, of being a part of a larger group, whether a family or a neighbourhood; (3) a sense of a past and a future, of a place behind us and a place ahead of us; and (4) a sense of being at home, of being comfortable, of being, as it were, in place" (Orum & Chen, 2003:11). Orum and Chen (2003:15) reinforce their suggestion that cities are of interest to sociologists by stating that "place, [in other words], is that special site, or sites, in space where people live and work, and where, therefore, they are likely to form intimate and enduring connections". The key message to come from this modern philosophical attempt to understand the city, is that whilst cities play a significant part in shaping the experiences of those whom live or work, or both, in them, this exercise in power is also reciprocal: those whom inhabit the city, can also influence the nature of the place itself. It is vital to acknowledge the influence of philosophy in this interpretation, even if this only serves to place into context the critique of the more ecological approach used by the Chicago School in the 1920s offered by Orum and Chen (2003). This appraisal of early urban sociology is based upon the perceived analogies utilised by Park and Burgess et al between humans and their surroundings, and animals and their natural habitats. It is clear that the relationship between society and human experience is very different to that of any other living organism, yet this assessment of the Chicago School does seem basic and ill-informed.

The key issue here, is to what extent, if at all, individuals or groups can form connections, intimate or otherwise, as suggested by Orum and Chen (2003), with airport terminals. These connections relate to the formation of community and belonging within the city, and yet this is a process involving time and engagement with the space, and with others whom share that space. Gottdiener (2001a) suggests as previously highlighted that the gathered crowd within the terminal building are interacting as if a community. Analysis of observation data gathered within terminal buildings around the world suggests that Gottdiener is confusing crowding with interaction. Crowds do gather, and interactions take place on a very superficial level between passengers within terminal buildings. The interaction however in every case, is one of necessity and a sense of being drawn together by instruction. The largest crowds within terminal buildings gather around the gate, primarily as soon as the departure gate is shown on video media, or once it is announced. Crowds form, and there is evidence of interaction, but this is more the tense interaction of conflict, than a sense of mutual appreciation or community. During observation at several UK airports, it was noted in the fieldwork journal that the crowds gather most around the FIDs, and this corroborates the work of Adey (2007). This gathering is one of expectation and anxiety, and not of sharing and community in this sense. The departure gate is a contested space, in the ways in which the crowd postures for position within the queue, and in the ways in which people attempt to lay claim to the seating areas. This is not community in any form, this is people forced together into an interaction with others, purely out of necessity. This interaction is in the majority of cases also futile, as the majority of flights are now allocated seating, and

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passengers are requested to pass through the gate in seating groups, thus rendering the queue pointless and ineffectual.

One area of the airport where counter-connection was observed, and it must be noted that this was not universal across the fieldwork, but was significant because of its setting, was at a bar in a UK International terminal (14/10/09). Whilst it cannot be argued that queuing for drinks at a bar is an intimate connection with a space, it can be considered to be an organised, and usually civil interaction with other customers and with the staff serving behind the bar. Certainly within the experience of the researcher, within the UK, the process of buying a drink is informal, yet effective. A melee forms around the bar, and individuals are served based upon a trust system. This system is clearly not always accurate nor fair, however this seems to be common practice and works in the majority of cases. At the very beginning of the fieldwork however, the researcher observed an orderly queue forming at a bar within the terminal. The bar had no obvious design differences to any other, in fact it was part of a chain of bars, and appeared to be little or no different to other bars of the same chain, which exist in towns and cities throughout the UK. There was no physical restraint or restriction, such as ropes or barriers, keeping customers in a single line, and yet this was very much the case. No customer in the 1 hour in which this was observed, perverted the queue, nor obviously challenged it verbally. Interaction between people waiting for drinks often demonstrates polite behaviour, permitting the informal process of buying a drink to go ahead without conflict, and often this results in over-polite gestures from some, but the single queue within this bar even removed this level of interaction. Customers waited in line, and waited for their turn, without acknowledgement of those either in front or behind. It can be assumed that this

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behaviour is a direct product of being in the airport setting, although it is acknowledged that this may not necessarily be a result of the physical space, but more a product of having queued several times prior to reaching this stage of the airport process. By this, it is meant that after passengers have waited in line to check in luggage, waited to clear passport control and security, and then finally reached the airside terminal building, then joining a queue is the accepted norm, and thus this pattern of behaviour continues beyond the formal process, into the informal: this is exaggerated because of the fundamentally informal nature of the space in question here.

5.2.2 *Belonging or routine?*

What was observed in many passengers whilst in certain UK airport terminals was routine, and the researcher has been careful not to confuse routine with connection or interaction. Many passengers clearly have knowledge of certain airports, and passengers boarding holiday flights and business travellers boarding flights to domestic or non-holiday destinations, demonstrated the greatest level of familiarity with their surroundings. For those who fly frequently, the routine of where to go and what to do, and the expectation of how to behave once airside, is commonplace. The researcher observed however that this results in even less opportunity for connection or interaction with the space or with others, as it is this group of passengers who clear security, sit in a particular space, away from bars or shops, and wait for their flight to be called.

The key themes that arose from the interviews held with staff employed in airside retail, were however, very much supporting Gottdiener's (2001a) notions of belonging and community. Every member of staff working in airside retail talked in terms of being part of a community, and belonging to this specific community: one that arrived at the terminal, went through the same, if not more rigorous security checks, stayed for many hours, and then left to go away, but come back and do it all again some other day. These respondents definitely form "intimate and enduring connections" (Orum and Chen, 2003:15) with their surroundings, however none of them saw the terminal in which they worked as being akin to that of a city.

JC   I mentioned previously about the concept of the airport being like a city or like a shopping mall, do you notice, working here, do you consciously think of those things, or do you think that now I've mentioned it you might see some kind of similarities?

A   I think when I worked at *West Central Airport*, I mean that airport never ever shut down, and it didn't matter what time of the day or the night I commuted in or out of that airport, it was still live and it was still vibrant and it was very much like a city in its own right. I think because *Central* is slightly smaller, it's more like a small village or a small town, (erm) and there's a lot of networking with the people that are at this airport; it's a much smaller friendlier based airport, whereas the *West Central* experience was very like a

big city. Nobody really spoke to one another, not much relationships going on, so it was definitely very different between the two airports.

<div align="right">(Respondent A 09/07/2009 p3)</div>

Respondent A worked within the retail area of the terminal, and was selected for interview as a result of their experience working within a variety of retail settings, including a number of different airport terminal buildings. The specific airports here are anonymised in the interests of confidentiality and integrity. This was a repeated theme throughout interviews with retail staff within one airport; however it is clear from Respondent A's experience of working in a larger airport, that this connection and belonging is not always present.

5.3 LYNCH (1984) AND THE 'SELF-PERCEPTION OF THE CITY'

5.3.1 *The cosmic city*

If it can be accepted that cities are places and spaces, and as such, are of interest to social scientists, then how do we define a city? Architectural historian, Spiro Kostof (1991) notes that the attempt to determine what cities are, and indeed how they began, evolved or materialised, is as old as cities themselves, whilst at the same time being diverse and indeterminable. Kevin Lynch (1984) strips away the political or the economic order that seems to influence early interpretations of cities, and instead focuses upon the prime motivation, or the self-perception of the city, and from this derives three categories of city that he terms 'normative models': cosmic, functional and organic. The 'cosmic' model of the city, or the 'holy' city, is planned in a way to

reflect the universe and gods. Lynch identifies that such cities are designed around a somewhat symmetrical grid, where the focus of power is found at the centre, often in the form of spiritual statuary. Space within the cosmic city is organised around hierarchy, and although Lynch is unclear about just which system of stratification is used here, we can surmise that this is religious or spiritual power.

5.3.2 *Spirtuality, statuary, and the airport terminal*

The researcher observed the terminal as a spiritual space, specifically in the manners in which individuals appear to be more conscious of their mortality prior to flying; however, this is somewhat removed from Lynch's (1984) early motivation for the city. Lynch argues that the city is born out of a spiritual centre, and that this then becomes the basis for the formation of a hierarchy. As noted previously, the history of flight, and then the airport is one born from something bordering on the spiritual. It is also true to suggest that as a site where individuals are waiting to board a plane, which then takes flight, defying both logic and gravity, the airport is somewhere where individuals reflect upon their mortality (Gottdiener, 2001a). At many airports, and this may be as a security measure, prayer rooms are situated landside, allowing passengers time for individual spiritual reflection prior to checking in. This is a logistical issue in many regards, because a plane is not permitted to take-off without any passenger whom has checked-in their luggage, and if a passenger passes into airside, and then decides not to fly, this creates a great deal of work for airside staff. It is certainly not accurate to suggest that the airport has spirituality at its centre.

Many airport terminals do contain statues, although the majority of these have either cultural references to the country or district in which the airport is situated, or they relate to the history of either flight or the airport itself. Some statuary does have spiritual references however, but again, these are more references to historical as opposed to current spirituality.

Figure 61

Vancouver BC Airport

Figures 61 & 62

Source: J. Coulton

Figure 62

Statues within the airport terminal have caused controversy in recent history, as the following article from The Independent newspaper, relating to the statues at Bangkok demonstrates.

Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport

Source: J. Coulton

Figure 63

"Thailand's main airport is to relocate 12 giant "demon statues" to boost the morale of staff who thought the figures brought bad luck, local media and officials said Tuesday. The statues at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport will move from the arrivals area to the check-in zone at a cost of around 1.7 million baht (51,000 dollars), said Airports of Thailand (AOT) president Serirat Prasutanond. "AOT has decided to move the statues to the check-in concourse to give passengers and other people a chance to appreciate the statues' beauty," he said in a statement. But according to the English-language Bangkok Post newspaper, airport director Niran Thiranartsin admitted the decision had partly resulted from complaints from airport staff. "The shopkeepers are blaming the 'demon statues' for the problems they have faced at the airport, which was seized late last year by demonstrators and supporters of the People's Alliance of Democracy" (PAD), the paper said. "The guardian spirit statues will be shifted from the inner zone of the passenger

terminal to the check-in area to 'improve morale' of people working at the airport," the report added. The anti-government PAD seized two of the Thai capital's airports in a crippling eight-day blockade late in 2008, which badly dented the kingdom's tourist-friendly image. Serirat presided over a religious ceremony at the airport Monday ahead of the relocation of the figures, which are modelled on 12 statues at Bangkok's Grand Palace. He said the move should be finished within 90 days." (The Independent 10/11/2009)

Many of the terminals visited during this research contained statuary of many different genre, however the predominant theme is that of flight itself, with many of the statues and much of the art relating to planes and flight as previously noted. The spirit of flight and aviation history, whilst not wholly removed from Lynch's (1984) concept of cosmic city, is more akin to nostalgia than cosmic or spiritual being. As with the Bangkok example noted above, overly religious or cultural icons can invoke emotion not synonymous with the business of flight or airport commercial activity.

5.3.3 *The practical city*

Lynch's (1984) second normative model is the functional city, or the 'practical' model as he terms it. As the name suggests, this model implies no spiritual or magical influence upon its design, but instead focuses upon the city as a machine. The practical city is comprised of a variety of individual functional parts, that all ultimately link to create a larger and more functional 'machine'. This model is akin to

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the modern grid system that appears predominantly in the United States, and is also evident within the work of Le Corbusier, specifically his vision for the 'Radiant City'.

5.3.4 *The airport as machine*

As previously noted, the airport is, by design, a very functional space. The airports of the last half a decade, have all been designed, or in some cases redesigned, to maximise the movement of passengers and freight both in and out of the building, utilising minimum space, and maximising security. The airport experience is no longer one of speed, as passengers booked onto international flights, are now majoritively required to check-in their luggage two or two and a half hours prior to departure time. This does not alter the functionality of the space, in fact, it requires a greater degree of functionality, as waiting is added to arriving and departing within the airports functional remit.

