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NOVEL INTO PLAY: THE INFLUENCE OF RICHARDSON, FIELDING, SMOLLETT, AND STERNE UPON THE LATER ENGLISH DRAMA

by

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of novels into plays and films has become so commonplace a practice during the twentieth century that the critical problem involved in the change of one literary form into another tends to be minimized. More often than not, a play is judged by the standards of the novel from which it was drawn. The fallacy in this approach becomes obvious, however, when it is considered that the two types are ultimately antagonistic: the fundamental appeal of drama to the sense of perception and of the novel to the power of conception has brought into existence literary forms which in their totality are incompatible. Thus an aesthetically satisfying translation from one form into the other can only result if the writer carefully modifies his materials according to the requirements of the genre in which he has chosen to work.

The critical issue posed by the generic distinctions between novel and play is essentially timeless; when considered in the historical context of the period in which it first arose to prominence, it illuminates the impact of the major eighteenth century novels upon the later English drama. In fact, the outstanding plays performed after 1760 depend less on earlier dramatic traditions than on the more vital traditions originating with the new and immensely popular prose fiction of Richardson,
Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. Almost immediately after its first publication, Richardson's *Pamela* was adapted for the stage, and within twenty-five years, his novels had supplanted the earlier drama as the primary source for the most popular plays. In addition to plots, characters, and themes, Richardson's development in *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, and *Sir Charles Grandison* of the bourgeois Court of Love, with its elaborate rituals of courtship and marriage, provided the dramatists with precisely the vehicle they needed for expression of the increasingly popular doctrines of benevolence. The plays of William Whitehead, Frances Sheridan, Elizabeth Griffith, and Hugh Kelly, often called "sentimental" drama, are more properly defined as Richardsonian ritual comedy, and during the 1760's this comic mode predominated on the English stage. But very soon it was challenged for supremacy by another mode deriving from the comic novels of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne.

A comic novel tradition in drama emerged primarily from the plays of Arthur Murphy, George Colman, and Samuel Foote to receive its consummate expression in the comedies of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In defining the function of literature, Goldsmith turned to Fielding for the ethical structure that informs his comedy and satire, while Sheridan went first to Smollett for the inspiration of *The Rivals*, and then for the greatest play of the period, *The School for Scandal* (1777), he transformed
Tom Jones into the most perfect dramatic version of any eighteenth century novel. Goldsmith and Sheridan together brought the comic novel tradition in drama to the fore, and the ensuing conflict between 'laughing' and 'weeping' comedy is rightly seen as a new statement of the antagonism existing between Pamela and Fielding's Shamela and Joseph Andrews, or between Clarissa and Tom Jones.

After The School for Scandal, the comic novel tradition retained its position of dominance on the stage in the plays of Richard Cumberland, Hannah Cowley, Thomas Holcroft, and Frederick Reynolds, among others, but in the fourth quarter of the century it was considerably modified by infusions of pathos largely inspired by Sterne, and by the increasingly popular comic mode known as amiable humor. During the last decade of the century, audience demand for spectacle, melodrama, and the thrills of Gothicism caused the dramatic traditions of Richardson and the comic novelists to dissipate. Nevertheless, the dependence of the drama upon other literary types continued, becoming even more widespread during the nineteenth century, and not until the artistic integrity of the form was asserted in the plays of Pinero and Shaw did the drama emerge from its long period of obeisance to prose fiction.
Scholars have long recognized that the English novel, in the fully realized form it assumed in the eighteenth century, was influenced in many ways by the earlier drama. Henry Fielding, for example, was an active playwright before turning novelist, and it has often been said that his talents, which were inhibited by the drama, could only have found their fullest expression in the freer realm of prose fiction. Besides drawing characters and plots from plays like Charles Johnson's Calia and Rowe's The Fair Penitent, Samuel Richardson took his principles of structure from the drama; in the Postscript to Clarissa for example, that work is referred to as less a "History" than a "Dramatic Narrative." And as if to stress their awareness of the drama as a literary form, all the novelists—Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne—at different times subscribe to the view of life embodied in the ancient metaphor revived by Shakespeare: "All the world's a stage,/ And all the men and women merely players." But extensive though its debt to the drama was, almost from its inception the novel exerted a reciprocal influence upon the drama. Very soon playwrights began to draw plots, characters, and themes
from the new and immensely popular form of prose fiction.

It is an interesting and often pondered fact that the sudden rise to popularity of the novel coincided with the decline of the drama; before the end of the eighteenth century the novel had gained an eminence in literature that it has yet to relinquish. Perhaps it was inevitable that dramatists should try to capitalize on the popularity of the new form. In any event the use of other literary types for source materials was a common practice in dramatic writing from the very beginning. The tragedians of ancient Greece drew at will from the epics of Homer, and the medieval religious drama found its primary source of inspiration in the Christian Bible. During the golden age of English drama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it became a convention of playwriting to take materials from sources as diverse as North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, and the rudimentary forms of prose fiction written by Lyly, Greene, Lodge, and Dekker. And the during the Restoration, the writers of heroic drama drew much of their inspiration from the seventeenth century French romances. Nevertheless the difficulties involved in transforming one literary type into another did not assume substantial proportions until the novel emerged as a distinct form. The random selection of plots, themes, and characters is relatively simple compared to the much more complex problem
of changing one independently existing art form like the novel into another form, the drama, especially when the dramatist tries to encompass the whole of a novel within the limits of his play. This problem in aesthetics, however vaguely it may have been realized, was only one of many facing the playwright who turned to the novel for source materials. Many of them did, with varying degrees of success, and the extent to which the later dramatists utilized the novels of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne is the subject of this study.

The metamorphosis of novels into plays, and in the twentieth century into films, has become so commonplace a practice that it is hardly noticed as such. In the eighteenth century the process had its beginning, and its many aspects are illustrated by the influence the works of the major novelists exerted upon the drama. The study has been limited to these novels not only because of their intrinsic merits, but also because their influence was much more profound and long-lasting than that of any of the lesser novels of the period. Besides illustrating the problem of changing a novel into a play, the stage history of the major novels is important to the history of criticism in the way it demonstrates the features of the novels emphasized and valued by later generations.

The plan of this study has been dictated by the nature of the materials. To give the study a sound theoretical base, in the first chapter I have sought
to trace the history of the critical problem associated with the change of novel into play, which illuminates the diverse aspects of the problem itself. In treating the individual novelists, the procedure is a blend of chronology, literary tradition, and the special requirements imposed by a study of the novel's relation to the drama. Thus Defoe has been omitted, not because his work does not rank him as one of the masters of English fiction, but because his influence on the drama, except for a few late eighteenth and early nineteenth century farces and pantomimes, is scarcely discernible. In contrast, Richardson's novels, intrinsically so different from those of Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, inspired a tradition in drama that is itself distinctive. In treating both the Richardsonian and the comic traditions, I have dealt first with those plays which were adapted wholly from the novels, and then with plays where a less concrete relation is established by individual characters, traces of plot, language, and style.

The dates recorded along with the plays in the text indicate the time of first performance given in Allardyce Nicoll's *History of the English Drama*. For plays that were never performed, the date of the first edition is given.

* * * *

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TO ELIZABETH
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Chapter I. NOVEL AND PLAY - THE PROBLEM OF GENERIC DIFFERENCES

In terms of whole literary structures, making a play out of a novel involves the metamorphosis of one fictional construct having a certain set of conventions and peculiarities into another which is at once similar and markedly different. In fact it can be said with some accuracy that generic criticism depends more on the differences between literary forms than upon their likenesses. In this case, for example, both the novel and drama use dialogue, but for the novelist dialogue is only one of a stock of devices while for the dramatist it is the primary vehicle of communication. Although we tend to accept such differences as an obvious characteristic of the genres of literature and hardly question the independent existence of novel and play, ours is distinctly a modern reaction; many generations elapsed after the first publication of Pamela before critics even recognized the novel as an independent genre, much less did they consider the problem of translating a novel into a play.

It is an interesting fact of literary history that the appearance of the novel in the eighteenth century coincided with a general tendency toward relaxation of the strict critical dogmas formulated by the neo-classical
tradition in Western European literature. In England particularly historians of criticism have noted this movement toward a weakening of the rules. Speaking of the later eighteenth century, Ronald S. Crane observes that "in much of the criticism of the period the problem of the genres became relatively less important than it had been for critics of an earlier generation." Another authority states, "...the belief in a priori rules had had its day, and had made way for a broader historical rationalism." Among the reasons usually cited for a less rigid theory of genres are: the influence of empirical science, an increasing sense of historical relativity, and the constantly improving methods of scientific, textual criticism. The trend toward a more inclusive, less rigid and particularized concept of genre is evident in the evolution of theories of the epic, and in the attempts to provide a formal classification for the newly discovered ballad. And the change is nowhere more apparent than in the works of Samuel Johnson, undoubtedly the most important critic of the later eighteenth century. Professor Jean Hagstrum has observed that while traces of generic criticism appear throughout Johnson's work, he was not an advocate of this approach because of "his deep seated skepticism ... about the validity of literary definition, the very heart and core of generic criticism." 

The time was ripe therefore for the recognition of a
new genre. The novelists themselves, though not in agreement in the matter of types, were fully aware that their works were a distinctive and self-sufficient form of art. Professor Alan D. McKillop has noted that "Richardson made a serious attempt, with the help of some scholarly friends, to adapt the theory of the drama to his 'new species of writing,' just as Fielding was trying, with greater brilliancy, to adapt the theory of the epic for the same purpose." Richardson was careful to distinguish his work from the "light Novel, or transitory Romance;" he preferred the phrase "Dramatic Narrative," and his intimate knowledge of the problems of structure is apparent in such statements as the following, which appeared in an early form of the preface to Clarissa: "Judges will see, that, long as the Work is, there is not one Digression, not one Episode, not one Reflection, but what arises naturally from the Subject, and makes for it, and to carry it on." Fielding's theory of the comic epic in prose is well known from the Preface to Joseph Andrews and various comments in Tom Jones; the complex nature of his theory is sufficiently attested by Miss Thornbury's study. Fielding seems to have been fully aware of the problem he faced in gaining recognition for his new kind of writing. In regard to Joseph Andrews, Ian Watt comments, "In 1742 the novel was a form in grave disrepute, and Fielding probably felt that to enlist the prestige of the epic might help win for his first essay
in the genre a less prejudiced hearing from the literati than might otherwise have been expected. Thus in his Preface we find Fielding carefully differentiating his own work from the dramatic forms of comedy and tragedy, and from the serious epic, a term under which he includes the earlier romance:

> Now, a comic romance is a comic epic poem in prose; differing from comedy, as the serious epic from tragedy: its action being more extended and comprehensive; containing a much larger circle of incidents, and introducing a greater variety of characters. It differs from the serious romance in its fable and action, in this; that as in the one these are grave and solemn, so in the other they are light and ridiculous: it differs in its characters by introducing persons of inferior rank, and consequently, of inferior manners, whereas the grave romance sets the highest before us: lastly, in its sentiments and diction; by preserving the ludicrous instead of the sublime.

Though less given to theorizing than Richardson and Fielding, Smollett, for all his indebtedness to the picaresque tale, still had quite definite ideas about the distinctive nature of his own art, as the Preface to Roderick Random attests. And Sterne, in addition to the skeptical view of formal rules which he shared with Fielding, formulated a theory of the novel while writing one, Tristram Shandy.

In spite of the fact that the novelists themselves recognized the claim to uniqueness of their own art in an age when the rigid theory of genres was disappearing,
widespread acceptance of the novel as a distinct literary type was slow in coming. Writing in 1750 in *The Rambler* (No. 24), Dr. Johnson examines and comments upon some current works of fiction, undoubtedly the novels of Fielding and Smollett, and calls the new kind of writing "the comedy of romance" which "is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comick poetry."¹⁶ Far from giving these works the dignity of literature, Johnson regarded them as "the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas...written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life."¹⁷ More favorably inclined to the comic novel in particular was the anonymous author of *An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding.*... (1751).¹⁸ While he was uncertain about what to call the "new species," the author perceives "the great analogy there is between these Histories and Dramatic Performances..."¹⁹ and he is equally aware of the Aristotelian principles of structure that inform the works of Fielding:

In the Progress of his Work, (the novelist) must adhere pretty closely to the Manners of the Drama, viz. In the Beginning the Plan of his Story must be clearly opened, and the principal Characters should appear; towards the Middle his Plot should thicken, and affairs be brought to a Crisis; and then be gradually unravell'd to the Reader, 'till the Piece is concluded.²⁰
The analogy with the drama reappears in what is perhaps the first attempt not only to distinguish the novel from the drama, but to establish definitive artistic criteria for the new genre of prose fiction. In a review of Mrs. Frances Sheridan's novel, Sidney Bidulph, the Critical Review observes,

Under correction of the critics, we must profess ourselves admirers of this kind of dramatic writing; where every character speaks in his own person, utters his feelings, and delivers his sentiments warm from the heart. It admits of an infinity of natural moral reflections, which a true biographer cannot, without pedantry and seeking the occasions, introduce. To sustain with propriety all the different personages, to think, to act in their peculiar characters thro' a whole life, chequered with prosperity and adversity, requires a truly dramatic genius. If the writer is not confined to the unites of time and place, he labours under other inconveniences, from which the strict dramatist is exempted. He supports a character through life, the other only through one particular action; he observes probability in the transactions of possibly half a century, the other only of a day; he must rouse the passions, and engage the attention through a variety of unconnected incidents, the dramatist directs his whole strength only to one object; in a word, the memoir writer must be minute, without being tedious; he must study variety, and yet be perfectly simple and natural; he must extend without enervating his characters, rise gradually to his catastrophe, unfold his design slowly, and, after running a long course, appear vigorous, fresh, and unexhausted. It is sufficient proof of the difficulty of this method of writing, that the ingenious inventive lady, to whom the Memoirs of Miss Bidulph are attributed, hath not been able to avoid imitation.
The attempt to distinguish the novel from its nearest rival, while establishing the unique artistic principles upon which its highest expression depends, is indeed a rare phenomenon during this early period, and one that was soon vitiated by the great deluge of shoddy and sprawling imitations that appeared in the wake of the early masters of the novel. Within ten years, the cyclical movement of structural principles from drama to novel is completed: the example of the novel begins to infect the form from which it sprung, and The Monthly Review is compelled to assert the autonomy of the classical dramatic plot:

It has generally been supposed that a multiplicity of incidents, varied without inconsistency, and complicated without confusion, probable, however uncommon, and exciting both interest and curiosity, require very little further knowledge of art to be made a good play: but this is rather the excellence of a novel than a drama: a play may produce the greatest effect in representation, without including a story that would please as a narrative; without a rigorous degree of probability, or brilliant sallies of wit: its success will depend rather upon the scenes themselves, than the art with which they are introduced or connected; upon contrast of character, mistakes among the characters, situations of serious or ridiculous distress, and the general strain of the dialogue, whether tragedy or comedy.

The prevailing tendency among established critics of the next generation was to follow the example of Fielding and consider the novel as a legitimate form of
literature on the strength of its analogy with older, more reputable types. But even here the confusion in terminology is a tacit admission of indecision about what to do with the novel. In the *Progress of Romance* (1785), Clara Reeve groups the different species of prose fiction under the heading of romance, which she defines as "an Epic in prose."\(^{23}\) James Beattie, in his essay "On Fable and Romance" (1783), treats Richardson's *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* as examples of the "Modern Serious Romance" whose fables are "partly Epick, and partly Dramatick."\(^{24}\) In contrast is the "New Comick Romance" whose "Historical" branch includes all the novels of Smollett except *Humphry Clinker*, and whose branch of "Epick Comedy" includes Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*.\(^{25}\) In another place Beattie refers to the works of Fielding as examples of "the Epick or Narrative Comedy: perhaps the Comick Epopee is a more proper term."\(^{26}\) And as if to establish the justice of Beattie's usage, Henry Pye, in *A Commentary Illustrating the Poetic of Aristotle*, utilizes "some of those compositions which we usually call novels, and which . . . may be stiled the comic or prose epopee."\(^{27}\)

The traditional view of the literary kinds which exalted poetry above all the others continued to prevail, at least among the *literati*, well into the nineteenth century. In the early part of this period, the confusion
among critics about how to classify the novel was less important than the rabid opposition of some social groups to all forms of prose fiction, and the continued prevalence among authors of Johnson's view that novel writing was a disreputable and plebeian occupation. Richard Stang has shown that it was not until the period between 1850 and 1870 that the novel achieved full acceptance as a legitimate form of art, largely because novelists and critics alike combined to provide a coherent body of theory to support the novel's stature. It is significant that a substantial number of critics during this period who sought to define the unique character of the novel formulated their theories on the analogy with the drama, and in the process verified the relation between the two forms that Samuel Richardson had originally stated over a century before. Thus in a critique of *Tom Jones*, G. H. Lewes derives principles for the construction of the novel from the drama. He first defines the "principle of Economy" whose object is "to free the story from all superfluity." Because of the difference in time of representation, the drama is more rigid in omitting extraneous materials, but the requirements of both novel and drama are "the same in principle." Coordinate with economy is the "Principle of Selection" which includes what the Renaissance critic called decorum, or suit ing the action to the laws of logic and seemliness. In both play and novel, "the construction must not seem mechanical,
but natural, organical. . .; the artist must be careful in his selection, yet never suffer us to feel that there has been a selection; he must not permit us to see the strings and pulleys of his puppets; he must not betray his intention."\(^{32}\) Lastly, in the drama there is the further principle of "Climax in speech, scene, and act." Taken together, these principles "regulate the whole art of construction; and they are as valid in the novel as in the drama; although, from the great differences introduced by the form of the narrative, they are less rigorously demanded in the novel."\(^{33}\) On these bases Lewes concludes that *Tom Jones*, so far from being a masterpiece of construction, is, in truth, "a very ill-constructed novel." Regardless of the validity of his opinions, Lewes's theoretical analysis demonstrates the affinity of the two forms which had existed from the beginning when Richardson's *Pamela* appeared as a new, distinctive, and fully realized type of literature.

Though it was well over a century after *Pamela* appeared before the novel gained full critical acceptance, there was no such hesitation on the part of certain playwrights. The first stage version of *Pamela* appeared within months after the novel was published, and as we shall examine in more detail later, the trend once begun of converting novels into plays became more widespread in the later eighteenth century and after 1800 reached truly vast
proportions. In spite of the frequency of adaptation, statements from the point of view of the playwright about the critical problems involved in changing one literary form into another are comparatively rare. One of the earliest comments comes not from a dramatist but from a practicing novelist turned critic, Sir Walter Scott, who tries to evaluate Henry Fielding's comparative failure as a dramatist by analyzing the differences between the novel and drama. Scott begins by summing up the characteristics common to both: "force of character, strength of expression, felicity of contrast and situation, a well-constructed plot, in which the development is at once natural and unexpected, and where the interest is kept uniformly alive, till summed up by the catastrophe. . . ." The distinction appears when it is considered that while the dramatist appeals to both the eye and ear, the novelist, through the window of the eye, plays his light upon the imagination alone. The author of a novel "has neither stage nor scene-painter, nor company of comedians, nor dresser, nor wardrobe; words, applied with the best of his skill, must supply all that these bring to the assistance of the dramatist." Where the novelist must rely on his ability to describe and narrate, these techniques can be used only rarely in dramatic composition. Scott concludes his analysis by saying,

It may thus easily be conceived, that he
whose chief talent lies in addressing the imagination only, and whose style, therefore, must be expanded and circumstantial, may fail in a kind of composition where so much must be left to the efforts of the actor, with his allies and assistants the scene-painter and property-man, and where every attempt to interfere with their province, is an error unfavourable to the success of the piece.

Scott implies that success in either genre requires a special talent, and that it is unlikely that any one writer would have the capability to succeed in both.

Scott's own novels supplied abundant materials for those playwrights of the early nineteenth century who, in Allardyce Nicoll's words, "wrote plays, as a cobbler makes shoes, for the purpose of bringing in a few pence or a few pounds. . . " Only rarely do these stage versions of novels rise above the dead level of mediocrity then prevailing. It is significant that one of the most prolific adapters, Thomas Dibdin, has nothing whatever to say in his Reminiscences (1837) about the critical problem involved. On the other hand, George Colman the Younger, who had been active in the theater for many years and had tried his own hand at turning a novel into a play, evinces nothing but scorn for the adapters of Scott:

As to the generality of entertainments which have been manufactured of late from the popular Scotch stories, they can hardly be classed among dramatic writings.
These crippled Iliads in a nutshell are journeywork of the stage, in which scissors and paste predominate over pen and ink; consisting chiefly of huge passages cut out of the printed books, and fastened in adhesive torture together. They are calculated, however, to please the million, and to be profitable to the trade.

Early in his career Colman wrote a dramatic version of William Godwin's novel Caleb Williams, which was performed as The Iron Chest (1796). In this respect he is fully aware of the difficulties facing the playwright. Drawing upon his own experience, he recommends that in making a play from a work of fiction, "always . . . select a short and single one; by single, I mean free from complications. A scanty subject, which requires to be amplified, both stimulates the imagination and gives it elbow-room. . . ." The playwright should never "...dramatize a novel of two or three volumes; there is so much to reject for want of room, yet so much to compress which cannot be left out, that the original is mutilated, while the copy is encumbered." Like Scott Colman is aware of the demands imposed by the different genres upon the novelist and dramatist:

...the first interests you, by expanding his matter; the latter wearies you, if he do not condense it. Minuteness of detail, and a slow development of the main characters and events, by previous narration, and foregoing occurrences, heighten the effects of a Novel: a Play must plunge in medias res; must avoid, or at all events curtail, narratives as much as
possible; must bring forward its *dramatis personae* with little or no preparation, and keep attention alive by brevity of dialogue, and rapidity of action.

For all their sound reasoning and good intention, the admonitions of an experienced dramatist went largely unheeded; later nineteenth century playwrights continued to dramatize novels without much regard to the different requirements of the genres, and with the advent of the motion picture in the twentieth century, the act first performed by James Dance in 1740 was multiplied a thousandfold. In his first year as a director, D. W. Griffith transformed three novels into films, thus instituting a practice that was to become ever more common as the years passed. The tendency of novelists who try the drama to comment on the problems they face continues, and reaches a practical culmination in a formal scholarly study of the dramatization of fiction, which includes complete directions on how to turn a story into a play. Perhaps the very profusion of novels in the modern period has something to do with the fact that literary critics not only hesitate to examine the problem of transforming prose fiction into drama, they even feel uneasy about giving serious attention to the novel. Commenting on the repeated attempts "to dissipate the odour of unsanctity in which prose fiction seems destined to have its being," Ian Watt notes the analogy
between Fielding and those modern critics who try "to smuggle the novel into the critical Pantheon under the disguise of an ancient and honoured member." 45

The proliferation of plays and movies drawn from novels finally provoked a full scale critical study of the technical and artistic problems involved in the change. In *Novels into Film* George Bluestone first defines the differences between the two media which would affect the adaptation of a work of prose fiction into a motion picture, and then he proceeds to analyze a group of novels and the screenplays made from them in order to verify the theoretical conclusions drawn earlier. 46 The usefulness of his pioneering work to this study is limited by two factors: his concentration on the twentieth century novel, and the inherent differences between the film and the drama. Nevertheless the similarities between play and motion picture make some of his observations applicable here. In distinguishing between them, Bluestone observes that "between the percent of the visual image and the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media," 47 and throughout his study he continues to emphasize the primary appeal of the film, like the acted drama, to the eye and ear and only secondarily to the mind. This difference in modes of apprehension has far reaching effects. Thus the film, "by arranging external signs for our visual perception, or by
presenting us with dialogue, can lead us to infer thought. But it cannot show us thought directly. . . .", and we might add, neither can the drama. The representation of states of mind so prevalent in the modern novel can have no counterpart in the visual world of stage and screen. In the novel the line of dialogue stands in isolation; in a play or film the spoken word is attached to a spatial image, and "in the fusion of sight and sound, seeing remains primary." This fundamental distinction between the two genres has ramifications which would affect every phase of the metamorphosis of a novel into a play. The consequences in terms of ultimate aesthetic values emphasize the distinctive nature of the two forms. It is common among members of an audience, including even some formal critics, to judge a play made from a novel according to criteria derived from the novel. Such an attempt at evaluation is doomed to failure because in the last analysis, both novel and drama are independent and autonomous forms of art and judgment must rest on criteria derived from the modes of representation common to each. In this respect Bluestone's remarks about the film apply equally well to the drama:

What happens, therefore, when the filmist undertakes the adaptation of a novel, given the inevitable mutation, is that he does not convert the novel at all. What he adapts is a kind of paraphrase of the novel - the novel viewed as raw material. He looks not
to the organic novel, whose language is inseparable from its theme, but to characters and incidents which have somehow detached themselves from language and, like the heroes of folk legends, have achieved a mythic life of their own. Because this is possible, we often find that the film adapter has not even read the book, that he has depended instead on a paraphrase by his secretary or his screen writer. That is why there is no necessary correspondence between the excellence of a novel and the quality of the film in which the novel is recorded.

It is clear that judgments of value ultimately depend on the characteristics peculiar to each genre.

In the period when this whole problem had its beginning, the drama was already an ancient literary type while the novel was as yet a mere fledgling. As we have noted earlier, since critics of the later eighteenth century were hesitant to give the novel official sanction as a genre, they were not likely to see an aesthetic problem arising from the generic translation of Tom Jones into a comic opera. Dramatists had always ranged far and wide for source materials, and when the new prose fiction was pressed into the service of the stage, the change was accomplished without any marked change in the prevailing conventions of the drama and was accepted without undue comment. Regardless of critical reactions, after 1740 it soon became a common practice to make stage versions of the currently popular novels, and it is necessary for us to consider the possibilities for adaptation offered
by the novels of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne so as to illuminate the problems faced by the playwright who attempted the task while stressing the differences between the genres. Since our purpose will be served by pointing out some of the more marked ways in which these novels diverge from the drama, it will not be necessary to give detailed examination to the many nuances of style and method unearthed by modern criticism of eighteenth century fiction. These would heighten, but would not appreciably change, the basic distinction.

The fundamental difference between the novel and drama was originally stated by Aristotle. When the mode and objects of imitation are identical, "the poet may imitate by narration - in which case he can either take another personality as Homer does, or speak in his own person, unchanged - or he may present all his characters as living and moving before us." Implied here is a difference between narrator and dramatist that Northrup Frye has stated succinctly:

The suiting of style to an internal character or subject is known as decorum or appropriateness of style to content. Decorum is in general the poet's ethical voice, the modification of his own voice to the voice of a character or to the vocal tone demanded by subject or mood. And as style is at its purest in discursive prose, so decorum is obviously at its purest in drama, where the poet does not appear in person.
Since drama is a mimesis of dialogue or conversation, the internal characters carry the whole burden of the representation and occupy the center of attention. The author is out of sight and, ideally, his presence is never discernible. In prose fiction on the other hand, particularly in that of the eighteenth century, the author, and the voice or voices he assumes, becomes an integral part of the total structure. He often appears as an additional distinctive character with a whole range of traits and attitudes, who not only controls the action but becomes personally involved in it, while through commentary directing the attention to significant aspects of the fiction. The "intrusive narrator" or "persona" has become a factor well known to students of eighteenth century fiction, yet in the drama the narrator either disappears altogether or is radically altered. Of the four major novelists, Smollett devoted least attention to the creation of the author as a character. In the works of Fielding the ubiquitous narrator is an undeniable fact always to be reckoned with in analyzing the matter. In Joseph Andrews, for example, the focal point of the action lies in the character the author assumes; as Professor McKillop has observed, "the narrator imparts to the story a higher unity than is derived from the mechanism of the plot." He directs and comments upon the action while making it clear that the events he
describes are not wholly under his control. And in Tom Jones, R. S. Crane has commented that "a whole essay . . . could be written on the masterly way in which Fielding exploited the various devices implicit in his third-person 'historical' mode of narration. . . ."56

The dominant role of the narrator in the unfolding of the novel's action has prompted Dorothy Van Ghent to say that his presence provides "one more contrast in the total aesthetic system - the contrast of plane between the author and his book, between criticism and creation, between intelligence focussed on the human situation he has created and the intelligence of the characters within the created situation."57

With Richardson and Sterne the situation of the author changes. Ostensibly Richardson is merely the compiler of letters, but in place of the author as narrator, the epistolary method introduces several correspondents who not only describe the action but are directly involved in it, a device that has been described as "writing, editing, and even reading the novel within the novel."58

The technique, which Richardson perfected in Clarissa, means that several points of view are used to report and comment upon the central conflict, and often "significant commentary on the action is a complication and advancement of the action."59 Instead of the objective narration of an omniscient author, there are many reports from diff-
erent angles which introduce almost limitless possibilities for the minute delineation of states of mind and feeling. In general these observations apply equally well to the epistolary technique in Humphry Clinker, though Smollett is less prone to the analysis of emotions. Sterne, on the other hand, makes the subjective reactions of the narrator a dominant feature of Tristram Shandy and one which influences every facet of the novel. The complexity of the narrator's role is indicated in the comment of A. D. McKillop:

Tristram the narrator is not identical with young Tristram; as narrator he does not keep to the point of view of the child, or write straight "stream of consciousness," he is the efficient agent of the far-reaching references in time and space; he is both inside and outside the moment; he is not only the knower of English empirical philosophy, but the philosopher who writes with confidence about that knower — a somewhat different matter.

As we shall note in more detail later, a few dramatists try to compensate for the loss of the narrator by enlarging the function of what Northrup Frye has called the siron, the unobtrusive but omniscient character who holds the key to the play's outcome. But it is obvious to any reader of these novels that no playwright could hope to duplicate the multiple effects engendered by the narrator, and it is significant and noteworthy that the task of the modern writer who would turn a novel
into a play has been appreciably eased by the tendency in twentieth century fiction to substitute an omniscient author for the narrator. 63

Although novel and play share the concepts of plot, character, setting, and theme, the difference in length alone has implications that become almost insurmountable for the adapter. As Colman the Younger observed, it is a practical impossibility to reduce seven volumes into five acts. In regard to plot, one has only to read R. S. Crane's definition of the plot of Tom Jones to realize the futility of trying to recast the novel in dramatic form. 64 In contrast, the plot of Clarissa—a protracted and finally completed seduction—is deceptively simple, but one need only note the intricately patterned lines of cause and effect that exist between the different groups in the novel to realize that Richardson's supposed profuseness is not what it appears. 65

A different kind of problem would be posed by Smollett's early novels where the wanderings of a picaro constitute the main line of development. And as for Tristram Shandy, the apparent lack of plot that has confused so many readers accounts in part for the fact that Sterne's novel was less often dramatized than any of the others. The difference in length also affects characterization, but to a lesser extent. The brief vignettes and caricatures in Smollett, and the compact delineation of humors in both
his work and Fielding's, would be more amenable to dramatization than a complex character like Lovelace. Lastly, the difference in length has a pronounced effect on chronology. Fielding's "History," the protracted seductions and courtships in Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison, the interminable adventures in Smollett, and Sterne's apparent disregard of time, are not congenial to the conventions of chronology in the drama, especially in the later eighteenth century when most dramatists continued to give at least lip service to the neo-classical doctrine of the unities.

The provision of elaborate scenery became an increasingly important part of stagecraft as the eighteenth century progressed, yet setting is notable for its absence in the novels. Descriptions of the environments surrounding the characters are rare, except for occasional set pieces, and when inanimate objects do appear, they have less value as entities than as symbols evoking an aura of associations with the action of the novel, for example, the garden door in Pamela and Clarissa and the clock in Tristram Shandy. In the matter of settings, these novels are much like the Elizabethan drama: the construction of scenes is left largely to the imagination of the reader or spectator.

In the matter of themes the works of the four novelists reveal not only their kinship with the earlier English drama,
but also present an element fairly easy to translate into an acted play. No useful purpose would be served by trying to list here the great variety of thematic patterns that appear in the novels. The problems of courtship and marriage, for example, or the conflict of social restrictions and animal instincts, are part of the common stock of literature. In refashioning them for his own purpose, the dramatist would face no problem unless he tried to duplicate the situations in the novels from which the themes arise, and how the theme appears would be determined ultimately by the technical requirements of each genre.

Brief and cursory though it is, this survey of the more outstanding differences between the drama and the major eighteenth century novels should serve to emphasize the critical problem involved in the translation of prose fiction into a play. In the study to follow I will examine the repeated attempts of playwrights to cope with the differences in form during the years after the novels first appeared, and it will be seen that the degree of success is in direct proportion to the individual dramatist's understanding of the distinctive characteristics of each literary type.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


2 A. Bosker, Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson (Groningen, 1930), 43.

3 Ibid., 44-85.


6 Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism (Minneapolis, 1952), 33-4.

7 Samuel Richardson (Chapel Hill, 1936), 138.

8 "Preface," Clarissa, The Shakespeare Head Edition of the Novels (Oxford, 1930), I, xv. All subsequent references to the novels are to this edition.

9 Ibid., "Postscript," XII, 309.

10 McKillop, Richardson, 127.


12 The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1959), 258.

13 (New York, 1939), xxiv.

14 See the discussion by Bosker, 112-13.

15 This element is evident in Alan D. McKillop's discussion of the novel's structure in The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence, 1956), 185-219.

17 Ibid., 16.
18 (London, 1751). I have read a microprint of the original edition in the possession of Professor Alan D. McKillop, whose edition of the work will be published by the Augustan Reprint Society in 1962.
19 Ibid., 7.
20 Ibid., 27-8.
21 XI (1761), 186-7.
22 Review of Hugh Kelly's play, A Word to the Wise (1770), XLIII (1770), 150-1.
25 Ibid., 570-4.
26 Cited by Swedenberg, 163.
27 Cited by Swedenberg, 165.
28 Maurice Quinlan, Victorian Prelude (New York, 1941), 145-79.
30 Ibid., passim.
32 Ibid., 334.
33 Ibid., 335.
34 The Lives of the Novelists (London, 1903), 49.
35 Ibid., 50.
36 Ibid., 51.
38 (London, 1837).
40 Ibid., I, 126.
41 Ibid., I, 128.
42 Ibid., I, 128.
43 See, for example, Horace A. Vachell, "Technique of Novels and Plays," Essays by Divers Hands (Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, n.s., XVI), (London, 1937), 43-60.
45 Rise of the Novel, 258.
46 (Baltimore, 1957).
48 Ibid., 48.
49 Ibid., 58.
50 Ibid., 67.
54 This device is defined by Maynard Mack in "The Muse of Satire," Yale Review, XLI (1951), 80-92.
55 McKillop, Early Masters, 109.
56 "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of Tom Jones," Criticism and Criticism, 641.

59 McKillop, *Early Masters*, 68.

60 See Dorothy Van Ghent's discussion of Clarissa in *The English Novel*, 45-64.


64 "Concept of Plot," 624.

Chapter II.  THE RICHARDSONIAN TRADITION IN DRAMA:
ADAPTATIONS AND BASIC ELEMENTS

Historians of eighteenth century literature have long been aware that the influence of the novel upon the drama extended beyond the literal dramatic renderings. The connection of the novel, Pamela, with Henry Giffard's play of the same name is obvious; the relation of Fielding's Amelia to Edward Moore's play, The Gamester, is not so apparent. Commenting on the latter case, Professor Alan D. McKillop has observed that "the novel accustomed the public to more vivid characterization and more elaborate moralizing, and then exerted a reflex influence on the drama, eventually producing extreme examples of sensibility." Other scholars have agreed that this "reflex influence" was extensive. In the context of dramatic history, for example, James J. Lynch comments, "...it is probably not claiming too much credit for the influence of the novel to assert that the popularity of Steele's and Cibber's plays would not have been so long-lasting, and their influence upon such later playwrights as Kelly, Cumberland, and Murphy so vital, if the mid-century novels had not contributed to the literary vitalization of sentimentalism." At another point he says, "the novel had a variety of effects upon the theater," but except
for a few isolated examples, these "effects" are defined in such abstract terms as "sentimentalism;" the influence of the novel is repeatedly stated in generalizations that lack adequate substantiation. Lynch is tacitly admitting that the full extent of the influence is vaguely understood at best, and one of the purposes of this study is to correct this deficiency in our knowledge by presenting a detailed examination of the novel's effect upon the drama. To take a case in point, the influence of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison is so extensive that it is proper to speak of a Richardsonian "tradition" in the drama. In defining the nature and extent of this tradition, I will treat first the avowed adaptations of each novel, then the variations of such elements as plot and character as they appear in the later plays. The chapter to follow will be concerned with the more tenuous elements such as theme and tone, together with a special consideration of the language of the Richardsonian tradition and its relation to the recurrent problem of sentimentalism in the eighteenth century drama.

I

Any reader of Alan McKillop's Samuel Richardson is well aware that the stage history of Pamela becomes increasingly complex in the years following the first
publication of the novel, especially after French and Italian versions return to England to undergo further modification. Besides retracing in some detail the outline for the English drama which Professor McKillop has provided, I will present some additional evidence of Pamela's influence in plays of the eighteenth century.

The first two volumes of Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded were published on November 6, 1740. Within a few months at least two authors were at work on dramatic versions of the novel, and in the autumn of 1741 two plays were published anonymously: Pamela: Or, Virtue Triumphant and Pamela: a Comedy. The first is ostensibly the work of James Dance, and, according to David Garrick, the second was written by Henry Giffard. In 1742 a Mr. Edge published Pamela; . . . an Opera at Newcastle. From the first play to the last there is a gradual divergence from the printed text of the novel which illustrates the dramatists's increasing awareness of the fundamental differences between the two genres. Dance's play represents an attempt to make an almost literal translation of the novel in to dramatic form. It appears that the author tried to duplicate closely the action in the first half of volume I of the novel, and then he was forced to compress more and more in order to conclude Act V with the marriage. The structure of the play indicates that the division into five acts was accomplished without too much attention to dramatic
values. The first act includes Mr. B's first trial of Pamela's virtue in the summer house and ends with his claim that she is trying to exaggerate the incident to the detriment of his honor. The beginning of Act II indicates one of the difficulties Dance faced. Of returning to her parents, Pamela says, "...for tho' I am sure of the Poverty, I shall not have half the Distress I have had for some Months past...," and we are forced to assume that the events in Act I occupied a period many times longer than the actual time of representation. Act II includes the visit of the neighboring gentry to view Pamela, the attempt on Pamela's virtue which occurs after Mr. B hides in the closed in her bedchamber, and his plot to send her to the Lincolnshire estate. Act III opens with Old Andrews seeking his daughter, includes Pamela's meeting with Mrs. Jewkes and connivance with Parson Williams, and concludes with her attempted escape and meditation on suicide, which Dance takes almost verbatim from Richardson's text. In Act IV Dance makes increasing use of characters who report events that have happened offstage, and here the compression of narrative time is even more noticeable. In a rapid alternation of scenes comes Mrs. Jewkes's plot to marry Pamela to Colbrand, the protracted debate over the obstacles to Pamela's marriage with B. and his decision to marry her in spite of them, Pamela's reunion with her father, and the
preparations for and completion of the wedding. Act V opens with a condensed version of Pamela's turbulent altercation with Lady Davers while B. is away, B.'s intervention and the reconciliation of brother and sister, and the scene where B. sets down the rules by which the marriage is to be conducted. In the last scene the wedding night is in the offing, and Mr. B. appears as the thoroughly reformed rake when he speaks the closing lines:

In vain the Libertine with lawless Flight,
From vicious Passions seeks a vain Delight,
When all is past, Experience this will prove,
Nought Charms like Raptures of connubial Love.