Figure 64

Terminal 5 Gate Level - First Floor

To Additional
Departure Gates

To Additional
Departure Gates
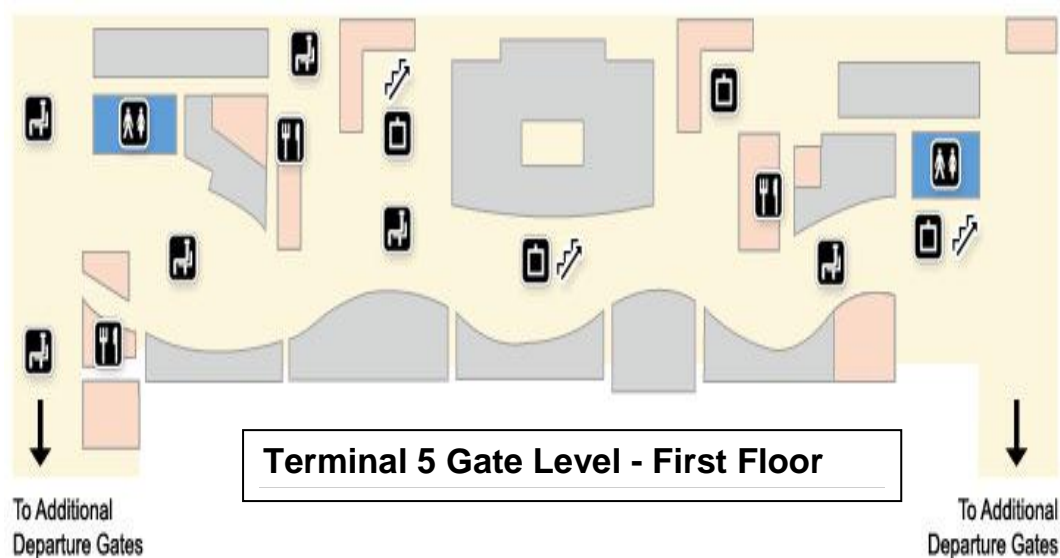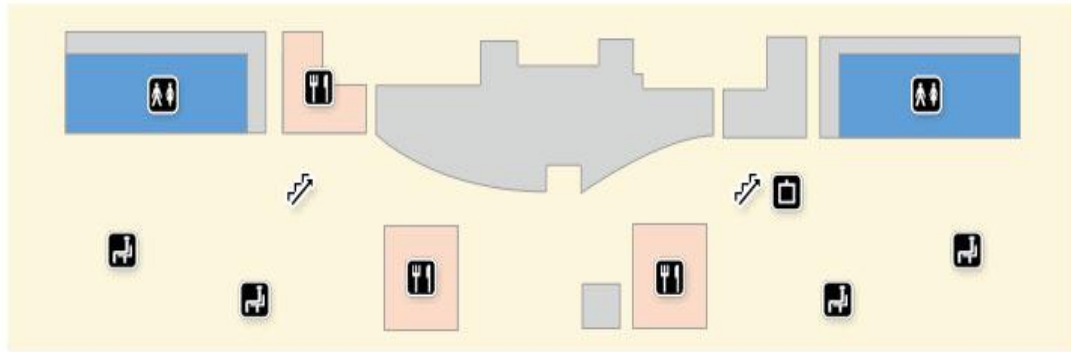
Terminal 5 B Departures - First Floor
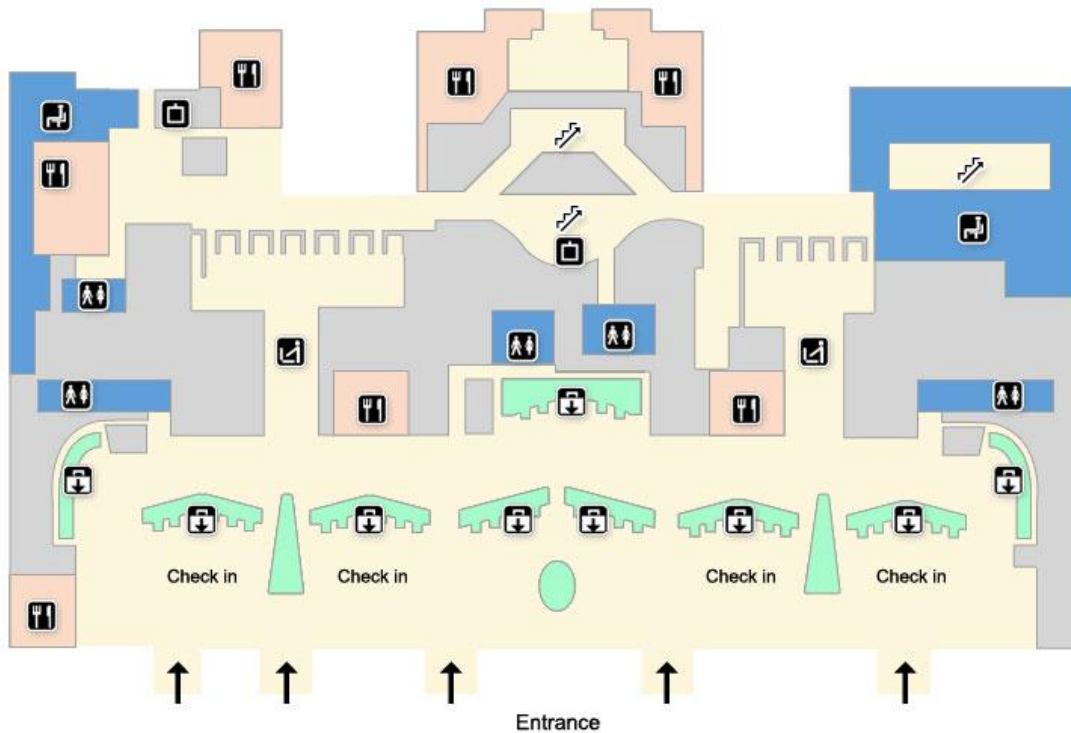
Terminal 5 Check In - Second Floor

As the previous floor maps of Heathrow Terminal 5 (Heathrow Airport 2011) highlights, the terminal building is designed almost symmetrically, specifically to facilitate movement and waiting. This of course, incorporates much of Castells work,

where the airport is viewed as a space of flows; the airport is much more than facilitator of movement, promoting leisure activities such as dining and shopping. In a true space of flow, the inclusion of delay would be counter-productive. Airports now have moving walkways to move people, but this should not be confused with the movement of information. The digitisation of people movement could never legislate for spontaneous acts of consumption. As can be seen from the following plan of Newark Liberty Airport, New York, the architectural design of the airport in its entirety, is to enable access and to promote functionality.

Figure 67

New York Liberty Airport
10/08/11

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The airport terminal is functional, yet it is more than that. The researcher was very focussed upon whether the airport existed as the archetypal non-place, as set out by Auge (1995), and this would be typified by functionality: the act of transit over experience. What was observed however, was that people do have experiences within the terminal that go far beyond simply being there, waiting to get to somewhere else. Whether this is fear of what is to come, excitement at the impending destination, curiosity over the experience of flight, pondering of memories in a similar place, or the overwhelming compulsion for consumption, the airport terminal is far more than practical or functional in reality. The researcher would suggest however that so is the contemporary city.

During observation, (EMA - 09/07/2009) all of the key characteristics previously noted were identified in a single departure area in a single airport, within a two hour time period. Without entering into a psychological debate around the concept of fear, it was clear that individuals within the terminal were displaying signs of clear anxiety, noticeable to the untrained eye. This included physical and verbal exclamations of fright to others; both travelling companions and strangers. These displays included excessive nail biting, clock watching, audible sighing and excessive posture shifting. It is acknowledged, that such displays could also relate to boredom; however there was a clear observable difference between sighs of boredom, and those reflecting anxiety. The clear signifiers of excitement were also evident here, and again, these were often similar to fear, but delivered in a different manner. For example, excessive movement in the seats, accompanied by laughter and often over-the-top gestures showed signs of eager anticipation, not anxious anticipation. Excitement was clearly demonstrated more by families with children; although it must be noted that whilst the

majority, not all of those demonstrating excitement were obviously children. One significant difference between fear and excitement, was demonstrated by the willingness to move through the airport process: eagerness to move from security to gate to aircraft was far more obvious in those showing signs of excitement, than those who were seemingly loathed to engage in the necessary routines once airside.

A further group observed at this time (EMA - 09/07/2009), were those seemingly desperate to shop. This group of individuals behave almost as if this is the primary activity for which they are in this space, and any impending journey is secondary to the act of consumption. The specific airport in which these observations took place, facilitated this desire to buy with the inclusion of the 'yellow brick road'; this however creates the perfect opportunity for those wishing to engage in shopping, as their path is directed through the primary retail space. This group did not join the congregation around the FIDs; choosing instead to wait until much nearer the time for boarding, or on occasions waiting to be called personally to move to the gate.

Very few individuals were identified (EMA - 09/07/2009) who did not fit somewhere into one of these categories, with only 13 people in the two hour observation period choosing to sit quietly and without demonstrable emotion, and this group either read books or electronic devices such as laptop computers, e-readers or netbooks.

If the airport terminal were to be truly functional, then the process of transit through the building would be as speedy as possible with as few distractions for people as there could be. This is also true of the city, yet much of the key sociological work into the built urban environment (Benjamin, 1999, Gottdiener, 1985, Hannigan, 1998,

Kostof, 1999) highlights the need for dysfunction within the city. There is no room for phantasmagoria within the functional city, and yet within every airport terminal observed within this study, there has been an element, often varying in size and influence, but yet always present, an element of the phantasmagorical.

5.3.5 *The organic city*

The third and final model set out by Lynch is the 'organic' model, also identifiable as the biological city. In the organic model, the city is recognised as a living organism, as opposed to a functional machine. The biological city has fixed boundaries and has the ability to adapt to change whilst maintaining a balanced state. Such cities are neither planned around hierarchical nor functional designs, but are instead evolved, with various parts of the city playing certain roles within it. "The pairing of human organ and elements of urban form on the basis of functional similarities satisfied a simple urge of animation: it affirmed the primacy of urban *life*. Open spaces like squares and parks were the lungs of the city, the centre was the heart pumping blood (traffic) through the arteries (the streets) – and so on" (Kostof, 1991:52).

5.3.6 *The 'biological' airport*

It is feasible to suggest that the airport is 'biological' or 'organic' in the sense that as a space, it has changed exponentially in the century since its inception. The airport terminal appears to be in a constant state of flux; many of the terminal buildings observed during this study, have been in a variety of states of rebuilding or design. For example, both of the terminal buildings at Manchester Airport were undergoing

substantial renovation to the airside terminals, as was the principle terminal building at Dublin International Airport. It is important to note that the changes in both of these cases were specifically to the retail areas, and were not changes to gate areas or security zones, although these changes are currently taking place in airports across the world, specifically in order to accommodate larger aircraft on the gates. As alluded to in various parts of this thesis, the airport terminal has changed from being a booking hall for the rich and famous, through to the sites of architectural, cultural, and commodified delights that they have become. Lynch (1984) suggests that the organic city has boundaries, into which it develops and grows, much like a living organism, and this is where the airport differs. The growth and development of the airport is not about the desires of those who use the space on a daily basis, but more about those who see the space as a commercial entity. The city may grow organically, although this too is contestable, but the airport does not. Airport spaces change in response to commercial needs: MAG have recently introduced the 'yellow brick road', discussed further in this study, to enable passengers to pass through the principal retail area of the terminal, Gatwick have redesigned the seating area in the North terminal, and Heathrow has redesigned Terminal 2. These changes are not driven by passenger numbers or by space issues, but are driven by the commercial directors of the airports themselves.

Respondent F, a member of airport staff with senior responsibility for the retail operations of the MAG airport group, noted the need for the airport operator to constantly adapt to the changing market.

     JC   What impact is the current financial downturn having upon the airport?

F   Of course, the recession impacts on all businesses, but the impact here is felt very keenly. We need to make sure that we keep up with the market. If more people are flying, then we provide space for them to buy more. The problem with a financial downturns is that less people fly, and less people are likely to buy. This means that retailers are less likely to want to be in airports. We need to make sure that our retail spaces are as attractive to retailers as they are to passengers, and this often means refurbing at times when this would otherwise seem financially inappropriate.

The 'yellow brick road' within the terminals of all of the MAG terminals now is one such change as noted by Respondent F. The emphasis here is on the attractiveness of the space, alongside a deliberate move to determine the flow of passengers. This does suggest an organic nature to airport space as they are flexible and subject to change.

5.4 MUMFORD'S (1961) SOCIO-SPATIAL TYPOLOGY

This holistic approach was favoured by the scholars of the Chicago School as we have already noted; however this led to Lewis Mumford (1961) devising his own typology of the city. Where Lynch (1984) categorises cities by their physical and spatial design, Mumford (1961) creates "an evolutionary linearity" (Amin & Thrift, 2002:8), which classifies cities in their sociospatial dynamic epoch. It must be noted that this assessment of Mumford's typography is a greatly simplified explanation of his work, which initially, specifically related to Ancient Rome.

The first of these is 'Tyrannopolis'; the city overrun by extortionists and, as termed by Amin and Thrift (2002), Gangsters. Tyrannopolis is followed by 'Megalopolis'. Whilst the term is used freely to define an extensive metropolitan area by geographers and urban theorists alike, for Mumford, the shift to megalopolis signalled the commencement of social decline through "greed, dissociation and barbarism" (Amin & Thrift, 2002:8). Mumford's nihilistic vision of the city did not end with megalopolis however, and instead evolved into 'Necropolis'. Mumford believed that the cemetery played several vital roles in every city; firstly as the practical manner of dealing with corpses, by simply placing them together prevented the widespread potential for spreading disease. The cemetery also provides the opportunity for burial grounds to be a sacred space, if not always consecrated. The cemetery also provides a physical focus for grief and ancestral reverence, and for this reason primarily, Mumford recognised the fundamental importance of death and burial rituals to every city. Utilising the organic metaphor, one for which Mumford, amongst others, was accredited, if the centre of the city is its' heart, the organ that promotes life and activity, then the cemetery is the soul, that allows its residents to reflect upon history, mortality, kinship and human emotion. Necropolis however, was not derived in order to suggest that following social decline and barbarism, there is peace and reflection; quite the contrary. Mumford suggests that Necropolis is the final cemetery awaiting each civilisation, a retrospective shift to primitivism and wanton destruction. Mumford (1961) issued a warning to America in the 1960s, that just as in Ancient Rome, the constant desire for sensual stimulation was leading to "magnifications of demoralized power [and] minifications of life" (Mumford, 1961:242). He even issued the warning that "Necropolis is near…..though not a stone has yet crumbled" (Mumford, 1961:242).

Soja (2000), adopts yet a different approach in his studies of the city, taking a more Lefebvrian line, suggesting that cities are indeed spaces, and not simply places, and that there is a 'trialectic' of city space. The first perspective is the city as a perceived space; "a set of materialized spatial practices that work together to produce and reproduce the concrete forms and specific patternings of urbanism as a way of life" (Soja, 2000:10). This is a physical, practical and more materialistic approach to understanding the city, and as noted by Soja (2000), has been the dominant perspective utilised when examining urban spatiality. The second perspective according to Soja, is a more imaginary or idealised approach which he terms 'conceived space': "cityspace becomes more of a mental or ideational field, conceptualized in imagery, reflexive thought, and symbolic representation" (Soja, 2000:11). Soja suggests that we all have mental imagery regarding the city, whether this takes the form of a 'mental map', or is more an emotional sentimentality at places and events that may have taken place in the city. The conceived nature of the city space can even stretch to include idealised or utopian desires and hopes for city spaces. As a result of enhanced global technology, a larger percentage of the world's population now has the capability of conceiving the nature of cityspace that they have never physically visited. For example, many people have a mental picture of New York or London, and this image may simply be the result of television pictures or through internet web sites. Such representations do serve to shape the nature of cityspace however, even though those whom have never physically experienced it first-hand. Soja notes that while "firstspace perspectives are more objectively focused

and emphasize 'things in space', secondspace perspectives tend to be more subjective and concerned with 'thoughts' about space" (Soja, 2000:11). As previously noted however, Sojas' examination is a trialectic, and there is a 'thirdspace', which was also the title of his 1996 work predominantly examining Los Angeles. This third-way approach seeks to combine the first two perspectives, providing us with the concept of 'lived space'. This is different from perceived and conceived space in that it is a "simultaneously real-and-imagined, actual-and-virtual, locus of structured individual and collective experience and agency" (Soja, 2000:11). In short then, thirdspace is about having a full picture of cityspace. It is the amalgamation of the real and the imaginary. It is not therefore simply the mental image of one whom has never visited, but neither is it the pragmatic understanding of one who knows the city all too well. Soja himself likens this perspective to a biography, where the story or history of the city is told through physical comprehension, and through memory and legend.