Apparently Dance wanted to change the original text as little as possible. His method may be illustrated from Act II at the point where her fellow servants begin to suspect the reason Pamela has given for leaving the house. Jonathan has overheard an interview of Pamela with Mr. B. in which B. uses her harshly. He queries her about the incident:

Richardson: "Ah! sweet, sweet Mrs. Pamela! What is it I heard but just now!" (I, 56)

Dance: "Ah! sweet, sweet Mrs. Pamela what was that I heard just now."

In the play Jonathan proceeds to report what he has overheard; in Richardson Pamela as narrator reports the incident directly. In play and novel, Pamela then tells
Jonathan she is leaving and he acquits her of any blame. Pamela replies,

Richardson: "Thank you, Mr. Jonathan, said I; but as you value your Place, don't be seen speaking to such an one as me. I cry'd too; and slipt away as fast as I could from him, for his own sake, lest he should be seen to pity me." (I, 57)

Dance: "I thank you kindly Mr. Jonathan, but pray now for your own Sake, as you value your Place, don't be seen speaking to such a one as me."

In the novel Pamela proceeds to give an instance of the esteem in which she is held by Mr. Longman, the steward. Dance repeats this passage, too, but assigns Longman's half of the dialogue to Jonathan. Again, except for minor changes in word order and omission of some auxiliaries, the play and the novel have identical texts.

The necessity for condensation imposed by dramatic structure had some unfortunate effects upon characterization. Mr. B's charges that Pamela is hypocritical and self-seeking appear nearer the truth in the play because there is less space for giving substance to her motives; Pamela becomes more like Fielding's Shamela than her true Richardsonian self. The same nakedness of motive appears in the character of Mr. B., but in this instance Dance diverged from his text so as to heighten the element of salacity that is latent in Richardson. The sexuality
concealed in the novel comes out into the open in the play. Mr. B. appears as a calculating libertine of the least subtle kind, and his lust is abetted by accomplices whose own attitudes toward Pamela are of the crudest possible sort. Besides stressing the coarse lubricity of Mrs. Jewkes, Dance adds her counterpart in Mrs. Copley, the hostess of an inn, who is also a type of the aging procuress. As a consequence of these changes, the theme of the play is less that of virtue rewarded than of lust satisfied.

Because it illustrates so well the different requirements of the genres of drama and novel, I have described Dance's *Pamela* in more detail than its dramatic values actually warrant. That more radical changes were necessary to render the novel fit for the stage is illustrated by the fact that while Dance's play was never performed, the comedy by Giffard, which diverges even further from the original text, enjoyed some success on the stage. Belying a more intimate acquaintance with the principle of dramatic economy, Giffard opens his play with a group of servants, who serve the choral function of filling in the background of the plot. The unfolding of the action, which is limited to one place, is oriented toward the climactic scene in the middle of Act IV when Belville makes his only attempt to seduce Pamela. At this point Giffard introduces a major change by making Parson Williams the hero, who rescues the heroine from the
ravages of the seducer, and then gracefully retires so
that the seducer may marry the girl. In this manner
Williams serves as the instrument of Belville's reform.
Williams and Pamela alike reiterate the theme of virtue
triumphant in language as stilted and declamatory as any-
thing in heroic tragedy; Pamela becomes little more than
a mouthpiece for hollow tributes to honor and virtue.

Besides these changes in plot and characterization,
Giffard adds a slight sub-plot in which Colbrand connives
at a marriage with Mrs. Jewkes, then bilks her of her
fortune so that the scheming bawd is punished for her
misdeeds. A further addition is the character of
Jack Smatter, thought to have been written by David
Garrick, who played the part when the play was performed
at Goodman's Fields Theatre. Regardless of the author,
the character is considerably altered from the way it
appears in the novel. In Richardson Lady Davers's nephew,
Jackey, is similar to Mr. B. in age and expectations, but
particularly notable for his oafishness, undisciplined
ill manners, and lack of taste. In many ways he is a
type of the booby lord. In contrast Jack Smatter is a
friend and fellow rake of Bellville's, with all the glib
cynicism of the sophisticated London beau familiar in
Restoration comedy, one who has no qualms about betraying
his friend by proposing to Pamela that she become his
mistress in town. Although his attempt fails, his crude
rapacity and halfhearted reform undercut the sober morel
about the virtue of connubial love with which the play ends. As we will see later, the friend of the hero who has designs on the heroine becomes a familiar element in later plays in the *Pamela* tradition.

In the preface to his comic opera of *Pamela*, Mr. Edge derides the efforts of his predecessors who attempted to make the novel into a play. By citing passages he seeks to prove that Giffard's play needs improvement and concludes by attributing its many faults to hasty composition, "... for, to my Knowledge, several different Persons were writing on that Subject at the same Time; and happy was he who could draw the scene first." Using Giffard's play and not the novel as his raw material, Edge achieves his most striking effects by paring down the excesses in the earlier play so as to economize and direct the movement of the action toward the climax. For example, he either omits or severely curtails the scenes featuring Mrs. Jewkes, Colbrand, and Jack Smatter. To qualify the play as an opera, he adds a few songs in the first three acts and two scenes which portray the antics of some drunken servants; otherwise, the substance of Giffard's comedy remains unchanged.

These three plays, all appearing within two years after the novel was first published, seem to have sapped the strength of the impulse to make dramatic versions, and while they are quite obviously derived from *Pamela*,
as we move further down the years in the study of dramatic versions, a problem inherent in studies of this kind becomes of paramount importance: as the analogues to *Pamela* become less and less precise, how much can be claimed for Richardson as the source of any given play? The issue is rendered especially complex by the fact that the *Pamela* plot, when stripped to its barest essentials, becomes, in one sense, a modern variant of the Cinderella story, in another, it can be traced to the archetypal seduction—that of Eve by the serpent in the Garden of Eden. As Alan McKillop has observed, for Richardson "such a plot was not far to seek, and the parallels extended from Boaz and Ruth, and King Cophetua and the beggar-maid, to the contemporary cases of Sir Arthur Hesilrige and Lord Gainsborough." Obviously it would be utterly fallacious to claim too much for Richardson, and in the study to follow, I have made every effort to stay within the bounds of probability. Wherever possible, internal and external evidence are combined to substantiate the connection with the novelists, but inevitably there are some instances when only a bare analogy exists. Even here, however, there is some justification. The tremendous popularity of the novel's alone would encourage imitation by those of lesser talent. Thus Professor McKillop, remarking how "the plots of *Clarissa* and *Grandison*, less often of *Pamela*, are slavishly reproduced and combined" in later fiction,
goes on to say, "All stories of seduction and abduction inevitably remind us of Richardson after the middle of the century. . . ." With this fact in mind then, some plays have been included here as imitations of the novelists on the basis of simple analogy alone, but in most cases, the connections are demonstrated by more conclusive evidence.

Some indication of Pamela's influence appears in Edward Moore's comedy, The Foundling (1748), which will be treated later, but until 1760, the novel as a drama was much more popular on the continent than in England. Of the many plays that appeared in France and Italy, only three were returned to England in a form which altered in one way or another the native tradition: Voltaire's Nanine (1749), Goldoni's Pamela nubile (1750), and Voltaire's L'Écossaise (1760). The influence of these plays on later English reworkings of the basic Pamela plot was so pronounced that not one whole play appears which does not show some trace of the foreign innovations. An analogue to Pamela which can be placed in the pure native tradition is to be found in only one play, and it is a burlesque. In Joseph Reed's farce, The Register Office (1761), the Pamela motif appears in the character of Margery, a naive country girl who comes to London seeking employment. Speaking of herself as a "vartuous young woman," she says she has been forced to leave her native
Yorkshire by the importunate demands of her master:

The Squire wad not let me be ---By my truly, Sar, he was after me mwear, noon, an night - if I wad but ha consented to his wicked Ways, I might a had Gould by Gopins. . . .(I)

Woefully ignorant and gullible, she immediately becomes fair game for the procurer who operates the register office.

Turning now to the series of plays which show some indebtedness to the foreign tradition, one change that was to reappear on the English stage was wrought by Voltaire in Nanine (1749). In the play the basic Pamela situation of the aristocratic master in love with a female servant unfolds in a manner that places more stress on the conflict of social classes than does Richardson, partly as a result of the way Voltaire condensed the matter of the novel. As the subtitle of the play, "le Préjugé Vaincu," indicates, the major obstacle to the marriage is suggested to be the irrational fear of mingling with the lower classes, but even though prejudice is overcome to the extent that le Comte D'Olban marries Nanine at play's end, Voltaire stresses that this is an exceptional case and should not become a pattern. In the last lines of the play, la Marquise D'Olban says,

Que ce jour
Soit des vertus la digne récompense,
Mais sans tirer jamais a conséquence.16
As we shall see later, the problem posed by the difference in social classes was to be resolved in a different way by Carlo Goldoni, but for the moment it is more important to note the change Voltaire affected in the basic plot by giving Nanine a lover of her own social station. Early in the play, Blaise, the gardener, competes with le Comte D'Olban for the love of Nanine, and is ultimately forced to give way to his social superior. Potentially at least a somewhat similar situation exists in Richardson's novel in the relation between Pamela and Parson Williams. But the difference between a clergyman and a gardener, coupled with Pamela's repeated denial of any affection other than friendship for Williams, shows the extent of the changes wrought by Voltaire, and the introduction of a lover on the same social level as the heroine was to reappear many times in the English drama.

In Isaac Bickerstaffe's slight comic opera, *Thomas and Sally* (1760), Sally is the virtuous, humble young girl dwelling in a cottage whose lover, Thomas, has gone to sea to make his fortune. She believes that "virtue commands me, be honest and poor" (I, vi). The lusty, hard drinking Squire of the manor enters into a conspiracy with Dorcas, a Mrs. Jewkes type, to seduce the innocent Sally. After being repulsed many times, the Squire attempts to rape her, is interrupted by Thomas returning from sea, who rescues his beloved and carries her off to a life of humble bliss. At the end the Squire
remains unregenerate; frustrated once, he sends Dorcas off to reconnoiter for another victim. Here we see what may be a reworking of Giffard's plot with the substitution of the plebeian lover from Voltaire for Parson Williams.

Five years later Bickerstaffe turned directly to Richardson's novel for The Maid of the Mill (1765), a comic opera, but the play also shows the influence of Nanine. In his Preface to the printed edition of the play, Bickerstaffe speaks of "our romance of Pamela," and admits that "not only the general subject is drawn from Pamela, but almost every circumstance in it." He goes on to describe the changes he has made, including the addition of a brother for Patty: "Ralph is imagined, from the wild son which he (Goodman Andrews) is mentioned to have had..." He says nothing about Giles, the farmer who vies with Lord Aimworth for the love of Patty, but his familiarity with continental Pamela plays is indicated not only by the earlier Thomas and Sally but also by his allusion in the Preface to the novel abroad: "...in Italian and French, particularly, several writers of the first eminence, have chosen it for the subject of different dramas." In the play Bickerstaffe emphasizes the conflict between patrician and plebeian for the hand of Patty who has "modesty, sweetness of temper, and beauty of person, capable of adorning a
rank the most exalted" (I,x), although as the possibility of a marriage between lord and commoner becomes more likely, Giles appears more and more like a rustic buffoon. In Act III Lord Aimworth defends his choice: "...no reproach (is) justly merited, by raising a deserving woman to a station she is capable of adorning, let her birth be what it will" (III,x). Although Bickerstaffe admits his source, the critic for the Gentleman's Magazine defends the uniqueness of The Maid of the Mill.19 He says, "...upon the whole it seems to have as good a claim to originality as most other performances of the kind even while no imitation is acknowledged." He substantiates his position by comparing the novel and the play:

The dramatic story and that of Pamela are the same only in Patty's having been brought up by Aimworth's mother, & in being beloved, & at length married by him; in Lord Aimworth's having a treaty of marriage with another lady; and in Patty's being addressed by another lover: There are no such characters in Pamela as Sir Harry and Lady Sycamore; there is no similitude between Giles and parson Williams, nor in the circumstances of their courtship; there is no trace of such a character as Mervin, nor of such incidents as happen between him and Theodosia, any more than those between Ralph and Fanny. 20

As we have noted though, there is a similarity between Giles and Voltaire's Blaise. This critic commends the absence of "warm" scenes in the play; Lord Aimworth never
attempts Patty as Mr. B. does Pamela; and he concludes with a curious revelation of his critical standards: 
"...the piece has great merit, ... for when (this writer) read it alone in his study, having never seen the exhibition, it made him both laugh and cry." 21

As The Register Office indicates, thirty odd years after it was published, Pamela had become so familiar as to be a suitable object for burlesque. In an unpublished play of one act, Piety in Pattens (1773), 22 Samuel Foote ridicules the theme of virtue beleaguered by portraying an innocent country lass with an extravagant sense of chastity; of her parents she says, "tho' they be poor, they be honest. ..." like a "pearl on a dunghill." She will yield neither to her social equal, the butler, nor to her master, the Squire, who wants to make her his mistress. Even after the butler has offered her his fortune and the Squire a proposal of marriage, in the last lines of the play she announces that out of gratitude to both, she will take neither. Though the satire and the turnabout at the end are distinctly Foote's, the competition of lovers is in the tradition of analogues to Nanine.

The same pattern makes another appearance in Frances Brooke's comic opera, Marian (1788), 23 in which the heroine, who loves her social equal Edward, is pursued in a lach- adaisical manner by the Lord of the manor, Sir Henry True- man. Sir Henry, satisfied with love at a distance, is
the good hearted and compassionate landlord who justifies his innocence of evil intentions throughout the play, and at the climax, his overflowing benevolence makes possible the marriage between Edward and Marian.

In addition to Voltaire's Nanine, a second play from abroad figures largely in the tradition of English Pamela plays. This is Pamela nubile (1750) by the Italian playwright Carlo Goldoni, which was published in London along with an English translation in 1756. In his Preface Goldoni says he drew not only upon Pamela, "un graziosissimo Romanzo," but also upon Voltaire's Nanine. He could not accept, however, the social implications of either the novel or the French play. To avoid any hint of egalitarianism, Goldoni changes the condition of the heroine so that her virtue can be rewarded without "adult-erating the blood of a nobleman," but the truth about her birth is withheld until the climax of the play. This condescension to the demands of a rigidly stratified society is the most significant change Goldoni makes in the basic plot. In the character of Longman, the steward, he includes the idea of a plebeian lover for the heroine, and from either Lady Davers's nephew, Jackey, in the novel, or from the character of Jack Smatter in Giffard's Pamela, he took the idea for Lord Arthur, the fellow rake of Lord Bonfil, who tries to seduce Pamela while his friend is away. All three of these elements appear in later English plays.
Goldoni turned his own comedy into a comic opera, *La Buona Figliuola*, which was performed at Covent Garden Theatre in 1766 in an adaptation by Edward Toms.\(^\text{25}\) Even with the addition of songs, this play is less fully developed than the original, but the basic plot, in which the objection to the low birth of the heroine is removed by making her of noble blood, is the same. The divergence of English and continental ideas about the social structure is indicated by the comments of one reviewer, who said, "The story is that of *Pamela*, with such alterations as might possibly make it more suitable to an Italian audience, but have totally spoilt it for us, as they totally destroy all probability, and introduce such characters as we can scarcely conceive to exist."\(^\text{24}\)

In his second comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1774),\(^\text{26}\) Oliver Goldsmith achieves a balance that could hardly offend either republicans or royalists. The change of social station suggested by the title establishes a situation similar to the one in Richardson's novel, but the fact that the heroine assumes the role of a commoner makes the connection with Goldoni's play undeniable. In Act I Constance Neville describes Young Marlow as a man who is notoriously shy among women of quality and reputation, but "a very different character among creatures of another stamp." To overcome his diffidence, Kate Hardcastle capitalizes on the prevailing deceit
that has made the country house into an inn by posing as a barmaid. The ruse works to perfection; Young Marlow's shyness vanishes in her presence, and he soon succumbs to her charms. Once the disguise begins to operate on Young Marlow's feelings, Kate secures its effect by stressing the likeness of her situation to Pamela's. When he is about to leave in Act IV, she pretends to cry and says, "I'm sure I should be sorry, people said any thing amiss, since I have no fortune but my character. . . ." Young Marlow replies that the difference of station makes marriage impossible, "and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, or bringing ruin upon one, whose only fault was being too lovely." It could be argued that satirical treatment of the Pamela motif is intended here, since she is acting and he is sincere, but her reaction to his speech is also sincere; in an aside she says, "Generous man. I now begin to admire him." Thus Kate stoops socially to conquer the man. Whether or not the element was derived from Goldoni, differences in class are not stressed in the play. They are mitigated by the comedy arising from the multiple deceits, and by the gentle satire directed toward those supercilious critics who stigmatize all things "low."

The continuing popularity of Goldoni's dramatic version is attested by Frances Brooke's comic opera, Rosina, a phenomenally successful piece that was first
performed in 1782 and had run through fourteen editions by 1796. As is usual in such plays, the libretto is brief and compact: Rosina is a virtuous cottager of whom Squire Belville says, "There is a blushing, bashful, gentleness, an almost infantine innocence in that lovely countenance, which it is impossible to behold without emotion!" (I,i). The Squire's affection is equally innocent and platonic, but his scheming brother, Captain Belville, has baser motives. He first tries to seduce Rosina on a hillside only to have her rescued by the Squire; then he attempts to carry her off by force but again his plot is foiled. During the denouement, Dorcas, a faithful old servant, reveals that Rosina is actually the daughter of a nobleman, and with the stigma of low birth removed, marriage with the Squire takes place in short order. In this version, Richardson's plot, as modified by the pen of Goldoni, exhibits all the characteristics of an idyllic fantasy, in addition to the exaggerated emotions of the incipient melodrama. Mrs. Brooke's plan for opera and psuedo-comedy seems to have been popular with the ladies, for it is repeated with only minor changes in The Cottage Maid (1791) and The Village Maid (1792). The former varies the pattern by adding a Lovelace-like villain, and a deus ex machina in the form of a type of the good hearted sailor which originated with Smollett. The latter merely repeats the same hackneyed formulas: the heroine proclaims,
Though fortune shuns my humble cot,  
And ev'ry ill each comfort drains;  
I'll smile contented at my lot,  
While virtue in this bosom reigns. (I, i)

Charles Macklin's *The Man of the World* (1781), an old style comedy that received much critical acclaim, in some respects represents a blending of elements from *Pamela*, *Nanine*, and *Pamela nubile*. The play was first performed in Dublin as *The True-born Scotsman* (1764), and although the plot remained basically unchanged, it underwent several revisions before being approved for performance in London. But the elements which connect the play with the *Pamela* tradition were not the cause of offense. The plot is formed by the conflict between Sir Pertinax Macsycophant and his son, Charles Egerton, over whom Charles should marry. To satisfy his own lust for money and power Sir Pertinax wants to marry Charles to Lady Rodolpha Lumbercourt, but Charles loves Constantia, who is quite clearly the *Pamela* type. Without fortune or friends, she was befriended by Charles's mother; "my lady took her in for charity, and indeed has bred her up to the music and figures; — ay, and reading all the books about Homer — and Paradise — and Gods and Devils — and everything in the world, — as if she had been a duchess..." (I, i). Constantia has a "little study" and a "book of accompts;" she is "a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan" (II, i) whom Charles defends to his father: "Her poverty is not her
crime, sir, but her misfortune: her birth is equal to the
noblest; and virtue, tho' covered with a village garb,
is virtue still; and of more worth to me than all the
splendour of envied pride or redundant wealth" (IV,1).
In the end the marriage is approved. The innovation in
the Richardsonian plot from Voltaire appears in Act III,
scene iv, of Nanine, where Nanine's fellow servants,
envious of the position of favor she enjoys, try to
impugn her innocence. In Macklin's play, Constantia
suffers in the esteem of her superiors and her lover by
the "malignant envy of a paltry waiting wench" named
Betty, who circulates the story that Constantia is preg-
nant as a consequence of an illicit affair. The plot is
complicated further by the love of Charles's tutor, Sid-
ney, for Constantia, but his ardor, never very intense,
dissipates when he learns that difference of rank means
nothing to Charles. Sidney then retires in favor of
his pupil and friend. The friend of the hero who also
loves the heroine differs from Giffard's Jack Smatter
and Goldoni's Lord Arthur in that he is no profligate
seducer; the resemblance lies wholly in his relation
to Charles as friend and to Constantia as distant ad-
mirer. It should be noted that in this play, particularly,
the parts of the plot deriving from Pamela are overshadowed
by the characters of Sir Pertinax Macysycophant and Lady
Rodolpha Lumbercourt, which will be examined in more
detail later.
There is yet a third continental version of *Pamela* that had some effect on the English tradition. This is Voltaire's *L'Écossaise*, which shows traces not only of Richardson's novel, but also of *Manine* and *Pamela nubile*.\(^3\)

The most significant change from Voltaire's earlier play appears in the inclusion of Goldoni's idea that the heroine be of noble blood, and Kathleen M. Lynch has shown that other details as well derive from Goldoni.\(^4\)

*L'Écossaise* was translated into English as *The Coffee-House; Or, Fair Fugitive* and published in London in 1760, and a few years later George Colman the elder adapted the play as *The English Merchant* (1767).\(^5\)

Colman hardly changed Voltaire's plot, but his hand is evident in the characterization. Amelia is a fugitive from the clan feuds in Scotland whose poverty, innocence, and oppressed condition are reminiscent of Pamela. Besides emphasizing her pitiable condition, Colman heightens the bitter irascibility of the Lady Davers type, Lady Alton, and enhances the benevolent good nature of Freeport, a character added by Voltaire. In spite of the obvious indebtedness to Voltaire, there is evidence that Colman drew upon the native tradition in prose fiction that originated with Richardson. A significant change from Voltaire appears in the character of Lord Falbridge, a libertine who tries to take advantage of Amelia's indigent condition by making "dishonourable proposals" to her. Her injured honor forces him to repent, and she
agrees to marry him at play's end. This report of an "attempt" in the manner of Mr. B. is indeed a slight one, but it does show the direct influence of the novel.