Individuals negotiate airport spaces in part through their knowledge of what they expect them to be: this is thirdspace in action within the terminal setting, as people use their lived knowledge and their imagined or perceived conceptions of a terminal to negotiate around the space. This is not simply a spatial issue, as this also relates to social and cultural practices within the setting, such as consuming alcohol at times when this is not considered the norm, or purchasing luxury goods prior to travel.

Observations at a North West UK airport (12/10/09) support this notion, specifically in relation to purchasing luxury items. One couple were observed discussing purchases in the principal airport shop: to call this the 'Duty Free Shop' here would be a misnomer, and indicative of the point being made. The couple were seemingly

travelling within Europe, thus rendering their potential purchases 'duty paid'. This did not prevent a lengthy, and somewhat heated discussion between the couple as to whether or not to purchase expensive perfume, that according to one of the couple, was actually less expensive in High Street stores local to where they lived. The issue for the male however, was that they should purchase the product whilst in the airport, 'because that's what you do' (anonymous traveller – overheard).

Even observing groups of individuals (09/08/10) within a London airport terminal, for whom this was clearly their first visit, there is a perceived, or preconceived understanding of what to do. Negotiating the terminal is not like catching a bus or a train, despite some apparent superficial similarities in the nature of the space, and yet there is an understanding of 'what to do next', even if there is confusion over 'where' this takes place precisely. There are examples cited within this study of individuals consuming alcohol within the airport outside of the boundaries of usual consumption, and this is often because this is the perceived norm.

5.5 THE SPACE OF FLOWS

Castells (1989) argues that there is a significant difference between the physical world in which we live, we he terms the 'space of place', and the technologically driven, temporally flexible world that exists around us, which he terms the 'space of flows'. The fundamental distinction between place and flow for Castells rests in the understanding of the concepts of time and distance. Castells suggests that the pre-capitalist city existed on a physical 'here and now' basis and that such interactions

were clear and unambiguous, and required places in which to occur. The development of technology that has occurred since the industrial revolution has led to such interactions taking place virtually across time and space; literally. The impact for the city has been multifaceted; improved road, rail and air links to the rest of the world, an apparent shift towards service industries, although it must be noted that Castells believes that the seemingly vast shift into service industries is more illusion than fact (1989), industrial suburbanisation or decentralisation, and the restructuring of the labour force, to name but a few. According to Castells, it has become unimportant where business is actually located, as much of its work can be carried out from almost anywhere, although interestingly, he notes that we still identify large metropolitan areas as the sites for large businesses. What we actually identify however, is that large businesses have their corporate headquarters within the large city centres, but that actually, much of the 'backroom' activity associated with the day-to-day running of the business happens elsewhere, often outside the city centre, where it is more cost-effective and more convenient for the labour force. The city then becomes less of a physical significance, and instead becomes a virtually important site. Since the publication of 'The Informational City' (1989), this has become increasingly pertinent as a theory. Globalisation and the rapid development of faster and more accessible information sharing techniques, has led the city centre to become very much as Castells predicted, and the city is now more of a space of flow from one commercial aspect.

Whilst it is arguable that Castells model of the city in the digital technological era is accurate on a certain level, it actually seems to ignore the fact that as the city becomes less significant as a site for commercial interaction, it has increased as a site for

interaction of another type; leisure and consumption. Rob Shields (1992) examines the concept of 'lifestyle shopping', and this can include not simply the purchasing of goods, but also the associated trappings of a specific lifestyle, as the name suggests. City centres have become adept, on the whole, at catering for lifestyle shoppers. This includes the demise of the suburban or rural public house, replaced by chain bars and clubs, which provide the consumer with a predictable, McDonaldized leisure experience (Ritzer, 2000). In order to fully maximise the potential income from the lifestyle consumer, cities often divide themselves into 'quarters', if only hypothetically. Such division makes accessing the lifestyle of choice much simpler for the consumer. For example, Manchester, England comprises a variety of areas to suit various lifestyle choices, with the somewhat Bohemian Northern Quarter satisfying a very different taste to the Deansgate Locks area, where the clubs and bars are predominantly chains, and more aimed at a mass consumer market. Both of these areas geographically however, are situated within areas once noted for industry. Castells space of flows seems to propose that traditional cities will disappear and be replaced by either Mega Cities, or new cities situated on the periphery of old ones. One point of interest with Castells theory however, is the prediction that the development of the Mega City will see a return to the city-state status, which was previously identified in Soja's (2000) work on the first urban revolution, and the birth of the Metropolis.

The exploration into the theory of the city is clearly but a very small snapshot of the theories that abound regarding the development of the city through the ages. What has proved to be the most complex part of this analysis, was the decisions as to what should be examined, and what should be excluded from this particular section of the

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study. Many of the theorists whose names are synonymous with urban studies are not present here in any depth; for example Walter Benjamin, Henri Lefebvre, Georg Simmel, Park and Burgess, and David Harvey, and the primary reason for this is that an examination of their work on the city appears elsewhere within this study. The theories relating to the city that are present here, hopefully provide a useful framework to the history of city development and design, that will facilitate some kind of working definition of what the city is, to which we are comparing the airport terminal.

Firstly, cities are places with and for people. This may appear to be extremely simplistic, but for the purposes of this study, it is important to establish the difference between a populated and a lost or forgotten city. Alongside the existence of people, there lies also the implication of crowding in some respect. This is not a suggestion of overcrowding per se, but an intimation to population mass and density. Whilst a city cannot be defined purely upon its size of population, it is certainly clear that a critical mass has to exist in order to distinguish the city from other urban areas.

Whilst the city has population size as one distinctive feature from other urban centres, the second feature of the city is its role in a wider urban system. This is not so as to artificially increase population density, but is more an attempt to see the city as a constituent part of a wider urban hierarchy, where each geographical place has a stratified role against its neighbour and against the 'mother city', or metropolis.

Although cities may be geographically close to each other on occasion, and as previously noted, are an integral part of a wider urban hierarchy, they must also have definable borders. Historically these borders were physical and took the form of a

wall or a moat. Even where the boundaries are virtual, as is the case with the vast majority of modern cities, they do still exist and serve an important function. It is vital that the city knows whom and what belongs to it, and conversely, what does not. This is fundamental for the smooth organisation of a city if only administratively; for what and for whom is the city responsible? Without such borders the city would be unidentifiable, and this may see the birth of the 'Supercity' or the 'Mega City' as predicted by Manuel Castells, where several cities and the urban sprawl that exists between, becomes merged into one large city space. This kind of city however, can only truly exist as a geographical entity, as the administration, employment, leisure and residence issues would be irresolvable otherwise.

Cities are sites of inequality, in terms of income, health, status and power. In all cities, there are those whom govern, and those whom are governed. The employment opportunities within cities create wealth inequalities, as there will always be a specialised differentiation in the labour market. Greater skill will usually attract higher financial and status rewards, and because of the cities density of population, this creates a visible system of stratification. Drawing on the work of the Chicago School, this hierarchy reflects in where people live and work in relation to each other and to the city. Trends in city planning and design differ through time, however this hierarchy is still reflected within the city itself. For example, what was seen as the zone of transition by Park and Burgess, has recently been the subject of regeneration in many Western cities, and as such, has brought about something of a resurgence in city living, but this is still limited to specific income and status groups. This results in a renaming of the zone, but the concept of typical geographical residence and

occupation still stands. Irrespective of this current trend however, the suburbs will still be the site for those with the most privilege.

Cities are sites of sources of income. They contain several resources that generate wealth, be it raw materials, a labour force, or a more natural resource such as a harbour. Castells suggests that the space of flows sees businesses leave the city for a more appropriate, and often less expensive site, however cities are still often associated with the raw materials and industries that enabled city status in the first instance; for example, Manchester and textiles, Sheffield and steel, Nottingham and lace, Hull and fishing and so on. There is not a huge fishing fleet sailing in or out of Hull in East Yorkshire in the Twenty-first Century, however there are significant fish processing sites and associated industries still situated on the periphery of the city, similarly with the other examples quoted. Castells has also made a significant contribution to this debate regarding the labour force, as he once argued that one of the key functions of the city was the reproduction of a labour force for continued industrial prosperity. By definition, a large population density will provide a continuous supply of labour, although the skills required within city-based employment may well now be very different from the 1960's and 1970's. Some cities prosper further as a result of a natural resource such as a harbour, as previously noted. This provides an ease of transport for goods and people in and out of the city. One added factor regarding this would be the opportunity for employment diversity. Using Hull as the example once more, its position on the easy coast, in the natural harbour of the River Humber, has meant that as the fishing industry has declined, so the passenger ferry terminal has developed, providing employment and income to the city itself. Certain cities have power as a natural resource; power in a political, military,

historical or monarchy sense. This power is not always associated with size and population, for example the city of York, which has centuries of history as a site of the Monarch, but is still very small in geographical area and population density. Capital cities tend to be the seat of the reigning Monarch where one exists.

5.6 THE AIRPORT TERMINAL AS A CITY

The preceding scholarly attempts to define a city do little to assist in the quest to determine the extent to which an airport terminal can be likened to a city. Airports, whilst all individual in their design and appearance, do share many characteristics and some of these are city-like in character; for instance, airports have people, shops, information flows, distinctive functional spaces, the ability to develop, and yet they cannot be used as a suitable metaphor for the city. As observed on many occasions in a number of terminals during this study, the mêlée of the city is simulated in the terminal, however this is nearly always one-directional, and this is due to the nature of the necessary flow of passengers through the building. The key word here is 'through', as this is what happens in airports that do not always happen in cities. Even allowing for the static nature of the staff who work in the terminal, there is too much management and institutional practice in the terminal for this to be city-like. Airports also lack the somewhat obvious inclusion of groups whom rely on the city for sustenance: the homeless, beggars and those too poor to sustain life outside of the city. This only serves to highlight the private and privileged nature of the airport space, and whilst writers such as Mike Davies may seek to reveal the desires of cities to become as 'sterile' and 'managed' as the airport terminal, spending time observing

the airport space and the activities of those whom occupy this space, it is clear that this is not yet seemingly achieved.

Chapter 6

Findings: The Airport Terminal as 'Non-place' or 'Heterotopian Space'

6.1 THE AIRPORT AS 'NON-PLACE'

In contrast to the distinctions between liminalilty and transitionality, Marc Auge (1995) cites the airport terminal as a principal example of a non-place. Auge argues that "if place can be defined as rational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which can- not be defined as rational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place" (1995: 77). Such non-places, according to Auge, unlike certain 'places' of modernity where the ancient and the modern coexist, exhibit a state of excesses, solitude and self-containment, all of which are products of 'supermodernity'. Auge argues that as the world gets smaller through cheaper and more available means of transport, and through technological advances in communication equipment such as satellite and the internet, alongside an extension of life expectancy and an aging global population, there is an excess of space, time and ego, and that these three excesses result in supermodernity. Supermodernity, for Auge, is characterised by the temporary spaces it produces, which are specifically created for travel, communication or consumption. These 'non-places' exist simply to fulfil the requirements of the increasingly self-centred consumer. Examples of such non-places are airports, motorways, petrol or motorway service stations, large supermarkets and theme parks, often interchangeable and similar in appearance and layout. It is often the case that theme parks and shopping malls attempt to create a pseudo-real spectacle, aimed at satisfying the consumers' desire for historical or cultural identity, before ejecting them back onto the motorway, railway terminal or airport departure lounge. The impact of supermodernity and non-places therefore, according to Auge, is the decline of the public 'man', and instead, the rise of the self-obsessed individual, who spends "more and more effort wondering where they are

going [only] because they are less and less sure where they are" (1995: 115). Auge (1995) seemingly offers an opposing view of airport space to that previously stated by Mark Gottdiener, where instead of the individual undergoing a substantial shift in their sense of identity as a result of simply being in such a significant space, they in fact find themselves in some kind of void of significance, simply 'being' between other places, which may be of equal insignificance. This research questions Auge's 'non-place' notion, if for no other reason than the reason noted by Adey (2008), where he states that "airports are sites of euphoria as well as relaxation, panic as well as loneliness: one is only ever a few steps aside from the stream of humanity, the pain of leaving, the joy or arriving, as well as boredom and ill-humour. Airports without people are like an empty stage" (Adey, 2008, cited in Salter, 2008:151). Where there can be this variation and depth of human emotion, then this space is not without significance, and is therefore a valid site for further study.

6.1.1 Empty space

On many levels, E.M.A may appear to provide Marc Augé with his example of the sterile non-place transport hub as described previously within this thesis (Figures 68 to 71). There are many areas within the terminal which appear to be nothing more than waiting areas, or more appropriately, long functional areas where no attempt has been made to cloak their utilitarian purpose with historical or anthropological artefacts.

Figure 68

Figure 69

Figure 70
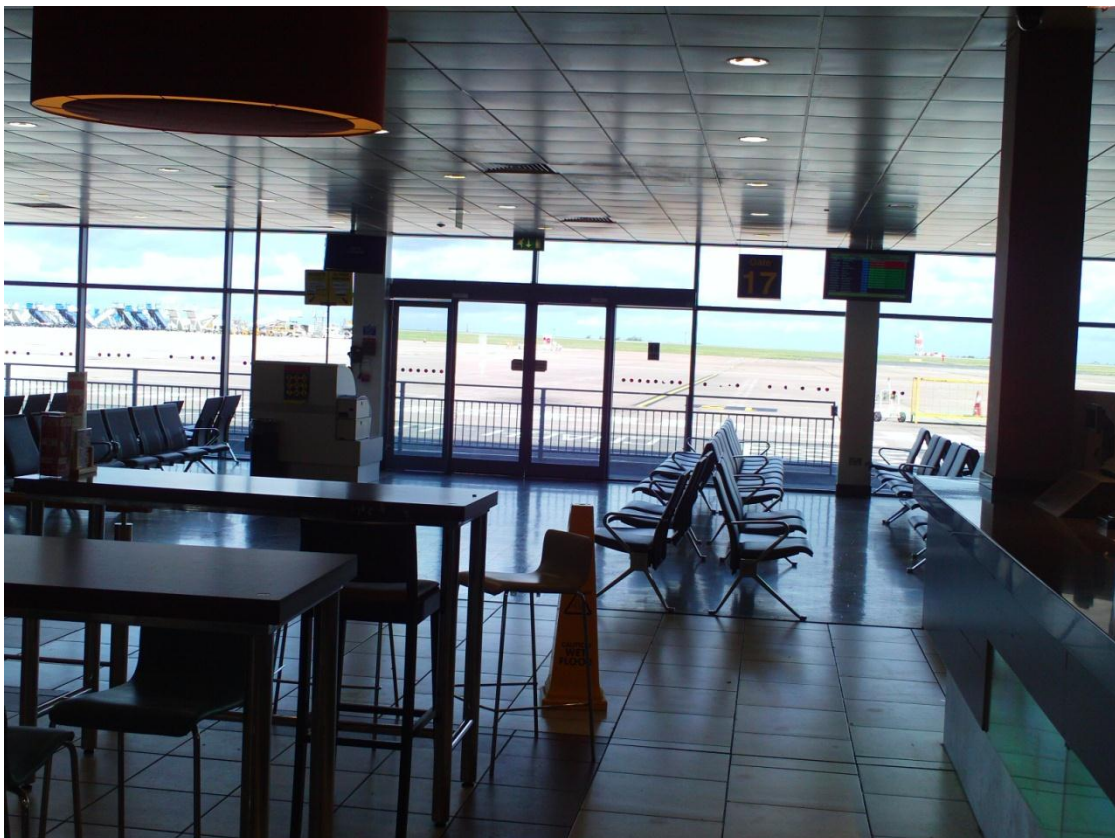
Figure 71

Source: Figures 68 to 71   J. Coulton

The fundamental problem with Auge's analysis of the airport is that he appears to mistake functional necessity for lack of historical significance. It is clear to the airport user that ornate, palatial décor and design are not synonymous with queuing to board a plane, or waiting to check-in baggage. Even in the earliest airport buildings, which were built as monuments to a successful history and bright future, and were often ornate in their design, form and function takes over, as the need to move people efficiently and on a tight schedule supersedes the desire for anthropological significance; the primary issue for Augé.

6.1.2 The heritage / non-place paradox

E.M.A appears to be aware of the history and heritage of the East Midlands area, and informs the passenger of this awareness on every available occasion (Figures 72 & 73).

Figure 72

Figure 73

Source: Figures 72 & 73 J. Coulton

The bar alludes to the three cities closest to the airport; these being Nottingham, Derby and Leicester. The largest restaurant also has the name the Three Counties Food Market, which also refers to the three counties immediately adjacent to the airport, and this food outlet specialises in local produce. Although beyond the remit of my research, as the focus is upon the controlled environment of the airside departure area, the arrivals hall has many references to local towns, cities, and the legends that emanate from there. The following quote, including Figure 74, from the EMA website discusses the 'tree' that features heavily within the arrivals hall. This tree is predominantly a reference to the Nottinghamshire forests, famed for the legend

of Robin Hood. The irony of course, is that the newer airport situated in Doncaster carries the name Doncaster Robin Hood Airport. The arrivals tree does make a great deal of linking the significance of the airport with the locale in which it is situated, and this is predominantly based upon history and sites of great historical significance.

Figure 74

Source: EMA, 2008

"The tree has been created by design company, Can't Dance and constructed by Terence Dickson of Dickson Associates. It includes three LCD screens depicting some of the region's most renowned places to visit, with a further two screens located elsewhere in the terminal.

The main objective of the project is to provide overseas visitors with more detailed information on the region's attractions and grow interest and awareness of what the region has to offer international visitors. The Airport's Information Desk has been transformed into a tourist information centre; providing visitors with a range of

informed literature on local tourist attractions. Visitors can

also book local sightseeing trips using a newly installed

interactive kiosk" (EMA, 2009)

This research process required the author to spend a great deal of time within a variety of terminals throughout the world, and it must be noted that there was never an underlying feeling of sterility or a sense of social irrelevance for the author. Being in a terminal setting provides a sense almost of something approaching privilege. The ability to engage in air travel reminds the passenger that they are part of the globalised elite. There are of course a group who appear to be ambivalent to air travel, but there are equally individuals who don't engage in historical or anthropological investigation either. Augé (1995) argues that the airport is the exemplar of non-place due to its role as transportation 'corridor', and this function certainly exist in airports (Figure 68); however the corridor should not be confused with the hub of the terminal, as one suggests movement, where the other implies lingering or being static.

6.2 THE AIRPORT AS 'HETEROTOPIAN' SPACE

Salter (2008) refers to the Foucauldian concept of heterotopian space, and this seems to account precisely for the interest in, and conceptualisations of the airport terminal. This is highly significant, as Jon Goss begins his 1999 study of the Mall of America with a brief examination of Foucault's concept of heterotopia. Foucault (1986) attempts to explain places within society as either utopian, which are, according to Foucault, unreal, or as other more real sites, which exist alongside each other, and

these he terms heterotopian places. Foucault (1986) utilises the mirror to demonstrate the relationship between real and unreal sites, or utopian and heterotopian places.

> "The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space, that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy" (Foucault, 1986:24).

Foucault argued that there were several fundamental principles to heterotopias. The first of these being spaces of crisis, that later are replaced by places of deviation. These are sites that are specific for sacred or ritualistic events, but that have an element of restriction in terms of access, for example, the honeymoon hotel or the boarding school. Both of these sites are synonymous with a rite of passage, yet both have restricted access. The suggestion that these sites have through time become sites of deviation, is that we now identify more of this in places such as prisons and retirement homes, and not in public schools or honeymoon hotels. The second principle is that through time, the primary function of a heterotopia can change, and Foucault cites the cemetery as his example, although there are many examples of this dynamic change in the function of a space within society. Foucault utilises the theatre and the garden as examples to demonstrate the third principle; heterotopian spaces are

capable of "juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces" (Foucault, 1986:25). Put simply, the heterotopia is capable of being more than one space at a time, and the theatre analogy is a good one, in that it is possible to imagine the stage being set as one thing, but within the setting of the theatre itself. The fourth principle identifies the temporal nature of the heterotopian space, in that time can be archived without standing still. The best example for this is the museum or the library, where objects from history are captured in time, but in a very real space that interacts with time. Museums are not always artefacts in themselves, although appear to be so on occasion. Foucault (1986) argues that heterotopian spaces are never truly public spaces, and there are usually rituals or criteria for entry. This forms the basis of the fifth principle, but Foucault does suggest that there are grey areas with this specific rule, in that partial entry may be permitted into certain heterotopian spaces, and he provides the guest in transit as the analogy; never fully gaining access into the inner sanctum of the family with whom they are staying. The sixth and final principle is that heterotopian spaces can fulfil two distinct, but connected roles: they can create spaces of illusion in an otherwise real space, and they can conversely create real spaces as compensation when surrounded by other unreal or hyperreal spaces. Foucault uses two extreme, yet effective examples to illustrate his point here, suggesting the brothel and the colony.

Comprehension of heterotopia, facilitates a clearer understanding of why the modern airport has been conceptualised in the various ways that it has, and taking each principle of heterotopia as set down by Foucault (1986) in turn, will highlight this more clearly. Firstly, the airport is very much a space of crisis that has somehow evolved into a space of deviation. In the one hundred years since the development of

the first airports around the world, air travel itself has progressed through a spectrum ranging from terror to normality, passing through romanticism and elitism along the way. If the element of crisis arises from the fear of the unnatural event of flight, then the deviation is born out of terrorism and environmental catastrophe. Airports are also prime examples of places whose nature have changed over time. Kazda & Caves (2000), Blow (1996), Horonjeff (1962), Pearman (2004) and Horonjeff and McKelvey (1994) have described, as noted previously, that the airports were initially designed to be grand statements and architectural triumphs, with the purpose of demonstrating to the world the importance and stature of the city or country. As passenger numbers increased, airports became increasingly functional spaces, and involved within this was the desire to generate profit from any means possible, particularly retail in the airports case. More recently, with the advent of architects like Sir Norman Foster, airport design has once more focussed upon form, but incorporating function within this. This conveniently leads into the third principle of heterotopia, in which the space can be more than one thing at any given time. Airports discovered quite early in their evolution that retail would generate profit, and as such, many modern airports around the globe do have many architectural and design features in common with shopping malls. Few, if any, airports are solely transportation hubs, and as such, all demonstrate propensity for juxtapositioning. Foucault's fourth principle relates to the temporal associations of heterotopia, and whilst few airports contain a museum to flight, many do incorporate displays or reference to their history. Some airports do have aviation museums or local history collections housed within them, and Manchester airport is a good example of how this temporality is not always historic, but can also be futuristic. Manchester airport houses a new visitor attraction that is built around the Concorde aircraft that it houses. Whilst the aircraft is historic in the sense that it was designed in

the 1960s and entered service in 1976, eventually being taken out of service by all airlines in 2003, it is also a glimpse into the future of air travel that may never be again. Concorde itself is a heterotopian space that exists in both a utopian and heterotopian reality: capable of supersonic flight, but not commercially viable in the current climate. This, once more, connects very neatly to the next principle, that suggests restriction to full access, with some only ever attaining the status of guest visitor. The modern airport is an increasingly stratified space, with the low-cost carriers and more traditional carriers vying for space within. More importantly, the passengers of the two types of carrier often experience a very different space. The first class lounges that exist today, provide a clear demarcation between passenger types. This division may take the form of a terminal building, or even an entire airport. There are significant differences between departure lounges that serve the budget airlines, and those set aside for the national and prestige carriers. This is a throwback to the days of elite air travel, when only the wealthiest could afford to travel by air. It is easy to overlook the fact that in the Twenty-first century, even allowing for the proliferation of budget airlines, that there is still a significant percentage of the world's population who cannot afford to fly, even with the cheapest of carriers. The best that many can hope to be, is a guest visitor into the world of the worlds "kinetic elite" (Salter, 2008:ix). It is not difficult to imagine how the airport fulfils the criteria for the sixth and final principle. In many parts of the world, the airport still provides the link between the fantasy of global travel in an otherwise very real environment, for example in war-torn areas, where escape seems so near and yet so far. Conversely, in the hyperreality of Las Vegas, Los Angeles, even Palma Majorca or Alicante Spain, the airport provides the means of transport to and from

reality, and on occasion, the sense of returning to some kind of reality begins in the departure lounge of a holiday airport prior to the flight home.

It appears that by adopting a Foucauldian heterotopian framework, it is possible to comprehend why the airport is conceptualised as it so often is. Airports are social spaces that are "in relation with all other sites, but in such a way to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror or reflect" (Foucault, 1986:24). Adopting Auge's interpretation of the terminal however, seems too limiting, and fails to acknowledge that any passenger feeling excitement or nerves prior to boarding, any relative waiting to meet a loved one at arrivals, or anyone waving a loved one off at the check-in desk, is not experiencing 'nothing', and as such the space is significant. The key critique to Auge's conceptualisation of airports as non-places is that if the non-places of supermodernity are so overwhelmingly contractual and solitary, why can driving down the motorway or walking to the departure gate feel quite so liberating?

Chapter 7

Findings: The Airport Terminal as the 'Total' or 'Terminal 'Institution

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The theme running throughout this thesis has been one of institutionalised spaces and particularly the institutional practices of people management and manipulation. This of course is not a feature unique to airports outside of the asylum or prison, as proposed by Goffman (1991), but is instead true of many public spaces where order and compliance is necessary for smooth operation. This is as much about exerting control as it is about managing the movement and timetable of those involved. This reintroduces the work of Foucault, and the idea of the airport being an exemplar of the postmodern panopticon. It is necessary to examine whether the terminal exhibits the features of panopticism or institutionalisation here, and if so, whether this is in fact a defining feature, an accidental by-product of the nature of the space, or simply the result of an over-active sociological imagination at work in the researcher.

7.2 THE AIRPORT AS PANOPTICON

Interviews with staff at E.M.A suggests that whilst observation and control of passengers, goods, activities, parking, vehicle movements and employees is fundamental to the safe and efficient operations of the airport, staff do not perceive themselves to be under constant scrutiny, even though they are. It could be suggested that this is in fact the panopticon working at its best, as this is the ultimate aim; surveillance by stealth (Foucault, 1991). The claim of Foucault remains however, that the power of the panopticon rests in the concept of self-policing, where staff and passengers within the airport in this example, through fear of potential scrutiny, behave in a manner as if they are always under surveillance. The staff interviews

provide an interesting insight into the long-term habitual results of constant surveillance.

> "You get so used to coming through security and being on camera, that eventually you forget that it's there. I mean, you never forget that the security checks are there, but they become less of a hassle. You just get used to not wearing certain stuff so that it doesn't set of the thing, and you accept the fact that every now and then you'll get searched. We all know it's a good thing and that it's for our own good anyway" (Respondent F, 09/07/2009).