All of these elements in the drama that are central in the foregoing discussion of the Pamela tradition have as their ultimate source the first two volumes of the novel. There was a second part, of course, published in two volumes on December 7, 1741, but I have been able to discover only one play written in the later eighteenth century which shows any indebtedness to the story of Pamela in her exalted station, and this connection has been familiar to scholars for some time. Thomas Hull's unpublished play, The Fatal Interview (1782), draws its plot from the one fully developed conflict in Pamela II, Mr. B's incipient love affair with the passionate Countess during the period when Pamela is being delivered of her first child. In the novel Richardson carefully develops Pamela's increasing suspicion arising from her husband's apparent coldness, and as the indications multiply, her worst fears seem to be confirmed. But after the baby is born, the truth comes to light, her suspicions prove groundless, and she becomes so perfectly reconciled to her husband that she can soon entertain the Countess as their mutual acquaintance. Hull turns the affair into a tragedy by having Somerville, whose virtuous wife Louisa is pregnant (though this fact is never openly stated), resume
an affair with an old love, the bewitching Henrietta, who is now a duchess bound in an unhappy marriage. As in Richardson the initial meeting takes place at a masquerade. But unlike Mr. B., Somerville is unable to control his passion for Henrietta; he is finally slain in a duel with her husband, and after an elaborate display of suffering, Louisa dies of grief. Surprisingly enough, Hull's play is one of the few dramatic tragedies made from the many potentially tragic themes that appear in Richardson's novels. The outstanding example is the story of Clarissa, and we must now consider the appearance in the drama of this, the most serious, of Richardson's works.

II

The first two volumes of Clarissa Harlowe, or The History of a Young Lady were published on December 1, 1747, the second two on April 28, 1748, and volumes V, VI, and VII, on December 6, 1748. Edward Moore's comedy, The Foundling, was first performed on February 13, 1748. The chronology of novel and play is important because The Foundling seems to have been influenced not only by Steele's Conscious Lovers and Pamela, but also by Clarissa. In its barest outlines the plot of Moore's play arises from the complications attending Young Belmont's attempt to seduce Fidelia, a desolate and beautiful young orphan whom he has rescued and lodged in his father's house.
But his wicked ambitions lose strength as the play unfolds; Fidelia's parentage is revealed and he repents and marries her. The resemblance of Fidelia to Pamela was recognized before the play was ever performed; in his prologue Henry Brooke describes:

A young, a lovely, unexperienced Maid,
In honest Truth, and Innocence array'd;
Of Fortune destitute, with Wrongs oppress'd,
By Fraud attempted, and by Love distress'd;
Yet guarded still; and every Suffering past,
Her virtue meets the sure Reward at last.

Ever since Auguste Beyer drew attention to the analogy between Pamela and Fidelia, and Mr. B. and Young Belmont, scholars have accepted Pamela as one of the sources of the play. More recently R. L. Collins has suggested that Clarissa must also be considered as an influence upon Moore's conception. Among other instances, he cites the plots and deceits in the program of seduction conducted by Young Belmont as being more like the character of Lovelace than of Mr. B.; for that matter, the whole emphasis in the play on the sinister evil of uncontrolled lust makes comparison with Clarissa unavoidable. But the attribution of Richardson's second novel as a source cannot rest on internal evidence alone. Here, however, the problem appears to be insoluble. Richardson's acquaintance with Moore is well known. In her edition of the novelist's correspondence, Mrs. Barbauld includes a letter from Dr. Delany which mentions
Moore's plan, since abandoned, of making Clarissa into a tragedy, but the letter is dated April 24, 1751, long after the first performance of The Foundling. Even though concrete evidence is lacking, the fact remains that Moore's play shows a close affinity with those portions of the novel which did not appear for two to ten months after the first performance. From what we know about Richardson's penchant for communicating his plans to his friends, it is not unlikely that Moore was familiar with the novel before it was formally published. But until some documentary evidence appears, the possibility of Clarissa as a source of The Foundling must depend on internal analogies and such conjectures as those above.

Unlike Pamela, and with the sole exception of The Foundling, Clarissa inspired no competition among playwrights to get the novel onto the stage. In fact, it was long after Richardson's death before a play based directly on the novel appeared in print. Yet in the interim we find numerous instances of the novel's influence upon the drama. Samuel Foote's most successful play, The Minor (1760), includes a Mrs. Cole who, like Jewkes and Sinclair, is a cynical and corrupt old bawd, but unlike them, she is also a canting Methodist. At the request of the young hero, Sir George Wealthy, Mrs. Cole agrees to supply him with a mistress. She brings Lucy to his lodgings and
the girl, at Sir George's request, recites her history (III, i). After refusing to marry as her father wished, she was banished from his house. After wandering about for a while, "accident plac'd me in a house, the mistress of which profess'd the same principles with my infamous conductress. . . ." For some time she was deceived by the decency of appearances maintained in the house, "but an accident, which you will excuse my repeating, reveal'd all the horror of my situation. I will not trouble you with a recital of all the arts us'd to seduce me: happily they hitherto have failed." She throws herself upon his mercy; he has "an honest feeling for afflicted virtue," and ultimately marries her. In the details of her banishment, her dwelling in a house of whose reputation she was unaware, and in her resistance to the "arts" used to seduce her, the correspondence of Lucy's history with that of Clarissa is apparent. In the context of The Minor, it would appear that Foote was capitalizing on a currently popular story in order to further his own comic and satirical purposes.

Elements from an earlier portion of the novel appear in The Clandestine Marriage (1766) by George Colman the elder and David Garrick. Like the Harlowes, the family of old Sterling enjoys the wealth derived from successful trading enterprises, but while the Harlowes possess a settled affluence that aspires to the condition of quality,
the Sterlings are still avidly acquiring wealth and spending it wantonly to gain social eminence. The sole exception to this pattern is Fanny, the younger daughter, who is secretly married to Lovewell. Her beauty and innocence have long since aroused the enmity of her older sister. In the conflict that develops between them, Miss Sterling takes on more and more of the characteristics of Arabella Harlowe. Early in the play she belittles Fanny's own situation by boasting of her approaching marriage to Sir John Melville, and by ostentatiously flaunting the jewels he has given her in an attempt to incite Fanny's envy (I, i). In Act II, Lord Ogleby describes Miss Sterling: "She will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father, and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother." Much to her chagrin, Sir John falls in love with Fanny. To cover her own confusion she berates her younger sister: "I always knew you to be sly, and envious, and deceitful... the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me." When Fanny tries to defend herself, Miss Sterling resorts to irony in both the manner and language of Richardson: "Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure!" (II, i). Such accusations are familiar in the mouths of Arabella and her brother James, but in line with the comic intent of the play, they lack the unrelieved bitterness that appears in Richardson. As in
Clari\textsc{sa}, Miss Sterling's turbulent brassiness and haughty ill-humor contrasts with the retiring frailty and delicate sensibility of Fanny.

Two years after \textit{The Clandestine Marriage} was first performed, an anonymous play called \textit{Modern Courtship} was published\textsuperscript{50} which is reminiscent of the novel in having a heroine, Clarissa, whose father, Goldfinch, wants her to marry Steady, whose ruling passion, like that of Solmes, is lust for money. Like Clarissa, she has the freedom provided by a fortune independent of her father's control, but there the resemblance between novel and play ends. Clarissa Goldfinch chooses a husband from the men who answer her advertisement in the newspapers.

A play of much more significance to the history of the stage, Hugh Kelly's \textit{False Delicacy}, had its first performance in the same year (1768).\textsuperscript{51} This play is especially important to the relations of the novel and drama because of the way in which one half of its dual plot represents an evolution of the family relationship described by Richardson. In the part of the play in question, Miss Rivers has received the blessing of her father for a marriage with Sidney. However, after being attracted, for reasons she does not fully comprehend, to a hardened libertine, Sir Harry Newburg, she agrees to elope with him, and he promises to be waiting for her in a coach.
at the back door of the garden. The change from Richardson appears in the attitude of Colonel Rivers toward marriage. Earlier in the play he states that "...a union of interest I look upon as a union of dishonour; and consider a marriage for money, at best, but a legal prostitution" (I,i). After his suspicions are aroused, he lies in wait for his daughter and Sir Harry in the garden and overhears her refer to him unjustly as "obstinate, peevish, perverse..." (III, I). Though she has absolute freedom to choose a husband, she still rebels. But finally, as she awaits the arrival of Sir Harry, the awakening comes,

...an elopement, even from a tyrannical father (Clarissa's case), has something in it which must shock a delicate mind - But when a woman flies from the protection of a parent, who merits the utmost return of her affection, she must be insensible indeed, if she does not feel the sincerest regret. (IV,i).

Just as she is about to depart with Sir Harry, Colonel Rivers appears but makes no move to interfere. His parting speech reminding her that the choice is hers alone moves her deeply. When Sir Harry suggests they depart, she refuses; he tries to carry her off by force but she is rescued by Cécil, his friend, who, like Belford in Clarissa, agrees to assist in the elopement until he rebels at the prospect of being an accomplice in the destruction of innocence. Eventually Sir Harry, now repentant, marries Miss Rivers with the blessing of her
father. For its representation of a logical outgrowth of the situation in Clarissa, False Delicacy is especially significant. The power of decision which Clarissa is forced to share with her family is possessed by Miss Rivers in its entirety. By focusing attention on the responsibility such a right imposes, Kelly displays the other side of the coin - the difficulty of making a decision about marriage when the girl is completely alone.

In addition to elements of plot and character, Kelly's plays reveal an indebtedness to Richardson by the manner and language in which he portrays states of mind and feeling, a form of influence which will be examined in more detail later. In this respect, Kelly resembles Elizabeth Griffith, who often takes a "hint" from the French drama but remains very much in the tradition established by Richardson. In The School for Rakes (1769), for example, the Advertisement admits a "hint" from the Eugenie of Beaumarchais while stressing the author's own contribution. In the play, a penniless and corrupt Lord Eustace has deceived Harriet Evans, a Welsh heiress, into a sham marriage, but it has not yet been consummated. In his plot to get her fortune, he is aided by his wily servant Willis (corresponding to the servant of Lovelace) and opposed by Frampton, a Belford type, both of which were added to the original plot by Mrs. Griffith. Lord Eustace has brought Harriet and her family to London and has lodged
them in his town house, which is described as a trysting place much like mother Sinclair's (IV,i). Having learned of the plot, Frampton tries to persuade Lord Eustace to restrain his excesses and forego involving an innocent young woman in ruin. Very much in the manner of Belford, he says; "Miss Evans cannot be much longer deceived, and when I reflect upon the vile artifices, that were used, to draw her into a feigned marriage, by heaven, I cannot help detesting you, and every one of the infernal agents, who were any way concerned in it" (I,iii). Before Act I ends, Lord Eustace, unlike Lovelace, has already begun to repent. In Act II Willis says of Frampton, "This fellow is turn'd puritan; he'll preach, presently;" and "rampton damns Willis as an "agent of perdition." Frampton re-nounces Lord Eustace in Act III, then returns because he can't leave a friend "on the verge of a precipice," but he still says, as Belford did to Lovelace, "The man, who has forfeited his own esteem, thinks all the world has the same consciousness, and, therefore, is, what he deserves to be, a wretch." When Lord Eustace offers to make a legal marriage with Harriet, she replies, "Nay, I will not - Your poor evasions have no weight with me - Leave me, for ever leave me - I will not be united to you, by any ties." When he suggests that she has no alternative, she replies, "No! I can die!" (IV,ii). In Act V Harriet's brother, Colonel Evans, serving the same function as Clarissa's
cousin Morden, challenges Lord Eustace to a duel, but Frampton intercedes and all is reconciled at the final curtain. Thus it may be seen that in rewriting the play of Beaumarchais, Mrs. Griffith relied on the novel of Richardson to give her comedy its distinctly English orientation.

In a later play of Kelly's, *A Word to the Wise* (1770), Captain Dormer, the rakish hero, shows some affinities with the character of Lovelace. In order to seduce the innocent daughter of an honest tradesman, Dormer resorts to feigned gallantries, while justifying his actions by claiming that her passion will be at fault if matters go to an extremity (I). He entices her to his private lodgings in Pall Mall (III); but then is exposed, becomes repentant, and marries the girl (V). Neither Lovelace's occasional outbursts of unrestrained passion nor his often frenzied machinations find any counterpart in Dormer, who is at best a tame and pallid imitation of Richardson's dashing original.

In later plays of the century, elements which may or may not derive from Clarissa continue to appear. In Richard Cumberland's *The Fashionable Lover* (1772), the innocent orphan Augusta is pursued by the infamous Lord Abbeville (I), and finally enticed into the house of his procuress where he attempts to rape her but is interrupted and she is rescued (III). In Samuel Foote's
comedy, *The Bankrupt* (1773), much of the complication arises from the freedom given the heroine by a large, independent fortune. The disguisings so important to the schemes of Lovelace have analogues in *The Belle's Stratagem* (1780) by Hannah Cowley, where Saville hires a prostitute to impersonate a lady of quality (IV, ii); in the same author's *The Town Before You* (1795), where the chameleon-like Tippy proposes to disguise himself as Miss Sally Martin (the same name as Mrs. Sinclair's assistant in the novel) to entice the heroine to a private lodging house for a sham marriage; and in Cumberland's comedy, *False Impressions* (1796), the libertine Algernon assumes the guise of a footman in order to gain access to the heroine.

It was not until 1788 that the first full scale dramatic version of the novel was published. The tragedy of *Clarissa* was the first and only play written by one Robert Porrett. In his Preface he says he has tried "to combine rational amusement with moral instruction, and to make the tears of sorrow promote the interests of virtue and the purity of social manners." In Act I Porrett follows the novel fairly closely in detailing the events leading up to Clarissa's decision to grant Lovelace a private interview, including the meeting with Solmes Solmes before the family. The divergence from the text begins in Act II, where Porrett has Young Harlow
and Lovelace act the renounter which has already occurred when the novel begins. From this point on, the changes multiply. As soon as he is introduced, Belford begins pleading with Lovelace to give over his attempt at seduction (II,iii); then Porrett returns to the novel for the scene in which Joseph and Lovelace conspire to abduct Clarissa. Act III opens with a scene that is somewhat startling. The stage direction reads, Scene, a Cavern - Banditti discovered at table over their wine. The robber captain outlines a plan to rob a coach. Colonel Xorden is introduced searching for Clarissa; Uncle Antony appears raging about the foul deed of Lovelace; then in scene iv, Lovelace and Clarissa are discovered bound in the robbers's cavern. Curiously enough, Porrett's depiction of Clarissa at this point appears to be a crude attempt to duplicate the emotional intensity of the scene following the rape in the novel. The robber turns out to be Lovelace's fellow rake, Tourville, who releases them. In Act IV a rapid succession of scenes present the lodging of Clarissa in the house of Lovelace in London; Arabella and Young Harlow are taken by the robbers, then released, then retaken and finally murdered; Colonel Morden continues his search; Tourville rescues Clarissa from the house, they meet Lovelace, the two men fight and Tourville dies. The opening scene in Act V tries to duplicate the events in the novel following
Clarissa's first escape from Lovelace; the pen-knife scene follows; and then the reduction of the heroine to near madness is portrayed in great detail. Here the stage directions are suggestive. Clarissa laments her isolation and helplessness, then falls into a light sleep ("Soft music plays...".) Finally she comes to a full realization of her plight "(...her looks very wild indeed)." Later, the bodies of her children are brought to mother Harlow who dies of grief; Clarissa dies; and Lovelace wanders alone in the fields saying, "O agony! O torture! too, too much to bear—Ye hell hounds avaunt!—where am I?" Thunder is heard, Clarissa's spirit appears to warn him that vengeance is near, and Colonel Morden slays Lovelace to make the tragedy complete. The degree of Porrett's success in struggling to dramatize the novel is sufficiently apparent from this description.

The Critical Review, intent on distinguishing Porrett's play from its more illustrious original, notes that the "story of the robbers...is new," but it mentions no source for the addition. In this respect, it appears that Porrett sought to make the old novel more timely by adding some elements from the machinery of the Gothic drama, which was nearing the crest of its popularity in 1788. Bertrand Evans has shown that robbers, caves, and murders under mysterious circumstances were stock devices in the
Gothic mode of novel and drama. The Critical goes on to comment that a dramatic version was doomed from the outset, "the subject is ... in many respects improper for a play, since the catastrophe is known; and events, which follow in long succession, cannot be so artfully combined, as to form a whole, within a proper compass."

The only exceptions are the history plays of Shakespeare, whose "principal merit arises from the excellence of particular scenes, and the bold originality of the language." Needless to say, Porrett's play has neither quality.

III

Richardson's third and last novel, Sir Charles Grandison (1753-54), influenced the drama in a decidedly different way than the earlier works. As far as I have been able to determine, the novel's principal plot, the elaborate courtship of Harriet Byron by Sir Charles Grandison, never found its way into the drama, but many of its characters and interpolated stories do appear, and even more pronounced is its influence as a conduct book for marriageable young ladies and gentleman, an aspect to be treated in the next chapter.

One of the first plays to show traces of the influence of Sir Charles Grandison, is the comedy of the poet laureate, William Whitehead, The School for Lovers.
Although the plot is taken from Le Testament, Whitehead considerably enlarges the central characters, Caella and her guardian, Sir John Dorilant, so that at the beginning the relation bears a marked resemblance to the incipient love affair between Sir Charles Grandison and his ward, Emily Jervois, and though Sir John soon admits his love for his ward, he remains a prototype of the good natured, benevolent, "older" young man. Further analogies are seen in the character of Araminta, who is remarkably like Charlotte Grandison, and in the pairings of characters and in the settings, as we shall see in a moment.