The key element of this short narrative is contained within the notion that staff 'get used' and 'accept' issues of airport security, and surely this is the principal aim of panoptic surveillance. Having experienced entry into the terminal via the staff channel during extensive observation, it is certainly the case that individuals ensure they are equipped and dressed appropriately for entry, the important question however is whether this is in fact self-policing, or simply sensible preparation.

Passengers are far more aware of the security procedures within airports; however E.M.A have taken measures to soften the impact, and thus reduce some of the awareness of surveillance and control within the terminal.

> "Now we try to soften that as much as we possibly can; we've taken the guys out of uniform and we've put them into suits to try and soften it. What I can't (erm) distinguish is that (erm) it is a stressful process, it is a serious process,

(erm) and people do feel that once they've cleared security, then the holiday can begin. That's the majority of people. There are a few people that once they've got through all of those processes, then the stress levels start to increase because it's the fear of flying for some people. It's absolutely vital that the ambience of the terminal is such that it's a relaxing atmosphere once they've gone through these processes and they feel that the holiday is just beginning" (Respondent K, 10/07/2009)

It is of significance that the words 'ambience' and 'relaxing' are utilised within this narrative, as this implies that the overt nature of the security and surveillance that occurs prior to entry into the airside terminal, somehow prepares the passenger for the process, however once these barriers are crossed, passengers move into an area of covert surveillance, akin to that which is present in other sites more associated with everyday living: everyday surveillance does not scan for suspect packages or furtive behaviour however.

Airport security is not a covert operation in any sense: passengers and staff are subject to rigorous security operations at every stage of the process of boarding a plane in order to take a flight. These measures are overt, as are the many instructions as to how individuals should approach these areas. The level of intensity changes depending upon whether an individual is checking in their luggage, passing through passport control, or boarding the aircraft. It is often overlooked that the fundamental rationale behind Bentham's design for the panopticon was one of utility, and very much grounded in the

principles of economic parsimony. The ever watchful eye of authority that has pervaded into everyday discussion regarding CCTV and police speed cameras to cite but two examples, often fails to focus on the key element of self-regulation as a means to save economic resources: surveillance of the many, not simply by the most powerful, but also by the most economically frugal means possible. This observation of the many by the fewest possible, is a concept definitely observable at every airport. It is also often overlooked that the panopticon was a laboratory (Foucault, 1991), in which the behaviour of individuals or groups can be experimented upon, or simply observed. The airport terminal provides an excellent social laboratory space, where the actions and interactions of individuals and groups can be observed by the covert curious observers. It is in this sense, alongside the now perceived meaning of panopticism as covert authoritarian surveillance, the airport terminal is indeed a postmodern panopticon. The behaviour of both staff and passengers within the airport terminal is of key importance not simply to the border security agencies who determine who is permitted within political and geographic boundaries, but also to airport operators, wishing to maintain order and promote calm in an otherwise hectic and fear-inducing environment, as noted previously. The laboratory effect however is utilised as a tool to determine the most effective, efficient, and profitable manner in which to ensure the first two aims are achieved. This is akin to the challenges facing researchers conducting observation with a group; in order to negate the effects of researcher presence, the observation requires a covert approach. Similarly, for the authorities to truly examine how pre-flight passengers behave, they need to be observed covertly and thus the provision of consumer outlets,

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where covert surveillance is commonplace, has been identified as the distraction of choice for the majority of consumers.

7.3 THE TOTAL INSTITUTION

It is true that within every airport terminal, almost by definition, all aspects of life whilst waiting to board a flight happen under the same 'authority': passenger management and the management of flows of people relies upon this happening within a set area. Security necessitates that a distinction has to be made between landside and airside, and that once passengers have passed into the airside area, their status must be maintained. It is also possible to argue that once airside, passengers are not all in the same area, as some passengers will wait within executive lounges, and others at the gate, whilst others may shop or dine, however, this is still under the same roof, within the same building, or at least in a building linked by covered walkways. The biggest area of contention within this particular characteristic lies in the suggestion that once airside, everyone is governed by the same single authority. There are many authorities working within the airport, from the CAA, to the UK Border Agency, the police, and airport management, but ultimately, once airside, there is a single authority under which all passengers are governed.

7.3.1 *Large Batch Of Others*

The second feature is that " each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together" (Goffman, 1991:17). Figure 75 highlights the principal way in which the airport creates and manages the large batches of others. As

previously noted, once airside passengers have the freedom to spend their time in a variety of areas, and undertake various activities

Figure 75

Source: J. Coulton

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It must be noted at this stage that the reference to 'daily life' clearly does not apply to passengers, as the majority will not spend each day in an airport; however, the most interesting observations to arise with relation to the airport as total institution, is that staff do spend a great deal of their life within the airport, subject to the same levels of control. Whilst it is acknowledged that all staff do not do the same jobs at the same time in the same place, jobs are routine to a greater or lesser extent, and this starts to develop the thought that whilst the claim that passengers are 'institutionalised' whilst airside is questionable, are the staff institutionalised also? At E.M.A, the lack of 'back stage' areas for staff to rest, eat, or smoke in, adds to this concept that employees are in fact working 'together' in large groups.

7.3.2 *Formal Rulings And A Body Of Officials*

The third characteristic, as noted by Goffman, that "one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials" (Goffman, 1991:17), is synonymous with the working of every airport. Every airport works because of predetermined scheduling, which if challenged, creates chaos. For example, the process of checking-in baggage, which leads to passing through security, then proceeding to the designated gate, then boarding the plane, and then sitting in a preordained seat, is precisely what Goffman is referring to, although he was clearly not identifying the processes of passenger flow when writing. It is also true to suggest that this process is governed by the same ruling authority who oversees all airport operations.

7.3.3 *Rational Plan*

The final feature of the total institution is that these various enforced activities are "brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aims of the institution" (Goffman, 1991:17), and once again, this is indeed the practice at E.M.A and at all other airports. Staff within E.M.A, whom I interviewed during this research, were generally very positive about their experiences at work.

> JC   Do you ever find that the strict security and lack of
>
> places to hide from the public gets you down"?
>
> A   You get used to it really quickly, and it's just
>
> something that you do. Sometimes it's a bit of a pain if you

leave something in your car, or need to go out and make a

private call in your break, but you get used to it.

JC   Do you find that you start to dress in a way that

you know will not set off security?

A   Definitely. It's just part of working in an airport,

and you really don't think about it after a while. You just

make sure you don't bring stuff into work that you know

won't get through, and you soon find out which shoes and

stuff set the beeper off (Respondent D, 07/09/09)

This does not inherently imply that E.M.A is not institutional in a Goffmanesque

sense for its passengers or staff. What this does suggest however, as supported by

research into prison staff (Long et al., 1986) is that institutionalisation is not always

to be identified as a negative attribute for a place. Goffman's total institution is

dystopian in nature, but in the airport, this provides a framework, which allows staff

and passengers to comprehend a complex and often stressful operation, facilitating a

smoother transition through it.

7.4 THE 'TERMINAL INSTITUTION'

Before this examination proceeds further, it is important here to make clear that

whilst the airport is looking more and more like the Goffmanesque total institution,

the significant, and not incidental difference here lies in the length of time an

individual is likely to reside within. As noted previously, Goffman (1991:22) makes

very clear that the rationale for the total institution being a site of sociological

significance, lies in the nature of it being "part residential community, part formal

organisation"; it is for this reason that the contemporary airport terminal cannot be perceived as a 'total institution'. There is however, a clear case for discussing the airport as a 'institutional'.

Goffman (1991) examines the Asylum from two perspectives: the 'inmate' and then the 'staff' view of the total institution; the same investigation can be made with the airport, although it is important to change the labels applied by Goffman to 'passengers' and 'staff'. Whilst the roles within the airside terminal are clearly different between these two groups, there is evidence of institutional processes operating across all those whom occupy the space. The most notable similarities between the airport and Goffman's total institution exists in terms of practices within the space, but also notably rituals, practices, processes and barriers to entry and exit. There is however a clear demarcation between staff and passengers, evident in how they enter, exit and behave whilst in the terminal, but also importantly how the two groups interact whilst in the space. "Each grouping tends to conceive of the other in terms of narrow hostile stereotypes, staff often seeing inmates as bitter, secretive, and untrustworthy, while inmates often see staff as condescending, highhanded, and mean. Staff tend to feel superior and righteous; inmates tend, in some ways at least, to feel inferior, weak, blameworthy, and guilty" (Goffman, 1991:18). Observations (EMA – Various, Palma – 16/09/09, New York, Liberty – 10/08/10) affirm that this is true in the terminal building, particularly with security staff and the processes undertaken whilst moving from landside to airside. The balance of power lies very much in the hands of the staff, and writing as a 'guilty looking' individual, it can be affirmed that there is a clear divide here. Whilst security staff declined from being interviewed as part of this research, in casual conversations, it became clear that certain of the staff 'enjoyed' the sense of power held over travellers, and this seems to

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exist from the moment baggage is checked-in, to the point of boarding the aircraft at the gate. Again, writing as a traveller and airline passenger, this guilt arises from the number of rules and regulations we encounter when entering the airport; is our luggage within the correct weight limit; does the content of our luggage meet regulations regarding liquids and sharps; do we have the correct legal documentation; are we in the correct lane; has anyone assisted in packing our luggage; are we wearing clothing that can be removed should this be required; have we removed the contents of our pockets? At the same time, the role of the staff is to ensure that these rules are obeyed, and they are required to identify any individual who may be breaching any of these regulations. There are as many social rules we must adhere to in this situation however; are we dressed in appropriate clothing should the requirement to remove some of it be applied; are we adopting an appropriate attitude for passing through strict security and identity checkpoints; is our passport photograph so old that it no longer resembles us; are we prepared should a member of security staff break normal rules of personal boundaries by 'patting down' our clothing and touching us in intimate places; are we prepared to expose our most personal physical self through the use of a full body scanner? Goffman (1991) also highlights how tone and nature of language used between staff and inmates are 'formally prescribed', and this is again true in the airport. There is absolutely no room for flippant, arrogant, comedic or incendiary comments from passengers whilst passing through airport security; similarly airport staff, whilst attempting to remain personable, are expected to maintain an air of officialdom and severity, in order to highlight the importance of the processes engaged in.

This sits very comfortably with Goffman's discussion of the 'inmate world': a world in which certain practices and behaviour are challenged and then altered; or

'disculturation' as Goffman (1991:23) terms it. As Goffman suggests however, this process is not fundamentally to bring about a constant change, but more to create a 'tension', with which individuals can be managed. Entry into the airport, as into the asylum, for the first time, creates a confusion amongst individuals, who may be otherwise self-assured. Whilst the airport terminal may not be such a degrading or humiliating process as entering an asylum in 1960, the processes are created to alter the passenger's understanding of themselves. As previously noted, this can be observed best by observing a formal queue at a bar inside the airside terminal, when this would not happen outside of this space. The airport processes work with alarming speed to 'mortify' the individual into the institutional practices necessary to progress through the terminal and onto the plane. One fundamental difference here of course, lies in the manner in which the individual enters the terminal: not through force or coercion, but voluntarily. Having identified very many nervous passengers in terminals around the world however, there is a sense that the majority would rather be anywhere else, and that actually, their presence in the terminal is through coercion or at least as a result of there being no other rational alternative.

Goffman (1991:25) suggests that a specific set of procedures occur in the total institution, in an attempt to 'mortify' the individual, "such as taking a life history, photographing, weighing, fingerprinting, assigning numbers, searching, listing personal possessions for storage [and] undressing". Anyone who has passed through an airport in the last twenty years will identify with each and every one of these procedures as part of the contemporary process of gaining entry to an airside departure lounge. The institution is not always about completely removing the paraphernalia of ordinary life, but instead replacing them with amended and controlled versions of the same, and this is visible instantly in the airport lounge. The

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'lounge', even those set aside for more elite passengers, bear little resemblance to a domestic sitting room. As previously noted, the furniture is generally uncomfortable and fixed in rows. The departure lounge is to all intents and purposes a waiting area, yet this sounds too clinical and less welcoming. Goffman (1991) goes on to suggest that the trappings of life outside of the institution are then removed and replaced, by such as uniform. As with the lounge, the analogy here only goes so far, as individuals within airports are not subject to the same degradation; however, uniformity is very much part of the terminal process, and the passenger is restricted in their activities, and thus the practices of the waiting passenger are uniform, and this is not simply within a single terminal, but actually, this is true across the majority of terminals across the world. My experience in terminals around the globe, is that it is very easy to forget just where you are; a point highlighted previously by Salter (2008).

It seems that the principle facet lacking here, from a Goffmanesque perspective, is the totality of the space. The passenger experience at the airport, with the exception of when significant delays are experienced, and even then, is not about being in the space 'day and night'. This does not however result in a dismissal of the relevance of Goffman's work in the airport; quite the contrary, this provides us with an opportunity to examine the workings of the institution in a more transient space. This leads then to the concept of the 'Terminal Institution'; a space in which individuals undergo the rituals of institutionalisation, but in a compressed time frame. If, as Goffman (1991) suggests, the role of the institution is to change the 'inmate's' sense of their own identity, with the purpose of creating a compliant and malleable individual, then this is certainly evident in the airport setting. Salter (2007:51) notes how we voluntarily 'opt-in' to this program to "facilitate the passage of safe transit". This issue of 'transit' is fundamental here. The Terminal Institution is a complex yet

uniform management of people in transit. The degree to which a traveller is subject to institutionalisation is dependent upon their mode of transport; rules exist for pedestrians on the sidewalk, for motorists, for rail passengers and for those who choose flight. The airport is a perfect example of this in action, due to the time spent in the space, and the often cross-border nature of the travel.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Whilst it may initially appear that airports are little more than transportation hubs, or indeed the ideal metaphorical space, capable of being conceptualised in a variety of ways, it still remains to fully explore the impact of this study sociologically. The aim of this research was never solely to dismiss the validity of the work of scholars such as Mark Gottdiener, who may have misrepresented the airport, and the city or mall, in an attempt to strengthen or validate claims relating to social space and place. Quite the contrary; this study set out to examine the precise nature of the airport terminal as a 'public' space, because this was the common factor present in all of the critical literature referred to in previous chapters. It was simply through observation and sociological investigation that the following conclusions can be drawn. Without wishing to restate much of what has already been stated within this thesis, it seems pertinent to revisit why these conclusions are in fact reached at all.

8.2 WHY AIRPORTS ARE NOT QUITE WHAT PEOPLE THINK THEY ARE

Some airports, when viewed a particular way, may appear to share many characteristics with the city; shops, crowds, meeting and greeting places, social interaction and so on as previously described. The first issue here however, is that all airports are different, as are all cities. More importantly, defining the city is an incredibly complex task in itself, which can, and has, produced many theses over the years. This makes it troublesome at best, to make the connection between city and airport simply. The primary concern however, is that in attempting to make this association, the significance of both the city and the airport are diminished, in a way

in which scholars who have devoted much of their academic endeavour to examining the importance of the city, would find basic at best, and insulting at worst. This research concludes that far from being the terminopolis or airport city fantasised about by some, many airport terminals are far less complex than cities in many ways, in that they deal with a very specific set of people and circumstances in a very measured and managed way, and yet more complex in others, specifically in relation to ensuring the border security of the state in which it is situated. Airports have shops and bars, just like cities, but generally do not have the key aspects of the metropolis, identified by Jane Jacobs, Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, Louis Wirth, Robert Ezra Park, and others too numerous to name here, and to suggest they do, fails to acknowledge the significance of the work of these urban scholars. Similarly, the airport is an incredibly complex space of flow, interaction, emotion, (in)security, people management and so on, and to simply suggest that this is an integral part of its 'cityness' is failing to acknowledge the importance of such a place in contemporary society, where all of the previously noted characteristics are so key in assisting the social scientist in the quest to comprehend the role of the individual and the State in the increasingly globalised world of the Twenty-First Century.

As private spaces for consumption, it is understandable why the airport is conceptualised as a shopping mall; intricately planned spaces, ensuring footfall, whilst creating the illusion of individual freedom and choice. Malls are perceived by many who use them as public spaces, and it is possible to comprehend why this is the case. Airports are also perceived by many in the same way. As previously identified within this thesis, writers such as Jon Goss, Rob Shields, and Kowinski have studied the sociological importance of the shopping mall, and in much the same way as the

work on the city, this body of knowledge is somehow belittled by the suggestion that airports are just like malls because of their pedestrianised, indoor, climate controlled, private, secure environment. Malls have a much greater significance than this for society, including their impact upon the built environment of the city. Despite the best efforts of many airport architects, including Fentress Bradburn Architects, who designed Sea-Tac Airport terminal in Seattle, airport terminals have yet to create a significant change on the High Street, or Main Street in Seattle's' case. Large edge of town, or out-of-town shopping malls have made a clear impact upon city and town centres around the world however. This is not to suggest that the building of an airport in close proximity to a town or city does not have an impact; quite the contrary, the impact is generally very different in its cause and effect. Airports are clearly spaces for consumption, but for many airports around the world, this is where the association with the mall ends. Similarly, malls are very controlled and manipulative environments, and yet the numbers of those excluded from being part of the global travel revolution, as it has been termed, are far greater than those deemed to be undesirable by mall operators.

Airports are not theme parks and this is self-evident. The association with the theme park however, makes greater sociological sense than that of city or mall in many ways; these being the ways in which the individual is manipulated, transformed and controlled, as would be the case within the theme park. Whilst the physical and architectural features of the airport terminal bear little or no resemblance to the theme park, the influence upon the sense of self upon entry is clear within both places. This is articulated by Mark Gottdiener, in his discussion of the transitional nature of the movement into the airport building itself. This examination of the difference between

transitional and liminal spaces has been documented previously within this study. Yet again, the common factor is one of consumption; as the theme park patron is encouraged to consume both goods and experience, the same is true of the air passenger. Where this similarity ends is in the discussion of the informed consent of the consumer within the two environments; Gottdiener (2001) suggests that the theme park customer enters the theme park expecting consumption, indeed it may be suggested that this is the only purpose of entry. The passenger entering the airport terminal is not made quite so aware of this expectation to consume. There is of course, the option for the airline passenger to avoid consuming once airside; however this has been made increasingly difficult as a result of restrictions of what can be taken from landside to airside; bottled drinks for example. As has already been noted within the analysis, and will be reiterated later in this conclusion, the measure of consumption is the key factor here. The airport is not being cited as place of consumption simply as a result of passengers purchasing bottled water or pre-flight meals. As Gottdiener notes, the transition in the sense of self to one of consumer is far more wide-ranging than simply purchasing goods; it rests upon the concept of changing ones attitude to consuming a programme of events, or an ideology. As has already been explored, consumption in this sense can be a tool of control and manipulation. The theme park could be seen as a primary example of a space of chaos and disorganisation; crowds of thrill-seeking individuals, fuelled by adrenalin, desperate for the next rush, and yet all air passengers are not. Instead, they are sites of calm and organisation, where customers queue, sometimes for incredibly long periods of time, waiting for the next thrill. In this manner, they are the exemplar of controlled and managed space. The same is true of the airport, where excited, frightened, or individuals who sit anywhere within this spectrum of emotion, spend large amounts of

time being shepherded from queue to queue; waiting in specific areas only to progress to the next waiting area. Consumption within the airport terminal provides the necessary link to society beyond the airports boundaries, which enables the individual to manage their time within this otherwise manufactured environment.

The non-place, espoused by Marc Auge, is visible within the airport terminal, and all of the other examples cited in his work on supermodernity, to those who have not considered the airport experience in detail. Spaces utilised for transit can be sterile and hold little or no significance to society other than their role as a transit hub. Anyone who has waited at a rail or bus interchange will identify the sparse and seemingly irrelevant nature of their surroundings; this is very rarely the case in an airport terminal, where there is far more restriction on entry and movement, opportunity for consumption, and the element of fear, anxiety and eager anticipation. It does not necessarily follow that passengers waiting to board a train will not have such emotions, however the likelihood is less. It is also the case that whilst many of these sites of transit quoted by Auge may be subject to surveillance, this will not be as evident as in the airport where there are also quite invasive security checks. This again relates in some part to the concept of transitional space noted previously; entry into a motorway service station or bus terminus will not be such a transitional experience, but instead more of a liminal one, where there is no evident change in the sense of self. Even in some of the larger railway stations, which are often cited as bearing a resemblance to an airport, Manchester Piccadilly for one notable example, there is not the element of transition that we would find at an airport. It may be suggested that Auge's analogy fails to be acceptable with examples such as the larger railway stations, as these are sites with notable historical significance. The same is

true of the airport, as noted in the analysis of the airport as a non-place. As also stated, but highly significant enough to reiterate, if the airport is so devoid of meaning and significance in contemporary society, how can waiting to board a plane feel quite so liberating, exhilarating, or potentially terrifying. It is important to note when attempting to make a judgement on the historical and anthropological significance of place, how we are defining 'history'. It is subjective as to whether history requires a set time period; for example does a site need to have been an ancient burial ground, or can it instead have been the site of a more recent battle, or can it be a site of high emotion or social or industrial achievement? Many airports can fit several of these options, thus making them transit points with a background, thus making them places, not non-places as Auge suggests.

8.3 WHAT AIRPORTS ARE

It appears that airport terminals cannot simply be understood using a simple or a convenient metaphor, but are in fact complex spaces in their own right. Analysis of observational and interview data generated by this study suggests that airports are equally significant exemplars of two key sociological and criminological concepts; the postmodern panopticon and the total institution. It has already been noted however, that to talk of the airport in terms of it being a 'total' institution is both incorrect, and a gross misinterpretation of Goffman's work. The airport, along with other transport hubs, does however satisfy many of the criteria for being institutions, and the key difference lies in their transient nature. The airport is indeed first and foremost a transport hub, however as previously discussed; this could easily take a similar form to a bus terminal or a railway station. What differentiates the airport

from other spaces of transportation, is the level of control and discipline which is imposed upon the passenger by those with authority within the space. This is not to suggest that there should be no security or surveillance within airports, as most do serve as international borders, and a level of security has to be maintained here, but much of the control which is exerted within the airport, is not through direct overt policing, but is achieved more through more covert means. Airport terminals distribute individuals in space, and control all aspects of their environment; this includes fixed schedules and rigid spaces of flow. Through the processes of both overt and covert surveillance, the airport authorities watch, manipulate, and control those within this space; passengers, and in many airports, the staff too. Consumption plays a significant part in this manipulation and control, through its use as a therapeutic mechanism, but also through its properties as a routine activity for many. The principle exists here that whilst people are shopping, they are behaving appropriately; the by-product of course being the accumulation of profit for retailers, and the opportunity to generate income through property, as highlighted by the earlier examination of the work of Henri Lefebvre.

8.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AIRPORT

The airport has always been a site of great social importance, seen by many social commentators as the gateway to contemporary globalisation; by this suggesting that whilst global trade and travel has existed for centuries, the airport signifies the birth of fast and relatively inexpensive travel and trade markets. Architecturally, the airport has also been a significant showcase for state and individual flair and contemporary design. From the early attempts to produce decadent gateways, to the twenty-first

century desire for architects to have a major international airport terminal in their portfolio, the relevance of the airport building itself is clear. International air travel provided the platform for the economic elite to both enhance their business empires, but also to be seen to be part of the 'kinetic elite', as noted previously. Consumption has played a significant role in air travel almost from its conception, both in terms of presence within the earliest terminals, up to the global marketplace that now appears in major international terminals all around the world. As noted earlier within this conclusion, airports have not played a major role in changing the nature of town and city main shopping streets per se, but airports have certainly helped shape, and in turn been shaped by the cities to which they are associated, in much the same way as out-of-town malls shape traffic networks and periphery industry. Transport networks have evolved as a result of the building and expansion of airports, and with this industry has grown up on the periphery of airports also. Prior to this study, these, and many more reasons existed making the airport such a significant site for social investigation.

This study provides a window onto the airport from a new perspective; there is certainly nothing written which talks of the airport in these terms. The key point to get across, is that the airport is no less significant because of its dissimilarities to cities or shopping malls, but instead quite the contrary. Increasing numbers of people fly today than ever in history, and for now, those numbers continue to grow. Airports are not sites of ambivalence; few who use them do so routinely, even those who fly often. We talk about airports generally with a level of distain, in the way that they are some type of hurdle to be overcome, and yet this is not how observations show people to be within the sites. Airports are sites of managed social exclusion. This is in part due to their private nature, partly a result of their status as border crossing, but it cannot be

ignored that they are sites for the 'kinetic elite' (Salter, 2008), where those who are not privileged in this way are not only not welcome, but forcefully forbidden. They do, of course, have this in common with other pseudo-private spaces, such as shopping malls, but the level of exclusion is greater in the airport. Much of the exclusion is not the result of physical barring, but is a result of poverty and the inability to be part of the 'elite' as described by Salter (2008). It is pertinent to emphasise the point just made; airports are private spaces, and are not an extension of public space. This is important, and not simply from the perspective of security as already noted. Privately owned spaces have sets of rules and expected patterns of behaviour, and these are set out by those whom own the space itself. It is very simple to find oneself going from private space to private space, and this leads to a familiarity that can result in a belief that the space is public and for everyone. Airports are sites of conspicuous consumption: a great deal of the goods available are luxury, often marketed at 'lower' prices. Retailers synonymous with the sale of luxury items such as Hamleys and Harrods, can now both be found in airport terminals in the UK. Both Manchester Airport Terminal 1 and Gatwick Airport North Terminal, where the two previous retail outlets can be found, demonstrate the phantasmagoria of the Parisian arcades, first noted by Walter Benjamin (1999). The existence of the flaneur within the airport terminal is possibly a further research opportunity here; however the leisure class, of whom Veblen (1994) writes, are alive and well in the contemporary airport terminal.

Most importantly, airports are sites of specific social control and people management. Individuals expect to engage with social control agents as part of daily routine; the police, the government, possibly the church and so on. The level of control in the

terminal however, seems akin to that utilised in correctional facilities, as noted by both Goffman and Foucault, and this is seemingly excessive as part of 'normal' life. The control extends beyond the policing of 'right and wrong', and includes techniques already discussed here to ensure compliance, although in a short time frame. Whether these methods are employed to promote more 'docile bodies' for consumption, as Mark Gottdiener (2001a) suggests through his examination of the transitional nature of the airport space, or whether there is a wider security issue that requires such an approach is unclear, although observation suggests at least an element of both of these. The airport terminal seems to fail significantly if their approach to people management is hampered. There are many examples of adverse weather or power failure that result in a blockage of the flow of people, and this often results in large groups of individuals congregating in spaces where they cannot be managed, and this breaks down both the flow of the space, but also nearly all other operations. Such an unscheduled event in the asylum or the prison, would no doubt result in a 'lock-down' situation, where all inmates are returned to some type of default management process, but of course, this is not possible or permissible in the airport terminal. This sets the airport apart from other types of transport hubs, as a similar situation in a train station, would see people leave and return at a later point; something that can't happen simply once people have passed border security, as they are effectively in a 'limbo' space.

It seems clear, that despite their transient function, contemporary airport terminals, large and small, are indeed institutional. Their nature is to 'hold', 'sort', 'manage' and 'despatch' those who choose to enter, including those for whom this is a site of employment. The Terminal Institution plays a significant role in the manner in which free willed individuals move from place to place, and this surely makes the airport

terminal a site of sociological importance. Further study is required to evaluate the extent to which this institutionalisation spreads into other transport hubs, such as railway stations or bus terminals; however it seems increasingly likely that as social control increases, and individual freedom diminishes, the terminal institution will become a more common feature of movement, but will almost certainly remain 'invisible' to those without a sociological imagination.

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - OPERATORS

- What, in your view, is the primary function of the airport terminal building?