Traces of some of the minor stories in Grandison appear in the early plays of Mrs. Frances Sheridan, who, after her arrival in London, became one of Richardson's circle of admirers and accepted the novelist "as her master" in the writing of her own novel, Sidney Bidulph. It is perhaps presumptuous to suggest that she was indebted to her master in her first comedy, The Discovery (1763), since the prologue states,

No borrow'd thoughts throughout the piece are shown,
But what our author writes is all her own.

The fact remains that the character and family relationships of the spendthrift, philandering father, Sir Anthony Braville, who would marry off his children to alleviate the consequences of his own folly, bear a strong likeness to
the character and actions of Sir Thomas Grandison as
related by his daughters in the novel. A more positive
relation appears in Mrs. Sheridan's next play, *The Dupe
(1763)*, which revolves around the gradual awakening of an
aging libertine to the fact that he is being duped by his
mistress and her agent. In many ways the story of Sir
John Woodall resembles that of Sir Charles Grandison's
uncle, Lord W. Both are inveterate roués now entering
their dotage, plagued with the gout and the endless irri-
tations provided by a kept mistress. But whereas Sir
John flaunts his libertinism and boasts of it, Lord W.
is miserable, dominated by a termagant mistress who can
torture him more than he can torment her. Where Mrs.
Etherdown in the play uses guile and deceit, Lord W.'s
Mrs. Giffard uses bad temper and an imperious manner to get
her way. In both the novel and the play, a good natured
and compassionate intercessor (Sir Charles - Friendly)
rescues the duped keeper. There is a further suggestion
that Mrs. Sheridan took the trait of the loudly verbose
female from Mrs. Giffard and made it into the overweening
humor of Mrs. Friendly.

Another analogue to Lord W. appears in Hugh Kelly's
play, *The School for Wives* (1773), which the dramatist
says draws only its title from Molière. A minor character
in the play is the gouty, old libertine, General Savage,
who is abused and belittled by his mistress, Mrs. Tempest,
but here there is no kind intercessor; at play's end
the General remains subdued by his tyrannical woman.

As time passes and familiarity with the novels be-
comes more widespread, plays begin to appear which show
an indebtedness to all three of Richardson's works, and
here we begin to see the workings of a distinct tradition
embodying specific character traits, plans of action,
mental and emotional attitudes, and even a particular mode
of expression. A good example is *The Maid of Kent* (1773)
by Francis Waldron. In the first act resemblances to
Sir Charles and Dr. Bartlett appear in the characters of
Sir Thomas Richacre and Doctor Goodman. While Sir Thomas
praises the "piety, learning, good sense, . . . good nature,"
and "exalted character," of his daughter Emily's tutor,
the clergyman responds by saying of Sir Thomas, "Indeed,
so general is his goodness, he might be a pattern for
mankind: - he never saw an infant without a parent's
fondness, or a grey head, but, like a child, he honour'd
it." Emily is the Pamela-Clarissa type pursued by the
rakish Lord Sealand, who takes pride in her secret bene-
volences to the neighboring poor (II). Like Clarissa
she is met by the libertine in her father's garden and
carried off by force (IV), but she is rescued with her
innocence intact and is betrothed to the suitor of her
choice.

Other elements from Richardsonian fiction appear
frequently in later eighteenth century drama. One of the most striking of these is the device of contrasting pairs of female characters. In this respect we encounter a mingling of dramatic and fictional traditions. Just as John Harrington Smith has shown the prevalence in Restoration drama of the "gay" and "serious" couple in contrasting pairs, so Alan D. McKillop has pointed out how Richardson modifies the dramatic pattern by pairing "a serious suitor with a lively or 'difficult' lady, Hickman with Anna Howe and later of course Lord G. with Charlotte Grandison." While the role of the male in Richardson's pairings is slighter than in the earlier drama, his overall stress on the female character emphasizes the contrast between the lively, vivacious girl and the grave, serious one; the contrast only sketched between Pamela and Polly Darnford becomes fully formed in the relation of Clarissa to Anna Howe and Harriet Byron to Charlotte Grandison. This pairing of gay and grave females had a pronounced influence on the arrangement of characters in the later drama.

Such a contrast is apparent in Moore's *The Foundling* and Whitehead's *School for Lovers*, commented upon above. In William Kenrick's play, *The Widow'd Wife* (1767), Narcissa is the "cheerful, chatty, agreeable" girl (I,1), whose mother, like Mrs. Howe, lectures her on the necessity of propriety and restraint to the character of innocence,
and reminds her that she must indulge herself less in raillery at the expense of her friends (I,ii). Narcissa makes a firm resolve, "I will check the vivacity of my temper, and be more on the reserve" (I,ii), but her success is only partial. On the other hand, Sophia is the quiet, frail girl whose father tries to force her into an unwanted marriage; taking an image from Richardson, one of the characters remarks of her, "It is a pretty Canary-bird, and would become a gilt cage mightily" (IV,i). A similar pattern of contrast is repeated in Isaac Bickerstaffe's comic opera, Lionel and Clarissa (1768), where Clarissa is sensible, elegant, and beautiful (I,i), of "unexceptionable" character (I,iii), and like Clarissa, she has the appearance of pale debility (II,i). Her opposite is the vivacious Diana who playfully announces at the beginning of the play that she wants to marry a rake and finally does so. Samuel Foote's play, The Lame Lover (1770), presents a similar character, but one more like Charlotte in having a perceptive, incisive manner and a penchant for cutting, satiric wit.

In Kelly's Word to the Wise, the gay-grave contrast appears in the juxtaposition of Miss Montagu, a "mad" girl (II) with "amiable vivacity" (V), and the quiet, retiring, and hesitant Caroline Dormer. In William Heard's play, The Snuff Box (1775), the source of the contrast is explicitly stated in an exchange between Sophia and Emilia:
Sophia: But why so serious? I declare sister, the sentiments you are so continually reading in Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, have render'd you entirelly unfit for the gay society of Bath.

Emilia: Indeed, my dear, if polite society consists in disregarding the unequall'd sentiments of a Richardson, I must submit to be unfashionable, to preserve my reputation. (I,iii)

Emilia's position is borne out by the plot in which Sophia falls in love with a fraud posing as a French count, then discovers all and repents, "O Sister! had I not despised those sentiments you have so prudent-ly imbib'd; I shou'd have learned to distinguish genuine worth, from the taud'ry foppery of mere externals" (II,ii).

The continuing popularity of this pattern is shown by the first comedy of Hannah Cowley, The Runaway (1776), in which the "amiable delicacy" of Emily (I) contrasts with Bella, who says, "...they think I am made of ice, whilst the gaiety of my disposition only serves to conceal a heart as tenderly susceptible as the most serious of my sex can possess" (III). In this play the pairings of males and females are like those in Clarissa: the gay Sir George Hargrave and the grave Emily, and the grave Sir Charles Seymour and the gay Bella. In Know Your Own Mind (1778) by Arthur Murphy, the gay, vivacious Lady Bell accuses her sister Lady Jane of prudery, and the contrast is heightened as the play develops. And finally, in Miles Peter Andrews's comedy, The Reperation (1784),
the forlorn Louisa, a picture of amiable distress, characterizes Harriet as "my gay, sprightly, yet feeling friend!" (II, i), and the contrast is maintained throughout the play.

In addition to plots and characters, other elements from Richardson appear with some frequency in the later drama. One of the most important is the novelist's contribution to the tendency during the century to move the settings of comedy out of the drawing room and city into the countryside. Although all the novelists emphasize the contrast of city and country, Richardson's influence is particularly notable in the increasingly frequent appearance not only of rural scenes, but also in that distinctive eighteenth century version of the country, the formal garden with its carefully manicured shrubs and elaborate pattern of walks and byways. Unlike the wild, luxuriant havens of Marvell where the philosophic man could retire for contemplation, the formal gardens in Richardson are less important for their inanimateness than for the way this quality can be used to heighten the movements, attitudes, and feelings of men and women. In this respect the most elaborate use of the garden appears in the Italian scenes of Sir Charles Grandison when Sir Charles visits the della Porrettas. Here the garden becomes the background for the characters who stroll and discuss their feelings, strike attitudes, and observe each other at a
distance. Frequently the garden becomes and is exploited as a part of an escape mechanism; it provides a refuge when the emotional tensions inside the house become intolerable. Besides these characteristics, the garden as drawn by Richardson provided the dramatists with an ideal way to present the irony of disguise and foreknowledge; in the open characters could observe unnoticed, overhear, advance their own plots, and capitalize on the sudden confrontations provided by the abrupt walks and turnings.

For the use of the garden in the manner of Sir Charles Grandison, and for other reasons as well, the influence of Richardson is particularly apparent in three of the better plays of the later eighteenth century, Whitehead's School for Lovers, Colman and Garrick's Clandestine Marriage, and Kelly's False Delicacy. Gardens in the Richardsonian manner become so common in the drama after 1760 that no real purpose would be served by trying to list them all. The back door of a walled garden which, in Pamela and Clarissa, becomes a symbol of clandestine maneuverings in violation of the reigning authority, appears in almost every play of this period that features an elopement, to name a few: Bickerstaffe's Love in a Village (1761) and Lionel and Clarissa, Kelly's False Delicacy, The Runaway by Mrs. Cowley, and Andrews's The Reparation.

Other elements from Richardsonian fiction in the drama include the repeated appearance of old and faithful servants
like Jarvis in *Pamela*, notable for their obedient good nature and praises of their masters. In this respect, Richardson must share with Steele and others of similar outlook the creation of an antitype to the traditional image of the scheming, self-interested servant, who is prominent in comedy from Plautus onward. Such servants appear in *The School for Lovers*, in *The Platonic Wife* (1765)\(^28\) and *The School for Rakes* of Mrs. Griffith, and Bickerstaffe's *Lionel and Clarissa*, among others. Bickerstaffe and particularly Mrs. Griffith were fond of discussions between women in the manner of Richardson of problems relating to courtship and marriage. The device is apparent in his *Lionel and Clarissa* and her *The Double Mistake* (1766).\(^29\)

Plots, characters, settings, symbols, and peculiar narrative devices are the more easily definable elements from Richardson's fiction that appear in the later drama. More tenuous, but in many ways more profound, is the novelist's influence on the whole conception of plays - instances where his attitudes toward men and society are reflected even in the manner and language in which such matters are portrayed on the stage. And it is to this aspect of his influence on the drama that we now turn.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. *English Literature from Dryden to Burns* (New York, 1948), 304.

2. *Box, Pit and Gallery* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953), 215.


5. William M. Srle, Jr., *Samuel Richardson, a Bibliographical Record* (New Haven, 1936), 13.


8. *Pamela, an Opera* (Newcastle, 1742).


16. English reaction to these lines is indicated by the comment of Dr. Thomas Francklin, who translated the dramatic works for a complete edition of Voltaire (London, 1762). In XX, p. 187, he says, "The last line is entirely superfluous, and seems indeed to overthrow the tendency of the whole piece, which would certainly have ended better with the first; but the author wanted a verse to answer the other, and was resolv'd to throw it in, however absurdly."

17. (London, 1760).
18 (London, 1765).
20 Ibid., 78.
21 Ibid., 79.
22 Ms. Larpent 10 L (1773).
23 (London, 1800).
24 The translator is unknown.
25 (London, 1767).
26 (London, 1774).
27 In "Une Source de 'She Stoops to Conquer," PMLA, XLV (1930), 614, M. Baudin suggests that Goldsmith may have taken the device of heroine posing as barmaid from Marc Antoine Le Grand's one act comedy, Galant Coureur (1722). He concludes, "l'invention et la conduite of l'intrigue et quelques données de caractères la piécette de Le Grand pourrait bien avoir été le canevas de la pièce anglaise."
28 2nd ed. (London, 1783).
29 (London, 1791, 1792). Neither play was ever performed.
30 Ibid.
31 References are to the edition published as Augustan Reprint Society Publication No. 26, ed. Dougald MacMillan (Los Angeles, 1951).
34 Ibid., 95.
35 (London, 1767).
36 Sale, 26.
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<td>37</td>
<td>McKillop, <em>Richardson</em>, 70.</td>
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<td><em>Edward Moore, sein Leben und seine Dramatischen Werke</em> (Leipzig, 1889), 16-9.</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Caskey, 41.</td>
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<td><em>The Correspondence of Richardson</em>, ed. Anna L. Barbauld (London, 1804), IV, 37.</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>McKillop, <em>Richardson</em>, 159.</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>LXV (1788), 406.</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td><em>Gothic Drama from Walpole to Shelley</em> (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1947), passim.</td>
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61  Critical Review, LXV (1788), 406.
62  Selle, 76.
63  (London, 1762).
64  Alicia LeFanu, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mrs. Frances Sheridan (London, 1824), 108.
65  (London, 1763).
66  (London, 1764).
67  (London, 1778).
69  McKillop, Early Masters, 71.
70  (London, 1767).
71  (London, 1768).
72  (London, 1770).
73  (London, 1775).
74  (London, 1776).
75  (London, 1778).
76  (London, 1784).
77  (London, 1761).
78  (London, 1765).
79  (London, 1766).

Historians of the "sentimental" drama, which reached its full flowering during the eighteenth century, have proceeded cautiously when trying to evaluate the impress of the newly emergent novel upon this kind of drama. Osborne Waterhouse avoids the issue and mentions only "the great reciprocal influence exerted on the continent by Richardson's novels," when discussing the relations of French and English "sentimental" comedy. In the first extensive history of the genre, Ernest Bernbaum examines the problem more closely. In attempting to account for the stagnation of the "sentimental" drama during the period between 1740 and 1760 when the novel came into its own, he finds that the leadership in sentimentalism passed into other forms of literature, and concludes that these forms were perhaps "better vehicles than the drama for the conveyance of those feelings which sentimentalism valued." Of the novel in particular, Bernbaum writes, "In the choice of his subjects, the nature of his moral appeal, the method of conducting his plots, and the conception of his characters, Richardson was carrying forward the movement that the dramatists of sensibility had begun." Though
he realizes the connections between Richardson's work and the earlier drama, Bernbaum does not consider the reciprocal influence upon the later drama, and neither does Frederick T. Wood, who otherwise agrees with Bernbaum that the "impetus toward sentimentality on the stage was drained off by the novel." The most recent writer on the sentimental drama, Arthur Sherbo, attempts to define the genre precisely, yet he makes only the barest reference to the novel. His nearest approach is to trace the peculiar diction of late eighteenth century comedy to the "language of the letter writing manuals."

These citations show that scholars have tended to avoid the problem suggested by the novel's effect upon the drama, often, particularly in Sherbo's case, because of a desire to maintain a rigid distinction between the genres. But as I have already shown, practicing playwrights were increasingly aware of the decline of the genres and averse to composition by rule. While tragedy entered a period of decadence in which the neo-classical mode was utterly drained of whatever power it may have had, the writers of comedy, traditionally more responsive to the tastes of audiences, turned to the new and immensely popular novel for materials that might be successful on the stage. Besides plots, characters, and other elements noted earlier, Richardson provided a radically new conception of subjects with which comedy was perennially
concerned: woman, courtship, and marriage. For these matters he provided a special kind of ritual supported by a diction eminently suitable for dialogue and for the conditions governing the late eighteenth century stage, and he embedded the whole in the first coherent fictional statement of the increasingly popular philosophy of benevolence. Examination of these elements in the novels and their appearance in the drama which followed will be further evidence of the profound influence Richardson exerted upon the stage.

I

Among all the forms of literature, comedy is unique in its perpetuation of stereotyped characters and situations. From the time of the Greek New Comedy until the present day, the same basic pattern is repeated, albeit with many minor variations: the hero seeks the favors of the heroine, and a plot arises from the obstacles he must overcome to gain her hand. The other characters usually line up either for or against his endeavor, while some of them appear for the purposes of comic effect alone. In the typical play, the hero, after many, often violent, struggles, emerges triumphant at the end as the center of a new social group, and his feat is often celebrated with a marriage. This was the prevailing pattern in comedy
until 1740, although a tendency toward exalting the heroine at the expense of the hero can be seen in such a play as Richard Steele's *Conscious Lovers* (1722). It is a well known fact that the eighteenth century witnessed a substantial reorientation in the prevailing attitudes toward women in fiction. The process of creating a woman to occupy a central position in the plot, which appears in Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*, culminated in the three novels of Richardson. While the structure of Defoe's narratives depicting the almost interminable adventures of a roguish heroine show some similarity to the traditional pattern of comedy, the analogy of Richardson's work to this pattern is much stronger. In *Pamela*, for example, delineation of the heroine's character and her struggles is raised to a position of importance never seen before. In place of the hero struggling against many obstacles to gain his ends, Richardson establishes the heroine, who, as a result of the success of her efforts, becomes the center of a new social group that emerges after the climax of the action. This new pattern, the love plot with economic obstacles in which the heroine appears in an exalted role, was to become the mainstay of the English novel for nearly two centuries. While historians of the novel have long recognized Richardson's impact upon the later novel, the structural alterations that his example brought about
in comedy of the later eighteenth century have not been examined.

It would be impossible to describe a "typical" Richardsonian heroine, since Pamela, Clarissa, and Harriet Byron have distinctive qualities that set them apart from each other, but it is possible to isolate certain traits of the female character that were to become commonplace in later comedy, particularly in the sentimental drama. One of these is the concept of delicacy that evolves in the course of the three novels. There has been a tendency in recent criticism to emphasize the sexual connotations of certain key words in Richardson's ethical vocabulary, and Ian Watt is an exemplar of this point of view. He believes that "words such as virtue, propriety, decency, modesty, delicacy, purity, came to have the almost exclusively sexual connotation which they have since very largely retained." Evidently Watt is either misreading the conclusions of Utter and Needham, who carefully distinguish the heroines of Richardson from those of his imitators, or he accepts as valid the criticism of such contemporaries of Richardson as the anonymous author of Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, and Pamela (1754), who directs some acid comments to Richardson on "female chastity and delicacy, about which you make such a rout and a pother. . . ." but who partially invalidates his argument by his unequal stress on Richardson's
supposed prurience. Admittedly at least one aspect of such a term as delicacy suggests sensitivity in matters of sex, but Richardson's view of the concept was much broader and more comprehensive.

The first recorded use of "delicacy" in the sense in which it is most commonly used by Richardson appears in The Spectator (No. 286, January 28, 1712) in an essay attributed to Richard Steele. In distinguishing between true and false delicacy, the author says that the genuine quality "consists in exactness of judgment and dignity of sentiment, or if you will, purity of affection, as this is opposed to corruption and grossness." He goes on to state that the standard of delicacy is truth and virtue. By the middle of the century, the term had become what Schücking has called "ein Schlagwort," a concept expressing an ideal "gesellschaftlichen sowohl wie die moralischen. . . ." That Richardson was not alone in using the term in its broadest sense is shown by the unfinished treatise of the Reverend Nathaniel Lancaster, The Plan of an Essay Upon Delicacy (1748). In his prefatory remarks, Lancaster outlines an ambitious program for the analysis of the concept which would, in effect, establish it as a principle in the context of a fully developed philosophic and ethical system. In his second dialogue Lancaster states that besides giving pleasure of the most refined kind, delicacy "refines our
Morals, by cherishing those fine Emotions in the Soul, which create an Abhorrence of every thing that is base and irregular, and prepare the way for the easier impressions of Virtue and Honour. The universal quality and ethical basis of the trait are apparent in its definition: "Delicacy... is good Sense; but good Sense refined; which produces an inviolable Attachment to Decorum and Sanctity, as well as Elegance of Manners, with a clear Discernment and warm Sensibility of whatever is pure, regular, and polite; and, at the same Time, an Abhorence of whatever is gross, rustic, or unpure, of unnatural, effiminate, and over-wrought Ornaments of every Kind. It is, in short, the graceful and the beautiful added to the just and the good." Far from being a kind of squeamishness about sexual matters, Lancaster sees delicacy as a universal principle suitable to the highest of ethical purposes and pertinent to every phase of human relations. Although Richardson made no such attempt to expound a unique system of ethics, it can be shown that the concept of delicacy serves an equally broad and varied function in his novels.