- What role does consumption play in this function?

- Are consumption practices within this airport in any way influenced by the airlines or the destinations available etc?

- In what ways does this airport terminal emulate a city?

- In what ways does this airport terminal emulate a shopping mall?

- Would you suggest that this terminal is more like a city than a mall?

- When was this airport built, and has the consumption space been redesigned since?

- Do you believe that the design of the retail space within this terminal building makes shopping here a pleasurable process?

- It what ways could the space be changed to improve it in your view?

- What are the short and long term goals for this airport in relation to consumption?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - STAFF (NON-RETAIL)

- Have you ever worked in a city centre or a shopping mall before?

- How does (do you think) the airport terminal differ from either city or mall?

- What do you notice people doing here in the airport terminal that you would not expect them to do in a city centre or a shopping mall for example?

- Why do you think people react differently in airport terminals than they would in either a city or a mall?

- Do you think that the airport terminal is like a city centre or a mall in any way?

- Have you ever worked in a different airport to this one?

- In what ways was it similar and conversely how did it differ?

- Have you ever used this airport as a paying customer?

- What (if anything) did you buy?

- Was this just like shopping anywhere else or was it a different experience?

- Do you think that the design and choice of outlets in this terminal make shopping a pleasurable experience for customers?

- What do you think could be done to improve the customer experience in this terminal from your perspective?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - (RETAILERS)

- Do you recognise or accept the differences in the ways in which your stores operate between city centre, mall and airports?

- What are the main operational differences (apart from the obvious one about tax)?

- How does the physical design of the store differ in an airport to either a mall or a city – for example, window display, shop fittings etc?

- Does this affect the nature of the stock that you sell through airport retail?

- Does the nature of this stock differ between airports?

- Does the 'captive consumer' element to airport retail make a significant difference to the ways in which your store operates?

- Do you believe that airport retail will be affected by the current financial downturn as city and mall sales are forecast to be affected?

- How do you view the role of consumption within the airport terminal setting?

- Are your airport stores more akin to your city centre or mall stores in their appearance, operation and profitability?

- How do you view the future of airport retailing?

- How will this affect your stores?

APPENDIX B

<u>Interview – 09/07/09</u>

<u>Central Airport – Respondent A   (Retail Staff)</u>

JC   OK, first of all, have you worked in retail beyond the airport?

A   Yes. I originally did High Street department store retailing, and then passed down to the large shed type retailing, and then (err) the last eleven years into airport retailing.

JC   And what, apart from the obvious things like sort of the tax differences, what's the fundamental differences from working in those environments?

A   What you do have within the airport is almost (erm) an idea of what your passenger flow's going to be that day, so you can very much tailor your day around the passenger flow, whereas in the High Street and the out-of-town business, you might see an uplift at lunchtime, you might see an uplift at the weekend, but you really don't know what kind of passenger numbers you're going to get, whereas here, you know in advance, and daily, exactly what passenger numbers are coming through, and you can tailor your customer service and your staff resource accordingly.

JC   Excellent, yes. You say you've worked in city centre and (sort of) edge-of-town, out-of-town stores; are the types of customers you get different?

A   (erm) Working in a department store, and depending on the day and the time of day would dictate different passenger types. In the out-of-town; again, very much dependant upon the day, time of the year, (erm) would dictate passenger types, but at the airport you have an array of people coming through, (erm) especially in regional airports, where you do have all spectrums from, (erm) different backgrounds, all different (erm) economic groups of people going through…

JC   I've noticed the (erm) there are a lot of 'stags' and 'hens' leave this airport.

A   Yes, definitely the regional, you get a much broader mix, I think some of the more (erm) sort of (erm) *West Central Airport,* (erm) they don't have the wide spectrum of passengers going through, because I did six years in *West Central Airport* before six years here.

JC   Right, interesting, so you've worked in other airports as well as here. Were there any fundamental differences between *West Central* and here apart from the types of passenger?

A   Yes, (pause) the *West Central* passenger, you've got a very, especially with the split in terminals that they had, you had a very high level of business travellers, (erm) and although we still have a business traveller here, not in the volumes we had at *West Central*. I think it would be fair to say you have long haul out of West Central in a higher number, and therefore perhaps, you have a more affluent passenger going through *West Central.* There is a (erm) bigger base here (erm) on our low-cost carriers, and the passenger profile reflects that.

JC   I think then I already know the answer, but does that then effect what you stock here?

A   As a rule, we all have the same sort of core products, but (erm) the *West Centrals,* the *North West Internationals*, the London airports will also do top-end in spirits, liquor, (erm) jewellery, and also perhaps have some additional cosmetics houses, but probably about 85% of the product range is the same.

JC   How does the actual physical store differ in its design and its set-out, compared to (erm) either a city centre store like a department store or one of the larger edge of town stores? I do know some of the background to the redevelopment that went on here.

A   (erm) obviously here I the departure lounge we have a captive audience, but what we want that captive audience to do is to shop with us, because I know some research that I was involved in a few years ago over at *West Central*, actually denoted that passengers, once they enter the departure lounge, spend on average about 35 minutes in the departure lounge, and of that time they'll probably decide to eat, go to the toilets and decide to shop, so in a such a short period of time, we've got to somehow convert them into shoppers. So the design of the store here is very open. The majority of passengers have to walk through the store, and then obviously hopefully at that point, we will convert the passengers to a customer.

JC   Have you noted any changes in the (sort of) amount of time people spend, you said (erm), how long ago was the research?

A   That was about seven years ago.

JC   So about 35 minutes in the terminal. Has this changed, and have you noticed a difference with that?

A   I think what we've noticed (erm) I think duty free and tax free, (erm) has changed in the sense that because there's so now much competition on the High Street, and because a lot of the countries now can't take advantage of duty free, peoples perception is I think over the last probably since, (uuhh) 2004, as the EU grew and grew, is that we're no longer seen as (erm) such fantastic value. And so whereas when I started my career sort of 11 years ago, everybody came through the store and you were guaranteed everybody would buy, because you know everybody

took advantage of duty free. They would pick up a litre of spirits, pick up 200 cigarettes as a minimum, even if they didn't want them, they would buy them and give them as gifts or sell them on to people, whereas now, that isn't the case, and (erm) people I think, because of the High Street and because of the loss of duty free don't perceive as such high saving messages, so it's more difficult to convert people and less and less people are actually purchasing with us. So when I started, you would guarantee on average 36% of the travellers would purchase, today in *Central*, you're looking at 10%.

JC   I've noticed from looking at the departure boards, you've flights leaving here for places like Shaam el Sheik, I presume they're still taking advantage of the litre of spirits and cigarettes?
A   They're still taking advantage, but because travellers travel to different destinations, (erm) and a lot of our travellers do get confused, you know, one year they go to Malta and they can't buy, the next year they go to Shaam and they can, but in their mindset is the majority of people , they don't know what countries are in or outside of the EU and therefore the perception isd they can't buy, and we have quite a challenge in converting them.

JC   I suppose then that this is a difference between flying from here or from *West Central* or *North West International*. I've recently flown from terminal 1 at *North West International* which has a lot of the low-cost (sort of) European flights, but they've got very much sort of a long haul terminal, when actually most of the long haul departs from terminal 2.

A   Yes it does.

JC   I mentioned previously about the concept of the airport being like a city or like a shopping mall, do you notice, working here, do you consciously think of those things, or do you think that now I've mentioned it you might see some kind of similarities?

A   I think when I worked at *West Central Airport*, I mean that airport never ever shut down, and it didn't matter what time of the day or the night I commuted in or out of that airport, it was still live and it was still vibrant and it was very much like a city in its own right. I think because *Central* is slightly smaller, it's more like a small village or a small town, (erm) and there's a lot of networking with the people that are at this airport; it's a much smaller friendlier based airport, whereas the *West Central* experience was very like a big city. Nobody really spoke to one another, not much relationships going on, so it was definitely very different between the two airports.

JC   Village versus city; that's very interesting. You mentioned the (erm) duty free impact, the actual credit crunch, the phrase everyone's talking about at the moment, has this effected you, I presume it must have done?

A   Yes, we've seen, I mean we've talked about how many people we convert, so pre-abolition of duty free it's about 36%. Up to last year, we were running about 14% and this year we're only converting 10%, and it's our domestic travellers that are not buying, so that proportion that are flying perhaps on business or on leisure breaks to meet family, they are the guys that are not buying at all.

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JC   Right OK. Does the nature of this airport and the low-cost carriers make a difference to you, because I know that airlines like Ryanair don't encourage people to take any more baggage on than they actually have to?

A   Yes, it is dependent upon the carrier, (erm) you know, with BMI Baby and Easyjet, they're actually the people who travel on those are still fairly affluent, and (erm) we manage to still get quite a good yield from those passengers, with the introduction of Ryanair a few years ago, it was very much a different passenger type or a different mentality and the spend on those flights are dramatically less than the other low-cost carriers, and yes, the impact of the one bag rule, (erm) has had a negative impact on our business.

JC   One thing that seems obvious, I mean I come in here as well on a daily basis whilst I'm here, and just the procedure for getting here is different you know, if you work in a shop in a mall say the Trafford Centre in Manchester, you don't have to go through the security. Has that become part of your life that you just accept, or is that something that you never, you say you worked in airports for 11 years, is this something you ever get used to?

A   Yes you get used to it, (erm) it's part of your working day. (erm) I have over the years, you start to manage your day so that if you do need to do business landside, you either do it first thing in the morning or you do it last thing at night, so you can try and reduce the amount of trips through security, (erm) but you do just take it as part of your everyday existence. It is (erm) difficult for recruiting and the whole security clearance puts an immense pressure on us when it comes to recruit, you know from actually sort of interviewing a person and getting them on board, it can take about 3 months. Now for a senior role, that's not a problem, because people in a senior role have probably got at least a one to three month notice period, so they're happy to do that that, but if you're employing a sales consultant who's only giving a weeks notice or needs to give a weeks notice, you know all of them seem to think that they could be potentially out of work for two or three months while they get security clearance. That is a big, big barrier.

JC   Of course there is the GSAT that everyone has to do now.

A   Yes that's right.

JC   From your time working here in the airport, and before that in (erm) another sector, are there any observations that you notice that …….

A   I think what still after 11 years I really find difficult is the criminal aspect within the airport, because on the High Street, and especially the out-of-town business, you knew that you know, you knew that that you were going to get a percentage of your products stolen, through shoplifting; you knew that was going to happen. When I came to the airport, you consider it such a safe environment once you're airside, and you've got a captive audience, so if somebody steals, the chances are, they're gonna get caught, you know, because all they do is go into a lounge, and if we can identify them, they're captive in the lounge. If they go onto an aircraft, we can withdraw them from an aircraft, or we've actually had occasions were we can get people to get them at the other end, but there's still that criminal element, there's

people who'll just think 'take a risk' and take something, (erm) or there is the organised gangs that come through so we do still get targeted in quite a high way.

JC   Do you have the level of internal security that you would have say for example in a department store on the High Street or do you rely on the fact that the security is done prior?

A   We have two, it's slightly different. We still have the CCTV cameras which you would obviously have on the High Street and out-of-town business, but we don't have somebody sitting and operating them. We tend to use it to go back and extract evidence, so if we were suspicious about an activity, we would go back. The bonus we have here compared to a High Street is, you have on tap security, but more importantly, you have a resident police station, and they are very supportive. (erm) and so if we have some activity that we're not happy about, they will come and view the tape for us and make the decision for us: yes we'll go and proceed and search that passenger or take them off the plane or whatever so there is that which is a big benefit.

JC   That's interesting, (erm) I'm not sure if its my paranoia, because I have nothing to fear, but I always feel like I'm being watched everywhere, particularly in this role; a person loitering with no particular intent, and this is a little strange. Thank you very much for your help.

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

Research Governance and Ethics Committee

Ethical Approval Form for Post-Graduates

Ethical approval must be obtained by all postgraduate research students (PGR) prior to starting research with human subjects, animals or human tissue. A PGR is defined as anyone undertaking a Research rather than a Taught masters degree, and includes for example MSc by Research, MRes, MPhil and PhD. The student must discuss the content of the form with their dissertation supervisor who will advise them about revisions. A final copy of the summary will then be agreed and the student and supervisor will 'sign it off'.

The applicant must forward a hard copy of the Form to the Contracts Office once it is has been signed by their Supervisor and an electronic copy emailed to the Research Governance and Ethics Committee through Max Pilotti m.u.pilotti@salford.ac.uk.

(The form can be completed electronically; the sections can be expanded to the size required)

Name of student : Jeremy Alan Coulton

Course of study :   **PhD Sociology**

Supervisor :   **Dr Garry Crawford**   **Research Institute: ISCPR**

Name of Research Council or other funding organisation (if applicable): University of Salford GTA Program

1a.   Title of proposed research project

> **From 7-11 through 9/11: An examination of the airport terminal as consumption space.**

1b.   Is this Project Purely literature based?

   NO

2. Project focus

This project focuses upon the nature of space within the modern airport setting, particularly those spaces given over for retail use.

3. Project objectives (maximum of three)

• This project will aim to provide a sociological insight into consumption practices within the airport setting. • This project aims to examine the airport terminal as the dynamic analogy it is sometimes claimed to be by scholars, for example Mark Giottdiener, Gillian Fuller, Ross Harley, Alastair Gordon to name but a few. • This project aims to focus upon which ways, if any, the modern airport terminal is congruous with the shopping mall

4.   Research strategy

(For example, where will you recruit participants? What information/data collection strategies will you use? What approach do you intend to take to the analysis of information / data generated?)

This study aims to gain an insight not solely into a social group, as is often the case with ethnography, but instead to search for a more dynamic, holistic and natural understanding of the nature of consumption space within the modern airport setting. It is important to note though, that the key components to the nature of this enquiry are the groups who use the space; this includes the operators of, the workers within, and the consumers of airport consumer spaces, as well as the space itself. This researcher will undertake a participant observation study, and this participation will occur in a variety of settings: for example, as an employee of a specific retail outlet in a city centre, shopping mall and various airport environments, alongside observations from the perspective of the consumer within airport buildings. Alongside observation, the researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews with individuals, and respondents will be chosen using a considered sample from staff, consumers and

operators in each setting. At this stage, 'The Pen Shop' retail organisation and 'East Midlands Airport' have consented to assist in this study, and issues regarding access are being resolved. The study will also include a visual ethnography, some of which will be a 'walking study'. This approach combines the visual data provided by the image, whilst incorporating the influences of Michel de Certeau, who attempted to theorise the importance of "walking in the city as a practice of everyday life that involves a process of appropriation" (Pink, 2007:244). This concept of being where others are and seeing what others see, and expressing this through the visual image, is a powerful ethnographic research tool. The benefit to ethnography of the visual image, is best described by Iain Edgar who states that "new research methodology such as image-work, offers the opportunity for researchers to further study the personal and social world of the respondent and so obtain a blend of cognitive, affective and intuitive material known, dimly known, implicit, suppressed and even repressed by the conscious mind" (Edgar, 2004:104). The researcher understands the ethical issues that surround such a study, and acknowledges that issues regarding the taking of photographic images in public, whilst covered by the British Sociological Association's statement of ethical practice, are currently a sensitive social issue, and with specific regard to airports, there is a wider security implication, however the researcher will act in accordance with articles contained within the British Sociological Association's statement of ethical practice (2002), and more specifically, conduct in accordance with the British Sociological Association 'Visual Sociology Statement of Ethical Practice – October 2006', a copy of which is enclosed for information as Appendix A.

5. What is the rationale which led to this project

(for example, previous work – give references where appropriate)

Global travel is now a frequent and ordinary experience for a significant percentage of the populations of

industrialised and developed nations. Taking a flight is, in itself, a relatively unremarkable event; the development of airports from their humble beginnings, into the vast commercial and architecturally significant structures they have become though is indeed quite remarkable. What is of the greatest importance to this research, is the manner in which the airport has been likened to the city, in terms of both its historical design, and the spatial and commercial nature of the terminal buildings themselves. Sociologists, social geographers, anthropologists and architects amongst others (Gottdiener, 2001, Fuller and Harley, 2004, Gordon, 2008), have made this comparison, and yet they have failed to satisfactorily suggest specifically how and why this may be so. Airport buildings have also been cited as being the archetypal sterile and 'lifeless' artefact of postmodernity (Auge, 1995). This research aims to examine the nature of the airport terminal, and to explore the concordance it may or may not have with the modern city. There are many aspects of the development and nature of the city that have been studied, and to focus on each and every area would be both impractical and academically ill-judged, and therefore this research focuses on two theoretical concepts: consumption and space. It is also prudent to first examine the historical development of airport buildings, as this charts the progression in the significance of 'terminalisation'.

6. **If you are going to work within a particular organisation do they have their own procedures for gaining ethical approval**

   for example, within a hospital or health centre?

   YES

   If YES – what are these and how will you ensure you meet their requirements?

Issues surrounding airports have legal as well as ethical considerations. Access to airside in British airports requires strict CRB screening, and all of the arrangements are in place for this process to commence in time for the fieldwork to begin.

7. **Are you going to approach individuals to be involved in your research?**

   YES

Firstly, respondents drawn from staff members of the retail organisation and from the airport itself, will be volunteers, who give full consent (via a consent form, a copy of which is enclosed as Appendix B). All information given by such respondents will be treated with the strictest confidence, and will not be made available to any third parties. Names and places will be changed to ensure this anonymity and maintain integrity. All electronic data will be encrypted, and hard copy data will be stored securely and safely for the necessary period of time, following which, this data will be destroyed.

Secondly, this project aims to conduct brief interviews with members of the public whilst in the airport. One of the UK airports who are granting access for this project, has an in-house consumer research team, and selection of individuals will be carried out utilising their current procedures, assuming that such methods for identifying respondents meets with the ethical standards set out elsewhere within this study.

8. More specifically, how will you ensure you gain informed consent from

This research will not involve respondents under the age of 18 years, neither will it include working with vulnerable groups. Information will only be gathered from individuals whom are able to fully comprehend, and subsequently sign a consent form. It is understood that any participant can remove this consent at any time during the research process. For the period of observation, whilst consent has been given by the operators of each business, individual will be asked to give their consent via the consent form. Consent to observe within a more public setting has been granted by the owner/operator of that space where possible. All images will be anonymised where possible, and are intended to be images of space and place rather than individuals. Once again, the British Sociological Association 'Visual Sociology Statement of Ethical Practice – October 2006' will be adhered to at all times.

anyone involved in the study?

9. Are there any data protection issues that you need to address?

YES

If YES what are these and how will you address them?

Data protection issues may arise from the storage of personal respondent information. As previously noted, such information will be stored safely and responsibly within the University, and then destroyed accordingly.

10. Are there any other ethical issues that need to be considered? For example - research on animals or research involving people under the age of 18.

The taking of visual images in public (or pseudo public) spaces has moral and legal implications as well as ethical considerations here. Images of a sexual, violent or discriminatory nature will not be taken nor used in this study. I am mindful of the BSA – Visual Sociology Statement of Ethical Practice – October 2006, paragraph 12, which states: "Although sociologists, like other researchers, are committed to the advancement of knowledge, that goal
does not, of itself, provide an entitlement to override the rights of others. When dealing with vulnerable

groups in society, members should take particular care to explain the status and use of visual imagery in the
research and the participants' own legal rights under UK law". As previously noted, images taken for use in this study, are intended to be of space and place, and not of specific individuals, and where this occurs, either consent will be sought, or images will be anonymised.

11. *(a) Does the project involve the use of ionising or other type of "radiation"*

NO

(b) Is the use of radiation in this project over and above what would <u>normally</u> be expected (for example) in diagnostic imaging?

N/A

(c) Does the project require the use of hazardous substances?

NO

(d) Does the project carry any risk of injury to the participants?

NO

(e) Does the project require participants to answer questions that may cause disquiet / or upset to them?

NO

If the answer to any of the questions 11(a)-(e) is YES, a risk assessment of the project is required.

12. How many subjects will be recruited/involved in the study/research? What is the rationale behind this number?

It is envisaged that the research will involve around 45 interviews with various respondents from the groups identified previously, notably from airport operators, retailers and their employees, and the travelling public. This number of interviews will allow for a significant yet parsimonious sample from each group, and is a realistic and achievable number in the time available for this exercise.

Please attach:

- A summary in clear / plain English (or whatever media/language is appropriate) of the material you will use with participants explaining the study / consent issues etc.
- A draft consent form – again in whatever media is suitable for your research purposes / population.
  - A copy of any posters to be used to recruit participants

Remember that informed consent from research participants is crucial, therefore your information sheet must use language that is readily understood by the general public.

Projects that involve NHS patients, patients' records or NHS staff, will require ethical approval by the appropriate NHS Research Ethics Committee. The University Research Governance and Ethics Committee will require written confirmation that such approval has been granted. Where a project forms part of a larger, already approved, project, the approving REC should be informed about, and approve, the use of an additional co-researcher.

I certify that the above information is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and correct. I understand the need to ensure I undertake my research in a manner that reflects good principles of ethical research practice.

Signed by Student …………………………………………………………….

Date …………………………………………….

In signing this form I confirm that I have read and agreed the contents with the student.

Signed by Supervisor ……………………………………………………

Date …………………………………….

The Twenty-First Century airport as a consumption space

What is this study about?

As more of the population spend an increasing amount of time in airport terminals, it is necessary to examine what airports actually are, and more importantly, what we do while we're in them. This study aims to discover what airports offer to the travelling public, and how in return, airports are perceived by those who use them.

In order to gain a better understanding of the role that shopping plays in the airport, it is important for the researcher to ask about your purchases/sales generally. For example, questions regarding your thoughts on the ease of access to certain stores, what you have purchased, why you decided to buy in the airport, whether store design and placement influenced your purchases and so on.

Taking part in this study is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from it at any time if you wish. You don't need to give a reason and there will be no penalty. Nevertheless, I hope you will continue to be involved and find the experience worth while.

The interview will last between 15 and 30 minutes and will be recorded in order to gain an accurate record of your views. This will be completely confidential. A written transcript of the interview may be produced, and this can be made available for you upon request at a later date.
This account will only be seen by myself and supervisory academic staff within the University of Salford. In any subsequent report or publication resulting from this study, all names and places and dates will be changed, to ensure that all views and comments from the interviews are anonymous, so it will be impossible for individuals to be recognised.

Thank you for agreeing to take part.

Name and Title: …………………………………………………………………………

Address and Telephone Number: …………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
I have read the information provided and agree to be interviewed

-------------------------------------   ----------/----------/---------
             signature   *date*

----
             print name

Should you wish to withdraw from this study at any point, or require any information or clarification, then please contact the researcher via one of the following methods.

Jerry Coulton
515 Humphrey Booth House,
University of Salford
The Crescent
Salford.
Gtr Manchester
M5 4WT
0161 295 9008

Or

j.a.coulton@pgr.salford.ac.uk

Consent Form (retailer)

The Twenty-First Century airport as a consumption space

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In order to gain a better understanding of the role that shopping plays in the airport, it is important for the researcher to ask about your organisation/operation generally. For example, questions regarding your thoughts on the ease of access to stores, what are the most popular goods/services, why your organisation opened an outlet in this airport, whether store design and placement influence purchases and so on.

Taking part in this study is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from it at any time if you wish. You don't need to give a reason and there will be no penalty. Nevertheless, I hope you will continue to be involved and find the experience worth while.

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Name and Title: …………………………………………………………………

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……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
I have read the information provided and agree to be interviewed

-------------------------------------   ----------/----------/---------
        signature   *date*

----
        print name

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University of Salford
The Crescent
Salford.
Gtr Manchester
M5 4WT
0161 295 9008

Or

j.a.coulton@pgr.salford.ac.uk

Consent Form (operator)

The Twenty-First Century airport as a consumption space

What is this study about?

As more of the population spend an increasing amount of time in airport terminals, it is necessary to examine what airports actually are, and more importantly, what we do while we're in them. This study aims to discover what airports offer to the travelling public, and how in return, airports are perceived by those who use them.

In order to gain a better understanding of the role that shopping plays in the airport, it is important for the researcher to ask about airport retail generally. For example, questions regarding your thoughts on the ease of access to certain stores, what goods and services are available for customers, whether store design and placement influence purchases and so on.

Taking part in this study is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from it at any time if you wish. You don't need to give a reason and there will be no penalty. Nevertheless, I hope you will continue to be involved and find the experience worth while.

The interview will last between 15 and 30 minutes and will be recorded in order to gain an accurate record of your views. This will be completely confidential. A written transcript of the interview may be produced, and this can be made available for you upon request at a later date.

This account will only be seen by myself and supervisory academic staff within the University of Salford. In any subsequent report or publication resulting from this study, all names and places and dates will be changed, to ensure that all views and comments from the interviews are anonymous, so it will be impossible for individuals to be recognised.

Thank you for agreeing to take part.

Name and Title: …………………………………………………………………

Address and Telephone Number: …………………………………………………..
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
I have read the information provided and agree to be interviewed

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            signature   *date*

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          print name

Should you wish to withdraw from this study at any point, or require any information or clarification, then please contact the researcher via one of the following methods.

Jerry Coulton
515 Humphrey Booth House,
University of Salford
The Crescent

Salford.
Gtr Manchester
M5 4WT
0161 295 9008

Or

j.a.coulton@pgr.salford.ac.uk

Consent Form (non-retail employee)

The Twenty-First Century airport as a consumption space

What is this study about?

As more of the population spend an increasing amount of time in airport terminals, it is necessary to examine what airports actually are, and more importantly, what we do while we're in them. This study aims to discover what airports offer to the travelling public, and how in return, airports are perceived by those who use them.

In order to gain a better understanding of the role that shopping plays in the airport, it is important for the researcher to ask about your work in the airport. For example, questions regarding your thoughts on the ease of access to certain stores, what you observe and experience whilst at work, whether store design and placement influenced the behaviour of customers and so on.

Taking part in this study is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from it at any time if you wish. You don't need to give a reason and there will be no penalty. Nevertheless, I hope you will continue to be involved and find the experience worth while.

The interview will last between 15 and 30 minutes and will be recorded in order to gain an accurate record of your views. This will be completely confidential. A written transcript of the interview may be produced, and this can be made available for you upon request at a later date.

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Address and Telephone Number: …………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

I have read the information provided and agree to be interviewed

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        signature   *date*

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        print name

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Consent Form (Visual Images)

The Twenty-First Century airport as a consumption space

Why are images important to this study

This study aims to examine the ways in which airports are similar to both city spaces and shopping malls. A fundamental part of this research will involve the analysis of

home-made images of airports, malls and city spaces. The visual image provides the researcher with a vital additional source of data, furnishing the researcher with an added dimension. The visual image also assists in clarifying and objectifying findings to the reader, providing context and findings presented in a non-literary format.

Images within this research do not relate to individuals or small groups of people, nor do they aim to breach personal, commercial or national security. The images required for this study are of spaces and places within the airport, city or mall environment, and where people are situated within images, they will be indistinguishable, as part of a crowd or general melee. Images of crowds will be taken from either distance or using a wide angle to ensure this anonymity. The researcher is fully aware of the social and legal consequences of taking visual images in public places, and this study is determined not to breach either personal or commercial confidence in any way. The researcher is fully aware of the regulations regarding the taking of photographic images in airports as set out as part of the GSAT Training

Taking part in this study is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from it at any time if you wish. You don't need to give a reason and there will be no penalty. Nevertheless, I hope you will continue to be involved and find the experience worth while.

Thank you for agreeing to take part.

Name and Title: …………………………………………………………………

Address and Telephone Number: …………………………………………………..
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
I have read the information provided and agree to be interviewed

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       signature   *date*

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      print name

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