In *Pamela* the use of the term provides an interesting illustration of the heroine's change in social station. In the first two volumes of the novel, in which the colloquial style is decorously suited to the character of a waiting maid, the word does not appear, although it can
be argued that Pamela's delicacy sets her apart from her fellow servants, even though the trait is not called by name. But the situation changes in the sequel; Pamela, "in her exalted Condition," enters the "Genteel Life." While she is still making the adjustments to her new role, she defers to her aristocratic kinsmen, Lord and Lady Davers, as "Judges of Delicacy and Decorum" (III, 35). After a suitable period of time has elapsed, Lady Davers compliments her: "I am pleas'd with your Delicacy, my Dear, as I said before. -- You can never err, while thus watchful over your conduct" (III, 235). Familiarity with the concept makes a new coinage possible. Polly Darnford, vexed with the gross manners of her suitors, exclaims, "These Gentlemen, the very best of them, are such Indelicates!" (III, 341). And after the early trials of married life have been replaced by the settled composure imposed by a large family and a genteel existence, Pamela has so far mastered the concept of delicacy that she can define the quality for others. She warns the young ladies who come for her advice to beware of a "First-sight Love. For there is such a Susceptibility supposed on both sides, (which, however it may pass in a Man, very little becomes a Lady's Delicacy) that they are smitten with Glance; the fictitious blind God is made a real Divinity: and too often Prudence and Discretion are the first offerings at his Shrine!" (IV, 426-7). It can be assumed that Richardson
saw delicacy as an integral part of the most desirable female character.

In *Clarissa* delicacy is accepted as an essential principle governing the conduct of a young woman's life. Anna Howe wonders how any woman, with "the least degree of delicacy," could oblige a libertine (I, 184); Clarissa cannot comprehend how a person of Anna's "delicacy" could give up a friend (I, 197); and when Anna presses Clarissa about her love for Lovelace, Clarissa accuses in return, "should you, whose mind is susceptible of the most friendly impressions; who have such high notions of the delicacy which ought to be observed by our Sex in these matters; and who actually do enter so deeply into the distresses of one you love - should you have pushed so far that unhappy friend on so very nice a subject?" (I, 299). As the novel unfolds, delicacy as a trait to be particularly associated with Clarissa is emphasized in several ways. Her brother, James, with heavyhanded sarcasm, addresses her by synecdoche: "Blush, then, Delicacy, that cannot bear the Poet's *Amor omnibus idem*!" (II, 36) Clarissa becomes the embodiment of the quality (Lovelace: "To spare a delicacy so extreme, and to obey you, I write" IV, 193), and then she transcends the trait, becoming such a symbol of the evanescent quality of womanliness that "delicate" is no longer an adequate description. Thus a critic like Dorothy Van Ghent, in trying to
define the essence of Clarissa, is forced to settle for a term such as "debility," while admitting that even this term is inadequate to describe the whole of the character. A woman so attractive and compelling was bound to attract the attention of those less talented than Richardson, among them the later novelists and playwrights, who, unable to make a Clarissa, would settle for a merely "delicate" heroine instead.

In Sir Charles Grandison the concept of delicacy as applied to women undergoes further elaboration and refinement. The nature of this facet of character is set by Sir Charles himself: "Women are the most delicate part of the creation" (II, 195). Harriet Byron has "a great notion of female delicacy" (I, 216); she understands its ethical basis, "Nothing, surely, can be delicate, that is not true, or that gives birth to equivocation" (II, 275), and realizes its faults: "DELICACY, too, is often a misleader; an idol, at whose shrine we sometimes offer up our Sincerity; but, in that case, it should be called Indelicacy" (II, 275). Charlotte Grandison recognizes the trait as an outstanding one in Harriet: "What must your fellows think of you? In this gross age, your delicacy must astonish them" (IV, 79). And as Charlotte describes Harriet before her wedding night begins, the sexual connotation of the term is clear, and though the language is refined, it is arguable whether Richardson
reveals any "linguistic sensitivity" in trying to mask what is obviously in the offing: "There, with so much expressiveness of meaning, tho' not of language; so much tenderness of love; so much pious gratitude; so much true virgin sensibility; did she open her heart to me; that I shall ever revolve what passed in that conversation, as the true criterion of Virgin Delicacy unmingled with affectation" (V, 389).

The characteristic extends to some of the other women in the novel as well. It appears as a defining physical trait in Lady L., who has "that true female softness and delicacy in her features, which make her perfectly lovely" (I, 322). And Clementina della Porretta possesses "delicacy of . . . heart" (III, 170), and "never was there a more delicate mind" (III, 192). It should be noted that in the latter instance Richardson emphasizes the rational aspect of delicacy; it is a trait of the intellect existing beyond the rule of the passions.

In Grandison Richardson extends the concept to include some of the men as well as the women. Lovelace has no delicacy, and he tries to destroy that which is embodied in Clarissa. In contrast Sir Charles is a "Good Man" with an instinctive trait of delicacy in his mind and person, and an unerringly respect for the quality in others. To alleviate Harriet's doubts about his relation with Clementina, he says, "And thus far I will own against
myself, that were the Lady, in whose heart I should hope an interest, to have been circumstanced as I was, my own delicacy would have been hurt; owing, indeed, to the high notion I have of the true Female delicacy" (V, 144). The trait governs all his actions, particularly such an important matter as courtship. When he approaches Mrs. Shirley about Harriet, he explains his conduct, "I know too well what belongs to female delicacy in general, and particularly to that of Miss Byron, to address myself first to her, on the subject which occasions you this trouble" (V, 48). He pleads his case, and then says, "If . . . I may be admitted to pay my respects to Miss Byron, consistently, as I hinted, with her notions and yours of that delicacy by which she has always directed, and at the same time be received with that noble frankness which has distinguished her in my eye above all women but one; . . . then shall I be a happier man than the happiest" (V, 49).

Delicacy is, of course, only one of the cardinal traits in the character of the heroine that later dramatists and novelists were to make into a stereotype. While working with the traditional pantheon of female graces that includes innocence, propriety, modesty, and honor, Richardson places a greater emphasis than ever before on benevolence, with all its ramifications in terms of the sensibility, of which delicacy is a part. Besides the linguistic sensitivity in sexual matters noted by Watt,
Richardson imparts to the ideal heroine the kind of frail physical constitution exemplified by Clarissa. As the authors of *Pamela's Daughters* point out, many of these traits were to be carried to truly fantastic extremes in much of later popular fiction: prudery, and displays of emotion at the slightest provocation by means of blushes, tears, and fainted were the inevitable consequence when mediocre talents tried to recreate the heroines of the master. Nor was the heroine "fine by defect and delicately weak" confined to prose fiction, for she also plays a prominent role in the later drama. It should also be noted that in Richardson, many of her traits, such as a refined sense of delicacy, are shared by the hero, especially by Sir Charles Grandison. In the novels the roles of heroine and hero are subsumed by the larger issues of love, courtship, and marriage, and in this scheme, the heroine stands at the center of a new pattern of courtship that Richardson raised to the status of ritual.

II

Speaking of Richardson's fiction as a whole, Professor Alan McKillop has observed that "love between the sexes . . . poses the supreme problem in the harmonizing of passion with rational esteem and moral approval."
The crucial problem, of course, arises from the need for "harmonizing," and the tensions and conflicts created by characters striving for this goal are predominant factors in the novels. In attempting to understand Richardson's attitudes toward courtship and marriage, modern scholars have uncovered ample evidence of the novelist's preoccupation with these problems. In a study of one of the earliest publications, the *Familiar Letters*, Katherine Hornbeak has discovered that Richardson, unlike his predecessors in the genre of letter writers, included a high percentage of epistolary examples dealing with the details of courtship and marriage, thus confirming an early interest in the theme that predominates in the novels.  

Ian Watt has made an extensive study of the theme of courtship and has found, among other things, that "in 1740 the middle class concept of marriage was not yet completely established;" thus Richardson was compelled to gather scattered tenets and beliefs into a suitable code to fulfill "his aim of producing a new model of conduct for the relations between men and women."  

Marriage held a "tremendous fascination" for Richardson and he sought to idealize it in a distinctly Protestant way. Watt stresses the consistent "ceremonial attitude" toward marriage, and "the air of pondered contractual protocol" with which a courtship is conducted, thereby suggesting an aspect of the novels that I should like to
stress more strongly because of its effect on the later drama. Since Richardson was establishing a new code, it was necessary for him to formalize a set of fixed procedures for the conduct of courtship and marriage, to establish, in effect, a new ritualistic pattern suitable to his own social class and religious beliefs. Assuming that, in literary terms, ritual is "a recurrent act of symbolic communication," it may be seen that Richardson's most common technique is to use the principle of recurrence to establish symbols which, taken together, form the new rituals attendant upon courtship and marriage. We have seen how Clarissa comes to symbolize the principle of delicacy, and how, in Grandison, delicacy becomes an essential component in the management of courtship, and therefore in the new ritualistic pattern. So it is that by the repetition of certain elements, Richardson elevates them to the status of ritual; common words and phrases become, in specific contexts, symbols of the most desirable personal character, of states of mind and feeling, and of social relationships. What emerges from the novels is a special language that bodies forth an ideal scheme of courtship and marriage, a pattern that Richardson's followers were to accept as definitive.

Many of the elements that compose the ideal appear in the letter in Grandison, from the Countess Dowager of D. to Mrs. Selby, proposing a match between her son, the
Earl of D., and Mrs. Selby's niece, Harriet Byron. First it is to be noted that the proposal implies a repetition of a pattern first stated in Pamela: the marriage of an aristocrat with a woman of the middle class involves a move up the social scale for the lady because, as the Countess observes, "A man of quality . . . confers quality on his wife" (I, 329). In this respect it is pertinent to recall the change that Richardson made in the traditional pattern of comedy in which the heroine, and not the hero, is integrated into a new society.

As to the qualifications of the parties, the Countess states of her son:

My Lord has just entered into his twenty-fifth year. There are not many better young men among the nobility. His minority gave an opportunity to me, and his other Trustees, to put him in possession, when he came of age, of a very noble and clear estate; which he has not impaired (I, 328).

Like Mr. B., Lovelace, and Sir Charles, the Earl has reached the most desirable age for a man to be married, the middle twenties. He skilfully manages a large, unencumbered estate, which his mother gives only cursory mention to avoid any suggestion that common barter may be involved in the settlements. With his wealth and knowledge of practical affairs established, the Countess proceeds:

His person is not to be found fault with. He
has learning, and is allowed to have good sense, which every learned man has not (I, 328).

Here she states the dichotomy between "mind" and "person" that is of paramount importance in the Richardsonian concept of marriage. It is a crucial issue in the argument between Clarissa and her family. When Clarissa complains of the "disagreeableness" of Solmes's "person," her mother replies, "Now is Mr. Solmes, I see, but comparatively disagreeable; disagreeable only as another man has a much more specious person." Clarissa avoids the question of Lovelace by debating on principle, "Is not his person the true representative of his mind?" (I, 107). The argument with her family continues, but Clarissa remains adamant. She tells Anna,

I cannot help owning, however, that I am pleased to have you join with me in opinion of the contempt which Mr. Solmes deserves from me. But yet, permit me to say, that he is not quite so horrible a creature as you make him: As to his Person, I mean; for with regard to his Mind, by all I have heard, you have done him but justice. . . (I, 195).

Later on, Clarissa implies that she was impressed with Lovelace when, after "complimenting my person, he assured me . . . that he was still more captivated with the graces of my mind" (I, 264). The scale of values suggested here, of mind as a factor of much greater
moment than person, is constantly reiterated in Grandison. Greville establishes the pattern at the very beginning:

"But lovely as Miss Byron's person, I defy the greatest Sensualist on earth not to admire her mind more than her person" (I, 4). Harriet states as the ideal a love "founded in reason, and whose object is mind, rather than person...." (I, 164), and thus she defines her own love for Sir Charles:

Is it person that I am in love with, if I am in love? No: It is virtue, it is goodness, it is generosity, it is true politeness, that I am captivated by; all centred in this one good man." (II, 153)

Clementina, in accord with her piety, goes a step further; her brother, the Bishop, tells Sir Charles, "Your person, Chevalier, is not so dear to the excellent creature, as your soul" (III, 115). Hence when the Countess Dowager of D. gives priority to the rational attainments of her son and proceeds to say, "I look farther than to the person of a woman; tho' my Lord will by no means have beauty left out in the qualifications...." (I, 328-9), her criteria for selection are in complete accord with the predominant emphasis on "mind" as the primary consideration. The sense of disembodiment implied here, of "mind" and "person" as qualities set apart from the individual, also appears in the use of "object" as a descriptive term for the other party in the courtship. Thus we find Mr. Reeves agreeing with Harriet, "I never knew
a man who could make a jesting matter of the passion, in the presence of the object, so very deeply in Love, as to be hurt by the disappointment" (I, 162). In this use of "object" instead of a more concrete term, there appears the tendency toward depersonalized abstraction characteristic of much of the language of the ritual.

After the characters and intentions of the parties are established, a second prerequisite to the beginning of an active courtship appears when the Countess asks, "Are then Miss Byron's affections absolutely disengaged?" (I, 329). For Richardson the state of the heroine's feelings is always of considerable, often crucial, importance. In all matters, not necessarily of love, her desires are expressed in terms of her "inclinations." Clarissa has "a disinclination to change her State" (I, 11); Anna remarks that she is "drawn in by a perverse fate against inclination" (I, 67); she contrives "to avoid the intended violence to my inclinations" (I, 261); and the cause of her anguish is the conflict between "inclination" and "duty" (II, 72). Harriet speaks of parents who consult "their daughter's inclinations as preliminaries (to marriage) are adjusting" (I, 93); Sir Charles and Charlotte debate at length over her "inclinations" (II, 170f.; 397f.); Sir Charles gets hints that Clementina's mother is "disinclined to the alliance" (III, 163), and after the affair is ended, "He generously rejoices,
that he did not pursue his own INCLINATIONS" (IV, 181).
That "inclination" is a preliminary to a more active feeling is apparent in another letter of the Countess Dowager of D., where she writes, "I took the first opportunity to question him in relation to his inclinations to marriage, and whether he had a regard to any particular woman" (I, 332).

In the refined parlance of Richardson where open declarations of love are rarely permitted between the principals in a courtship, "inclination" is followed by "affection." Just as "mind" and "person" tend to become qualities abstracted from particular characters, so the "affections," by dint of constant repetition, come to symbolize a certain intensity of feeling and another stage in the ritual of courtship. In Pamela Polly Darnford is pleased with the suitor who said she "engaged the Affections at first Sight" (III, 215); Anna writes to Clarissa, "You are pleased to say, and upon your word too! That your regards (a mighty quaint word for affections) are not so much engaged, as some of your friends suppose, to another person" (I, 65); and in the multiple courtships in Grandison, the state of the affections is an omnipresent consideration. In the case of Harriet Byron, for example, all of her suitors are determined to learn if her affections are engaged; a lack of engagement is taken as a sign of eligibility. "Mr. Reeves, who has
a good opinion of Mr. Fowler, in answer to his enquiries, told him, that he believed I was disengaged in my affections; Mr. Fowler rejoiced at that" (I, 41); Sir Rowland Meredith asks her, "Are you, madam, are you absolutely and bona fide, disengaged? or are you not?" (I, 48); Sir Hargrave Pollexfen cannot understand why his suit is repulsed since he has been assured that her "affections are not engaged" (I, 123); and the modest Fowler says, "I was assured, madam, . . . that your heart was absolutely disengaged: On that assurance I founded my presumptuous hope" (I, 114). It is obvious that "engaging the affections" is roughly equivalent to the modern "falling in love." Richardson achieves variation by adding prefixes to the verb "engage;" the affections may be "pre-engaged" or "disengaged." In Clarissa the former condition is expressed by "prepossession" (I, 120, 141, 227, 231, 235); Clarissa's friends accuse her of having an "absolute prepossession in Mr. Lovelace's favour" (I, 335). The ritualistic status of the "affections" and their "engagement" as symbols is substantiated by the fact that Richardson abandons them in more complex emotional situations. Very early in Clarissa, a crucial problem arises about the state of her "heart," as Mrs. Harlowe says, "... since your heart is free, let your duty govern it" (I, 108), and the constant reiteration of the phrase (I, 109, 117, 118, 120, 126, 144, 150) sounds like a knell in prefiguring
the emotional crisis that follows. A similar effect is achieved in Grandison when Harriet Byron, whose "affections" are all that matter in relations with her other suitors, fears that her heart will become "entangled in a hopeless passion" for Sir Charles (I, 425, also II, 9, 91, 227, III, 234, 258).

Having described some of the fundamental elements in the Richardsonian courtship, it is now possible to formulate the ideal process as it emerges from the novels, and particularly from Grandison, which Professor McKillop likens to "a long-drawn-out session of a bourgeois or genteel court of love."29 It is well to note, too, that in this respect we are dealing with that aspect of the novel that places it in the tradition of the domestic conduct book: "Behind Sir Charles stands the figure of Bevil in Steele's Conscious Lovers, pointing the way to a program of benevolism in which the ideal of the gentleman is identified with an extension of 'the reverend Offices of Life' to include an entire society."30 Thus in the ideal courtship, man and woman share the often praised traits of benevolism - sensibility, generosity, compassion, amiability - along with the traditional virtues such as chastity, honor, modesty, and propriety.

The process is begun when a young gentleman of "unexceptionable" character (I, 41, 109, III, 135), inclines to marriage and seeks, either himself or through his "friends,"
to gain the "approbation" (I, 39, V, 296) of an "amiable" lady (I, 275, 285, 291, 308, II, 327, III, 73, IV, 263). If he has the necessary qualifications as to character and estate, and conducts himself with "delicacy," "punctilio" (III, 81, 322, V, 41, 145, 223) and "complaisance" (I, 87, II, 30, V, 107, 401), he may be admitted to pay his "addresses" (I, 123, III, 4, 54). Depending upon her "inclinations," he may gain her "esteem" (I, 114, 131, 163, II, 325, III, 8, IV, 43) and "engage her affections." If her affections remain "disengaged," he must be satisfied with "esteem" alone, as when Harriet tells Mr. Fowler, "... think me not either insensible or ungrateful: But time, I am sure, can make no alteration in this case. I can only esteem you, and that from a motive which I think has selfishness in it, because you have shewn a regard for me" (I, 115). Esteem may lead to acceptance of the suitor as a "brother" (I, 134, 218-9), but since it is founded on reason, it in no way suggests sexual passion. If the affections are engaged, then love and marriage may follow, but not necessarily in this order. Parents and guardians particularly seem to think that so long as the lady's heart is free, love will come in any case as a consequence of marriage. The situation of Charlotte Grandison, now Lady G., provides an interesting contrast to this point of view: "A calm and easy kind of esteem, is all I have to judge from in my matrimony, I
Something approaching the ideal courtship and marriage appears in the relation of Harriet and Sir Charles. Having earned her gratitude by the rescue from the clutches of Sir Hargrave, he soon merits her esteem, and finally engages her affections, "So it is; I must not, it seems, deny it" (II, 199). When she is in danger of losing Sir Charles to Clementina, she consoles herself that yet a higher attachment is still possible. She pursues the notion of a "disinterested passion:"

A Friend is one of the highest characters that one human creature can shine in to another. There may be Love, that tho' it has no view but to honour, yet even in wedlock, ripens not into friendship. How poor are all such attachments! How much beneath the exalted notion I have of that noblest, that most delicate, union of souls! (III, 338)

Even after her difficulties are passed and the marriage to Sir Charles is solemnized, friendship so defined remains the ultimate end of marriage, and such a relationship is confirmed between Harriet, Sir Charles, and Clementina (VI, 313).

In addition to refined, ritualized language, Richardson makes moralistic commentary an integral part of the ideal courtship, which must always be actuated by a soundly practical and ethical motive. The tendency to fill the narrative with pointed aphorisms is, of course,
precisely in line with Richardson's often professed moral purpose in the novels, a determination to make prose fiction a vehicle for ethical good that culminates in his last published work, *A Collection Of... Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflexions...* taken from the novels. Here, removed from its narrative context, the ethical commentary stands out in bold relief, and the topical arrangement of the *Collection* reveals some pertinent facts about the ritualistic element in the novels. For one thing, the increasing emphasis on courtship and marriage we have noted in the three novels receives ample confirmation: under "courtship" there are seven entries from *Pamela*, twenty-nine from *Clarissa*, and fifty-six from *Grandison*; under "marriage" there are seven entries from *Pamela*, thirty-three from *Clarissa*, and so many from *Grandison* that subsections are needed—"Marriages," "Marriage in advanced Years," "Clandestine Marriages," "Inferior Marriages," "Marriage Treaties. Settlements," "Marriage Proposals"—seventy-two entries all together. Thus the *Collection* provides an accurate measure of the distribution of emphasis in the novels. Moreover, it illustrates the interest in the establishment of suitable rituals common to all conduct books, and the repetition of certain linguistic patterns that is the essence of ritual-making is apparent in these entries about marriage and courtship from *Grandison*.
Marriage Settlements ought not to be made so large, as to make a wife independent of her husband, and to put it out of his power, with discretion, to engage her gratitude by his generosity, iv. 194.

A man, whose proposals of Marriage are unexceptionable, should be spared the indelicacy of asking questions as to fortune, v. 71.

A declared, and not unreasonable aversion, should not be attempted to be overcome, iii, 231.

It is an indelicacy hastily to urge a modest woman for an affirmative to a proposal of Marriage, when she has received it without giving a negative, iii, 231.

A lady's consent is enough implied in an early proposal, if she declare herself disengaged, and refer herself to her friends, iii, 231.

While preliminaries are to be settled among the friends of lovers, they both should hold themselves suspended, and not enter upon subjects with each other, that might lead to prepossession, iii. 102.

The true modesty, after hearts are engaged, is to think little of parade, and much of the social happiness that awaits two worthy minds, united by love and conformity of sentiments, v. 183.

A man of superior sense, merit, and delicacy, will sometimes be able to engage the heart of a sensible woman, without saying a word, v. 296.

Listing all the entries which contribute to the making of rituals is, of course, out of the question, but these will suffice to show how it is created.

In addition to a unique diction and moralizing commentary, Richardson either originated or gave renewed
impetus to many of the linguistic and rhetorical devices that were later to become hallmarks of the "sentimental" movement in literature. In a study of the characteristics of this movement, Erik Erämetsä first analyzes the special language of "sentimentalism," and proceeds to discuss cliches, compounds, and such stylistic devices as doublet, tria, enumeration, hyperbole, the emotional plural, and the various techniques, such as repetition, which are used for intensification. While the study establishes Richardson's place in the mainstream of the movement, it also points up the uniqueness of his contribution in more specific areas, such as the diction of the ritual of courtship and marriage, which appears again and again in the plays derived from his novels.

III

Scholars have long recognized Richardson's debt to the earlier drama but have differed about its nature and extent. The most reasonable view seems to be that while *Pamela*, in spite of some analogues, shows only the faintest trace of direct influence from the drama, the evidence in *Clarissa* is more conclusive: such plays as Charles Johnson's *Caelia* and Rowe's *Fair Penitent* have definite affinities to the plot and certain
characters in the novel, and on a more generalized level, heroic drama, Restoration drama, and sentimental tragedy and comedy, provided Richardson with materials for drawing the conflict between aristocracy and middle class that is basic to the novel. But in changing the role of the heroine and in formulating a new ritual for courtship and marriage, Richardson shows little indebtedness to the earlier drama. The exaltation of the heroine in serious drama, which was given special impetus by the she-tragedies of Otway and Rowe, undoubtedly contributed to the similar emphasis in the novels, but we must turn to the sentimental drama to find even the remotest connections with the novelist's concepts of womanhood, courtship and marriage.

In this respect it is revealing to examine the five plays that Ernest Bernbaum suggests as the exemplars of the sentimental drama before 1740: Love's Last Shift (1696), The Careless Husband (1705), and The Provok'd Husband (1728) by Colley Cibber, Richard Steele's The Conscious Lovers (1723), and The London Merchant by George Lillo (1731). As to the role of the heroine, the plot of Love's Last Shift revolves around the efforts of a devoted wife to reclaim a libertine husband. Although virtuous and faithful, she is not averse to the kind of licentious trickery that Richardson would have found grossly indecent. The Careless Husband concentrates on the reform of a wayward husband by a patient,
long-suffering wife, and except for the fifth-act reform-
ation, it hardly differs from Restoration comedy at its height. In The Provok'd Husband the plot situation is reversed: a sober, responsible husband is saddled with a wife given over to frivolity and dissipation. A new note appears in the character of Lady Grace, which Cibber added to the original plot of Vanbrugh. Her virtue, delicacy, and sensibility appear in stark contrast to the brittle follies of the heroine, and her courtship with Manly is decorous and proper. In this respect Cibber may have been following the pattern established by Steele, whose Conscious Lovers was performed a few years earlier, and whose style in comedy is most closely akin to that of Richardson. Steele's statement of his intentions in regard to women in The Spectator is significant: "When it is a woman's day, in my works, I shall endeavour at a style and air suitable to their understanding. When I say this, I must be understood to mean, that I shall not lower but exalt the subjects I treat upon. Discourse for their entertainment, is not to be debased but refined." The motive for such a style suggests an exalted notion of the fragility and refinement of womanhood, and it is the kind of conception that determines the character of Indiana in The Conscious Lovers. This heroine is sensible and delicate; both she and the hero, Bevil, recognize laudable ideals for the "Sex;" and in
one scene (II, 1) their courtship is conducted in a manner soon to be made commonplace by Richardson. Lillo's *London Merchant* has a similar female role in the delicate and sensible Maria, but her part is a minor one. It is obvious that earlier sentimental comedy reveals only traces of the intense concentration on the character and actions of the heroine that appears in Richardson's novels.

As to the language that Richardson made a part of the new ritual of courtship and marriage, in the early plays of Cibber, we see traces of the concepts that were to become common in the sentimental tradition—sensibility, generosity, and gentility—but no extended treatment of courtship. The three plays under consideration do, however, provide an interesting example of what was happening to the language. In 1696 Cibber used "inclination" to mean, almost without exception, carnal desire, but by 1728, there is hardly a trace of the sexual connotation as the term is used by Lady Grace and Manly in *The Provok'd Husband*. Cibber, ever sensitive to the proprieties of the moment, may have been adhering to the style Steele had established. In *The Conscious Lovers*, Bevil and Indiana demonstrate their 'consciousness' by an extended discussion of rational love that is punctuated by a nice regard for their mutual feelings (II, 1). The rhetoric and diction of Bevil's opening address create a tone that prefigures the style of Richardson: "If I might be vain
of any thing, in my Power, Madam, 'tis that my Understanding, from all your Sex, has mark'd you out, as the most deserving Object of my Esteem." They discuss the nature of esteem as an abstract quality that is the "Result of Reason" and "good Sense;" the "Height of Human Glory," it arises less from "external Merit" than from "a higher Source," the "Merit of the Soul." While Indiana reveals her dissatisfaction with esteem alone, the discovery and resolution make all things right, and Myrtle expresses pleasure that the "real Inclinations" of the lovers have been revealed. Steele and Cibber are concerned with "complaisance" as a desirable trait in parents and lovers. In The Provok'd Husband, Lady Grace complains to Lord Townly of Manly, "...he might have had a little more Complaisance before me, at least," and the Lord replies, "Complaisance is only a Proof of good Breeding: But his Plainness was a certain Proof of his Honesty..." (III,1). Amiability, another trait promoted by Steele, appears somewhat hollow in this play because of the cynical way Cibber uses it: once she has contritely reformed, the spendthrift wife immediately becomes "amiable" (V,1).

Although George Lillo preferred the genre of domestic tragedy, he writes in the tradition of Cibber and Steele. Revealing in its attempt at dignity, refinement, and sensitivity is this exchange between father and daughter in The London Merchant (I,11). Thorowgood tells Maria:
I am daily solicited by Men of the greatest Rank and Merit for leave to address you, but I have hitherto declin'd it, in hopes that by Observation I shou'd learn which way your Inclination tends; for as I know Love to be essential to Happiness in the Marriage State, I had rather my Approbation should confirm your Choice, than direct it."

After some discussion, Maria replies,

"I cannot answer for my Inclinations, but they shall ever be submitted to your Wisdom and Authority; and as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, so Love shall never make me act contrary to my Duty."

Here, and in the plays of Cibber and Steele, we see many of the attitudes toward marriage and some of the diction that was to appear in much greater detail in the novels of Richardson. In this respect, other sources that have been suggested for the novels, such as the French romances and the domestic conduct book, bear only the most generalized resemblance to Richardson in their treatment of women, courtship, and marriage. The early novels of Marivaux, for example, concerned as they are with action filled narrative, reveal none of the elaborate concern with the niceties of courtship that predominates in Grandison. Schöffler and Schücking have emphasized the influence of the Puritan conduct books, but one searches in vain in such a work as Defoe's Religious Courtship for the sophisticated and punctilious manner of Richardson, although the connection in matters of ethics is fairly concrete. In summary, it can be said that some of the sources, par-
ticularly the sentimental drama, contain in rudimentary
form certain of the elements that Richardson was to develop.
Although earlier literature reveals a tendency toward exalt-
tation of the heroine and toward extension of the doctrines
of benevolence to the vocabulary of courtship, it was left
for the novelist to provide the means for the creation of
a new and distinctive stereotype of the "sentimental"
heroine, and to make her the focal point of an elaborate
ritual that was to have a profound effect on the drama
and prose fiction of succeeding generations.

The sentimental drama that gains ascendancy in the
third quarter of the eighteenth century is markedly
different from the plays of the inchoative phase early
in the century, and a measure of the difference is to
be found in the influence of the novels of Richardson.
For one thing, their great popularity established the novel
as a new and vital form and inspired a host of imitators.
For another, they harmonized remarkably well with the
increasingly popular philosophy of benevolence. Social
conditions were likewise conducive to widespread accep-
tance of the novels. Just as Ian Watt has demonstrated
that the rise of the novel can be equated with the rise
of the middle classes, it has been shown that the drama
was even more responsive to the tastes and ideals of that
newly powerful element in English society. In yet another
area the novel brought change: where an earlier age had
turned to the extensive courtesy literature for guidance in matters of etiquette, the conduct book "went out of fashion" in the eighteenth century; "didactic fiction and bluestocking pronouncements" took "the history of polite conduct into new and different domains." All of these factors then contributed to Richardson's influence on the later drama.

In regard to the more specifically literary problem of defining the nature and extent of this influence, it is, of course, much easier to establish acceptable correspondences between such relatively concrete elements as plots and characters than between stereotypes and symbols that are difficult to distinguish. Conclusive proof that an author imitates the works of a master is seldom available, especially at this distance in time, and in the post-Richardson era, the problem is further complicated by the influx of plays and novels from abroad, particularly from France. A historian of the sentimental novel has observed, "As the Richardsonian current mingled readily with the Marivaux and Prevost streams of influence, it is not always easy or even possible to tell which is which." Undoubtedly there was much interaction between the two literatures; many Englishmen shared with the French an intense interest in the portrayal of sensibility; but scholars generally agree that in cases like this the native tradition is the stronger of the two, particularly
when the problem is so intimately involved with the native language. Moreover, the extremely refined and particularized sentimentality characteristic of French fiction and drama of this period not only received much abuse from English critics for its preciosity and pathos, much of it was so finely drawn that imitation was unlikely. As the writer in the Critical Review observed of the characters in Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*: "...the impression they make is strong, but it is evanescent; like the fleeting pictures of a dream, they strongly agitate for the time, and are afterwards forgot; while those of Richardson imprint the mind more durably, because the stroke is more frequently reiterated."52 It is apparent that while the French influence cannot be discounted, neither can it be recognized as a primary force.

The ritual of heroine-centered courtship poses a special problem because some of its elements had existed in earlier English literature, but, as we have seen, Richardson brought them together, molded them into a coherent and powerful form, and gave them a greater currency in the language of the time than they had ever known before. And Richardson's special way with the language was considered by his contemporaries to be one of his most unique contributions to literature. While some critics complained of a tendency toward affectation, particularly in *Grandison*,53 a more common view was expressed
by a novelist writing in 1779, who praised "the heartfelt, refined language, of the great master of the human passions, Richardson." And the special elements in the language that Richardson made current were perpetuated by a horde of imitations. Miss J. M. S. Tompkins has said that the novels provided patterns from which were drawn "the chief incidents of stores of books, with remarkably little variation, and sometimes with a literal closeness." Thus the style of Richardson remained in the public eye long after his death, and it is pertinent to note that many of his imitators in the novel were also playwrights, and their plays loom large in the Richardsonian dramatic tradition, to which we now turn.

IV

The play that historians of the drama have long recognized as marking the resurgence of the "sentimental" mode is William Whitehead's School for Lovers (1762). Notwithstanding its claims as a genre piece, the play constitutes the first appearance on the English stage of a courtship in the manner of Richardson. In an "Advertisement" prefixed to the first edition, Whitehead states that he derived his plot, which was already familiar on the French stage, from Fontenelle's Le Testament. The plan of the French play is a simple one: a mature
gentleman, having been made the guardian of the person and fortune of a dead friend's daughter, falls in love with his ward, and then must struggle to overcome the conflict between love and duty without violating any of the principles of polite conduct. Further difficulties arise when the widow, attempting to supplant her daughter in the gentleman's affections, promotes the suit of one of his friends, a conniving gigolo. Whitehead modified this pattern only slightly, mainly by providing the beau with a mentor and by eliminating some scheming servants. The nature of the resulting play is indicated by the comments of contemporary reviewers. The comedy, which is "full of delicacy and sentiment," while it contains nothing "to elevate, surprise, and excite loud bursts of laughter; the delicate reader will find in it abundance of entertainment." The uniqueness of the play was recognized by the critic in the Monthly Review. He found it "rather a Conversation-piece than a Comedy. The conversation is, however, natural, decent, and moral; and if the work does not abound with all that variety of business, plot, scenery, character and humour, which are requisite to gratify the taste of an English audience, it is, nevertheless, not an uninteresting performance; and may certainly rank among those which are distinguished by the appellation of Genteel Comedy." It is primarily the "Conversation" that sets Whitehead's play apart from its
The author states that he has "inviolably adhered to..." the "delicacy of the sentiments" in Fontenelle's hero and heroine, and the play bears out his claim. The motives and the manners of the characters are much alike, and both plays evolve around what one of Fontenelle's characters calls "une situation trop délicate" (I, ii). In fact, overcoming this delicacy, fulfilling the desires of the hero and heroine without giving offense, is a major problem; he refuses to force those inclinations about which she is herself uncertain. But Whitehead states that he has made "great and not contemptible additions to their characters," which were certainly inspired by Sir Charles Grandison on the one hand, and the Richardsonian heroine on the other. In naturalizing the play to an English scene, Whitehead introduces the setting of a formal garden, which Grandison had established as a useful and fitting device for the conduct of love affairs involving several principals; and more significantly for our purposes, he adds a foil to the gigolo in the person of a sober gallant who strives only for the hand of the knight's sister, while the gigolo strives for the heroine, the sister, and the heroine's mother, in that order. Thus it is apparent that Whitehead changes his source not only by stressing the interest in marriage of all the characters, he adds another major
character and by this means deliberately complicates the pattern of courtship as well. The allegiance of Whitehead to the manners of the bourgeois Court of Love established by Richardson is confirmed by the dialogue of The School for Lovers, which is expressed in the language that we have seen attain the status of ritual in the novels. Caelia is an "amiable creature," the "most worthy of her sex" (V,ii) with unusual "generosity" (V,i), whom Sir John Dorilant fears is "too sincere, too delicately sensible" (II,i) to admit his "addresses" (I,i). Early in the play, Caelia makes a familiar distinction, "I am afraid Sir John loves me; I am sure he esteems me, and I would not forfeit his esteem for the universe" (I,i). A forlorn Sir John exclaims, "...how happy must the man be who can engage her affections" (II,i), but he is determined not to "force her inclinations" (I,i). Disdaining the importance of her "person," he loves her with "head and heart" (II,i): "The lifeless form, beauteous as it is, would only elude my grasp; the shadow of a joy, not the reality!" (III,i). Contrary to the procedure of Fontenelle, Whitehead deliberately prolongs the courtship: when, after much hesitation, Sir John asks Caelia, "...is your heart your own?", he takes her lack of response as a sign of "prepossession," and fears his rival, "His easy assurance has won upon your affections, and what I thought my greatest merit, has
undone me" (III,1). But the obstacles posed by his "honnur" and her "sensibility" (IV,1) are finally overcome, and the way is opened for a marriage. In adapting a French plot for the English stage, Whitehead used the diction that Richardson had permanently fixed in the middle class ritual of courtship.

In Richardson the ritual derives much of its depth and power from the scope that is permitted for its development. On the other hand, the dramatist, faced with a form that demands economy, simply does not have room for that minute delineation of character that places the elements of the ritual in a context of real human passions. The restrictions imposed by dialogue force the dramatist to either create new and evocative symbols, or to draw on the common stock of tradition. In characterization the latter procedure produces the familiar stereotype, such as the delicate, sensible heroine; in dialogue it means the use of language made familiar in other contexts in hopes that it will retain its original meaning. When these elements become too abstracted from the environment that gives them depth, they become hollow and essentially meaningless. Thus the common complaint that sentimental drama divorces itself from reality gains further support when the dramatists render their methods trite by overuse. In Grandison particularly, Richardson himself tends toward a language of sensibility that does not ring true, but authors with smaller talents, who are rarely discriminating.
about conventions, were willing to sacrifice credibility in order to emphasize the ritual that the master had sanctioned. Like the perfunctory obeisances of everyday life — "Hello, How are you? "Fine." — the terms of the ritual, even in Richardson, came to have the characteristic hollow ring of language dissociated from reality.

But regardless of its inherent defects as a vehicle of communication, once Whitehead had shown that "Conversation" drama in the manner of Richardson could be successfully produced, other dramatists soon followed suit.

One of the most determined exponents of the dramatic style popularized by Whitehead was Mrs. Elizabeth Griffith, who was also a novelist enjoying considerable popularity during the 1760's. In her novels she openly acknowledges her dependence on Richardson, and as we have seen, his characters and situations reappear continually in her plays. Her heroines are almost uniformly types of Clarissa and Harriet Byron. Emilia in The Platonic Wife (1765) is "charming, sensible, unaffected," and "rational" (IV,v); Emily in The Double Mistake (1766) is the image of distressed innocence and "conscious" virtue (III,iv), a "paragon of humility" (III,v) who exclaims, "...by nature and by providence design'd, our helpless sex's strength lies in dependance: and where we are so blest to meet with generous natures, our servitude is empire: to such a state I once aspir'd, but Somerville
is gone; how lost my hopes of happiness!" (IV, iv).

Harriet in *The School for Rakes* (1769) is in a similar situation, but after suffering much anguish, her virtue and delicacy are safeguarded by marriage. The same comment could be made about Charlotte in *A Wife in the Right* (1772) and Louisa in *The Times* (1779).

In most of the plays the delicate heroine stands in the center of the action, and further evidence of Richardson's influence is seen in the diction of courtship. Mrs. Griffith's success in this respect can be inferred from the comments of the reviewers. The language of *The Double Mistake* is "polite and elegant;" in fact, the whole play "is perfectly chaste; the fable and the conduct have a good moral tendency; and the dialogue abounds with precept and sentiment that young people of both sexes may remember with advantage." Of *The School for Rakes*, the critic in the *Monthly Review* observed, "... the sentiments of honour and virtue, which fall from the mouth of Mr. Frampton, are such as ought to have a powerful influence in reforming the manners of the most dissolute." The author of the *Apprentice's Vade Mecum* would have been pleased had he known his works would have this kind of influence upon the stage. Mrs. Griffith's use of the Richardsonian ritual of courtship is everywhere apparent, as in this passage from *The Double Mistake*:
Lady Mary. As you describe your situation, I cannot blame you. - But was it aversion to the match proposed, or prepossession for some other object, that ruled your will? I beg you will be sincere. Your blushes answer me. - But go on.

Emily. I do not mean, my lord, to hide a single thought; sincerity is the fair garb of virtue, and they who know no guilt, need no disguise. At Bath, I met a gentleman, whom I had known at school. . . . Even though I thought him, as sure he is at this moment, the most amiable of his sex. (I, ii)

The sentiments Lady Mary expresses later in the play in favor of a public marriage ceremony are precisely in accord with Richardson's own:

L. Louisa. How often must I tell you, Lady Mary, that it is I, and not Mr. Freeman, that would have this affair kept secret. - There is something so indecent in public courtship and weddings, that I cannot bear the thought.

L.L. Mary. You'll pardon me, Louisa, if I pronounce it much more indecency for a young lady to receive the addresses of a lover privately, than if authorized by the approbation of her friends: in this case, her compliance might appear a condescension to their desires; in the other, it looks too much like granting an indulgence to her own. (III, iv)

Throughout the play, these two sisters, the "gay" Lady Louisa and the "grave" Lady Mary, discuss the problems of courtship and marriage in a way that provides a condensed imitation of similar discussions between Anna Howe and Clarissa, or between Harriet Byron and her "sister," Charlotte Grandison.
In her presentation of the emotions, Mrs. Griffith follows a familiar rationale: esteem is always a pre-requisite to deeper feeling, and the superiority of "mind" over "person" as an object of love is a constant theme. Her use of the protocol of the heart may be demonstrated from *A Wife in the Right* when Lord Seaton, seeking a reconciliation with his wife, explains his actions:

Lady Sea. We both deceive ourselves, my Lord, and both have been to blame.

Lord Sea. I would not wish, Madam, to involve you in my errors, and am sincerely sorry you should have suffered by them - Let me now proceed - After some unsuccessful struggles with myself, I at length determined to confess my prepossession for Miss Melville, and break off the treaty with you - I wrote to her, accordingly, on the subject - Her answer was consistent with that worth which dignifies her whole conduct. She owned ingenuously that her heart had been preengaged, but also generously assured me, that were it perfectly free, she could never have availed herself of my preference in her favour, to your prejudice.

Lady Sea. Generous, charming girl! how have I injured her!

Lord Sea. I have reason to believe that she left this house, in hopes her absence might efface my passion, and suffer your beauty and merits, Madam, to produce the effect they must naturally have had upon a disengaged heart. (IV,1)

Even in her last play, *The Times* (1779), which is otherwise a close, often literal, rendering of Carlo Goldoni's *Le Bourru Bienfaisant* (1772), there is the usual issue of "engaged affections," a recurrent debate about "true" and "affected delicacy," and a modest, "generous" hero of "unexceptionable"character and decorous comportment.
The French original is overlaid with the language of a thoroughly English ritual.

As the passages already quoted from her plays indicate, Mrs. Griffith was particularly fond of moralizing commentary. Besides plots oriented toward the fulfillment of a didactic function above all, Mrs. Griffith's dialogue is sprinkled with the kind of aphorisms and sentiments familiar to the reader of Richardson. Often a pair of characters, such as the sisters in The Double Mistake, function primarily as commentators on the main action. At other times a single character serves this purpose. The outstanding example is Frampton in The School for Rakes, who, as a type of Belford in Clarissa, uses his powers of oratory and his mastery of bourgeois ethics to reform the libertine lord. At one point in the play, when his declamation is unusually passionate, the libertine's servant remarks, "This fellow turn'd puritan; he'll preach, presently" (II,1). But the play as a whole makes clear that Frampton is regarded as the voice of reason and righteousness, and as such he states the didactic purpose without which no Richardsonian imitation would be complete.

Mrs. Griffith's plays represent the most extensive development in drama of the standard Richardsonian courtship. Her contemporaries during the third quarter of the century were more inclined toward a blend of traditional
comedy with the prevailing taste for moral plays, so that while the Richardsonian heroine very soon became a stock type, the elaborate and stately dialogue necessary for the conduct of a courtship in the manner of the novelist was forced to give way before the increasing demands for more action and less talk on the stage. An attempt to combine the best of both worlds is characteristic of the plays of Hugh Kelly. Like many of the dramatists who emulated the style of Richardson, Kelly, a staymaker turned journeyman literatus, was a member of the social class that seemed to find the works of the novelist particularly congenial. 75 His knowledge of Richardson is attested in his first extensive literary effort, the novel Memoirs of a Magdalen (1767). 76 Without benefit of much formal education and forced to earn his livelihood by his pen, Kelly stayed abreast of current fashions in literature so as to capitalize on public taste. Such a characteristic is suggested by his period biographer, Thomas Cooke, to account for the great success of his first play, False Delicacy (1768). 77 Cooke says, "Little versed in the polite circles of life, and not much experienced in the knowledge of mankind, he drew for his balance principally on the circulating libraries, and by the assistance of his own genius, accommodating to the taste of the times, he furnished a play which then received unbounded applause." 78 This is not the first time that the impulse for "sentimental"
comedy is traced to the circulating libraries. Cooke goes on to observe that Kelly "had but one forte in dramatic writing, and that was sentimental dialogue. . . ." 

A term so loosely defined and carelessly used during the period as "sentimental" is hardly adequate to describe Kelly's dialogue. His accomplishment can be detailed more precisely in terms of the Richardsonian ritual of courtship.

In spirit and manner of execution, False Delicacy is thoroughly Richardsonian: Like Grandison the plot evolves from not one but several courtships, all of which are conducted with the most fastidious regard to the dictates of refined sensibility, and to the precepts of orthodox bourgeois morality. The action builds upon each character's conception of "true delicacy:" the widow Lady Betty rejects Lord Winworth because she fears a second marriage would be indelicate; out of gratitude to Lady Betty, Miss Marchmont agrees to marry the Lord because she thinks any other course would be indelicate. Actually she loves Sidney, who is destined to marry Miss Rivers, who in turn loves Sir Harry. The tangle of frustrated courtships is unwound by the eiron, Cecil, who has the perceptiveness of Harriet Byron's uncle Sélby and sees through the complex web of essentially feminine punctilios to advocate consummation without delay. By this time delicacy had become a social issue of such magnitude that
the reviewers, ignoring the satiric implications of the attitudes expressed by Cecil and Mrs. Harley, concentrated on criticising Kelly's conception of "true delicacy."

That Lady Betty should be guilty of a false delicacy is a "silly notion;" the real culprit is Lord Winworth: "If notwithstanding his passion for Lady Betty, he could marry another consistent with the principles of true delicacy and honour, when he supposed he could not marry her ladyship, he could not consistently with the principles of true delicacy and honour, recede from a marriage agreement with another, after he found a union with her ladyship practicable."80 The quibbling over definitions is carried even further in the Critical Review:

Lord Winworth's application to lady Betty Lambton to further his addresses to Miss Marchmont, may rather be called indelicacy than false delicacy. Miss Marchmont's perverse mistake of Lady Betty's sentiments, accompanied with a resolution to make herself miserable, may rather be called false sense than false delicacy; and lady Betty's concealment of her sentiments from such an intimate friend as Miss Marchmont, is rather disingenuous and unnatural, than falsely delicate.

Standing in the background of this whole debate, however absurd it may appear to us now, is Richardson's seemingly endless preoccupation with precisely the same problem.

The language of the play likewise reveals Kelly's indebtedness to the ritual formulated by the novelist. The dialogue drew special praise. It is "easy, elegant,
and characteristic. - Indeed we remember no piece since the Careless Husband, in which the dialogue so happily imitates the conversation of people of fashion.82 Cibber is the nearest approximation to Kelly, but the critic overlooks the incursions into the drama from another genre. While Mrs. Harley laughs at the concern of the ladies for men of "unexceptionable characters" (I,i), Lady Betty ponders Lord Winworth's "inclinations:"

Till he withdrew his addresses, I knew not how much I esteemed him; my unhappiness in my first marriage, you know, made me resolve against another. - And you are also sensible I have frequently argu'd, that a woman of real delicacy shou'd never admit a second impression on her heart. (II,i)

During their "hour's private conversation," conducted with the most elaborate regard to delicate sensibility, Lord Winworth repeatedly praises her "generosity" in condescending to admit his "addresses," attempts to "engage" her "acquiescence" to marriage, complains of "an immaterial punctilio," and finally makes a seemingly irrevocable decision:

Since your final disapprobation of those hopes which I was once presumptuous enough to entertain of calling your Ladyship mine, the anguish of a rejected passion has render'd me inconceivably wretched, and I see no way of mitigating the severity of my situation, but in the esteem of this amiable woman, who knows how tenderly I have been attach'd to you, and whose goodness will induce her, I am well convinc'd, to alleviate, as much as possible, the greatness of my disappointment. (II,i)
After the interview, Lady Betty becomes duly sententious, "The woman that wants candour where she is address'd by a man of merit, wants a very essential virtue..." (II,i). When it appears that the Lord's "affections" have been "engaged" by Miss Marchmont, Lady Betty consoles herself that she can still "esteem" him (IV,i).

If we were to confine our attention to this half of the dual plot alone, the conclusion would be inescapable that Kelly's real intention is to burlesque the ritual of courtship, but the other half of the plot, involving the Clarissa-like courtship and abduction of Theodora Rivers, unfolds in a context so serious as to deny the possibility of burlesque. In spite of the "engagements" with Sidney arranged by her father, Theodora encourages the "addresses" of Sir Harry Newburg and contracts a "prepossession" for him. Her father is possessed of "great sensibility" and "an excess of filial affection" that is "extremely amiable" (III,i). In spite of his own feelings, he refuses to "do violence to her inclinations" (I,i) by allowing his filial affection and "disapprobation" stand in the way of her elopement with Sir Harry (IV,i). Sidney, "deeply sensible of Miss Rivers's very great merit," likewise refuses "to offer the smallest violence to her inclinations" because he wants a free and rational love: "There is something shocking in a union with a woman whose affections we know
to be alienated; and 'tis difficult to say which is most entitled to contempt, he that stoops to accept of a pre-engaged mind, or he that puts up with a prostituted person" (V, 1).

Mark Schorer has observed that the language of this play is filled with platitudes, and is "as genteel, as refined, as rhetorical, as lifeless as consistency in content and style can demand." Such a criticism, which could be applied with some justice to the language of Grandison, can be at least partly explained if we consider that Kelly was attempting to capture the tone and manner of the courtships of the novels within the brief compass of one dramatic form. Without the cumulative weight of meaning that an elaborate prose fiction can provide, the language, particularly the ritualized elements, must appear trite and hollow. Whether or not Kelly realized the difficulties inherent in an indiscriminate mixing of the genres, his later comedies reveal a gradual movement away from the style of False Delicacy. A Word to the Wise (1770), which features a further modification of the Clarissa plot, has fewer courtships but similar language. In Act I Charlotte and Harriot discuss Villars, who is "every thing that's amiable." Charlotte says, "...to deal candidly, my dear, I must acknowledge that your charge is but too just — and notwithstanding every effort of my pride, and every argument of my prudence, I find
this humble yet deserving Villars possesses a much higher place in my esteem than can be consistent with my happiness." The impossibility of marrying him has given her "an insuperable aversion to the rest of his sex," and she hopes to reject the husband proposed by her father "by throwing myself honestly upon Sir George's humanity, by telling him my affection is engaged, and by begging of him to withdraw his addresses in such a manner as shall appear to be the result of his own choice, and not the consequence of my disinclination. . . ." As the climax approaches in Act IV, she tells her father, "I have my affection upon an object that can never be intitled to your approbation." She confesses an "unhappy," a "hopeless prepossession," though she knew it would conflict with the "favourite object" of his "inclinations." But the obstacles are finally removed, and the marriage is expedited when Villars is discovered to have a large fortune.

In the Preface to The School for Wives (1773), Kelly admits that the title is from Moliere but he has borrowed nothing else from that poet, "nor to the best of his recollection from any other writer." The theme around which the play develops, the reformation of a married libertine, is nevertheless a familiar one. In this play the ritual of courtship is almost completely supplanted by comedy of humors; only the subsidiary affair of Captain Savage and Miss Walsingham is reminiscent of the pattern of False Delicacy. But even as the heroine,
Miss Walsingham represents a blend of the delicate sensibility of a Clarissa with the forthright vivacity of Charlotte Grandison. And in Kelly's last play, The Romance of an Hour (1774), only a trace of Richardson's influence appears in the attempt to impart a cast of fragile and delicate melancholy to the East Indian heroine, Zelida.

In False Delicacy, Kelly made a concerted attempt to capture the essence of the Richardsonian manner in dramatic form. Other playwrights of the era, less artists than panderers, were content to take the elements from the novels that seemed to coincide best with the prevailing taste for refinement and ostentatious morality. In this respect, Isaac Bickerstaffe has all the appearance of a latter day Cibber cynically exploiting these desires in order to achieve a decorously clad display of passions. His earlier attempt at a reworking in operatic form of the Pamela motif, Thomas and Sally (1761), culminates in the more elaborate Maid of the Mill (1765), a skilfully executed piece which is particularly interesting for the way it illustrates how the plot of Pamela could be blended with elements from the later novels. The most significant change Bickerstaffe makes in the original is in drawing the character of Lord Aimworth more like Sir Charles Grandison than Mr. B. Instead of a heated assault on the young girl's person, the diffident and generous Lord conducts an elaborate discussion with her
about their "inclinations." In II, xiv, he expresses concern that her "affections are engaged elsewhere," values her "esteem," and offers her his "respect," "friendship" and love. Once he makes certain that her affections are not engaged, the difference in birth ceases to be an obstacle to their marriage. Bickerstaffe carefully distinguishes between his characters here: only the Lord uses the diction and elaborate rhetoric of the Richardsonian ritual.

Bickerstaffe's tendency to equate refinement and propriety with the style of Richardson becomes starkly evident when his alteration of Wycherley's Plain Dealer is compared with the original. In his Preface, Bickerstaffe makes the customary complaint about "the licentiousness of Mr. Wycherley's Muse," and then describes how he has altered the play "according to the rules of modern refinement." Among other things, he has endeavored to soften the characters of Manly and Olivia and make Fidelia more "amiable." Besides omitting or recasting all the more obvious references to sexuality, he makes other changes that often appear ludicrously inappropriate when compared with the original. The tenor of the alteration is set early in the play. Wycherley's Manly says of Vernish and Olivia, "...I have trusted him with my Mistress in my absence; and the trust of Beauty, is sure the greatest we can shew" (I,iv). Bickerstaffe's Manly
says, "...words are but weak testimonies of his merit, and my esteem: I have trusted him in my absence with the care of the woman I love; which is a charge of so tender, so delicate a nature. ...(I,iv)." Making Wycherley's Olivia into a paragon of delicacy was a problem that Bickerstaffe finally gave over, but Fidelia was more amenable to change along the lines of the heroines of Richardson. Early in the play she recounts her motives, "at the time I formed the bold resolution of going with him to sea, I was sensible his affections were engaged to another: why then did I embark in so rash an adventure? Because I loved; and love is apt to buoy itself up with false hopes. ...(I,x)." Needless to say, this bears little resemblance to the blank verse soliloquy in Wycherley. Neither does her explanation of her disguise:

Dear captain, spare my blushes; yet wherefore should I be ashamed of a virtuous and generous passion? Yes, I am a woman, I own it; and through love for the worthiest of men, have attempted to follow him in this disguise: partly out of fear to disclose my sentiments, for I knew of his engagements to that lady, and the constancy of his nature, which nothing but herself could have changed. (V,xii)

Bickerstaffe's intrusion of language from the Richardsonian ritual is often abrupt and woefully out of character. After Olivia has told Manly of her marriage, these lines appear in Wycherley:

Man. I wish I never had seen you.
Oliv. But if you shou'd ever have any thing to say to me hereafter, let that young Gentleman there (Fidelia) be your Messenger. (II,i)

Bickerstaffe alters this passage, removes the hint of Olivia's incipient lust for Fidelia, and substitutes the following:

Man. I wish I never had seen you!
Oliv. You may perceive by this, how great a dependance I have upon your friendship: I am sensible every man might not be talked to in the same manner; but your uncommon delicacy of thinking, will, I am sure, feel for a person in my nice circumstances.
Man. True, perfect woman! and if I could say any thing more injurious to you, I would. .. (II,ix).

Later in the play, when Fidelia advises Manly that disdain would best serve Olivia, Bickerstaffe has him reply, "Perhaps it may, where the object has once been esteemed, but I now begin to think I had never any share in her affections; and therefore I'll take another method" (III,vii). Though these examples hardly represent an exhaustive analysis of the changes, they do indicate how Bickerstaffe went about "improving" the play by using the language and rhetorical modes of Richardson.91

In spite of his attempts to suit popular taste, Bickerstaffe's alteration enjoyed only indifferent success,92 and drew mixed notices from the reviewers. While one found the language "extremely elegant, yet characteristic,"93 another, more relentlessly moral, remained adamant: "Although the Editor hath expunged a great deal of
his Author's licentious ribaldry, yet he hath not entirely rendered it a chaste and modest performance." The most damning criticism came later: "the substitution of his own inadequate Stuff, in the place of what he has expunged, suits so lamely with the spirit of the Original, as to render the Piece still more languid and imperfect, though, perhaps, it may be less coarse and indecent; so that, while we acknowledge its chastity, we must lament its not being more entertaining. . ."195 The fact that opposition to the style of Richardson is being expressed at this time (1771) is of some moment, and I will recur to it later.

Lionel and Clarissa (1768) represents Bickerstaffe's most concerted attempt to dramatize the plight of a Richardsonian heroine. Perhaps he meant to draw attention to his source by calling his heroine Clarissa; in any case, she is much like that character, who was rapidly becoming a stereotype of the lady in distress. The major plot of the opera concerns an indigent tutor who, after falling in love with his pupil, finally overcomes the obstacle of his poverty by appealing to the sense of benevolence of her wealthy father, who gives his consent for the marriage. Clarissa is "beautiful," "elegant," "sensible," and "worthy" (I,ii); she is possessed of an "unexceptionable" character: her person is "agreeable, her temper sweet, her understanding good" (I,vii). Besides emphasizing her
"delicacy" (I,x) in other matters, Bickerstaffe lays particular stress on the frailty of her constitution: she is "pale," "grave" (II,iv,viii) and has a "sensibility" that heightens her tender and languishing nature. Clarissa stands at the center of a courtship conducted in the manner of Richardson. As the play opens she and Lionel enjoy a rational "friendship," but, having gained her "approbation," he asks to be "honoured with a share of (her) esteem" (I,viii), which she grants after some hesitation. In soliloquy, she asks, "... is it criminal to know the most worthy, most amiable man in the world, and not be insensible to his merit?" Then she makes a decision: "his looks, his actions, his present anxiety sufficiently declare what his delicacy, his generosity will not suffer him to utter: it is my part then to speak first. ..." (I,x). Later, when she reveals her true feelings, Lionel suggests that the world may disapprove. She replies, "They could but say, that, truth and sincerity got the better of forms: that the tongue dar'd to speak, the honest sensations of the mind; that, while you aimed at improving my understanding, you engaged, and conquered my heart." She has rejected the suitor proposed by her father because "I wish to pass my life in rational tranquillity, with a friend, whose virtues I can respect, whose talents I can admire; who will make my esteem the basis of my affection." But though her father
"will never force (her) inclinations," she will not marry without his "approbation" (II,xi). Finally, the father, recognizing that "him whom virtue raises, fortune cannot abase," gives his blessing (III,x), and all ends happily.

Although the most extensive dramatic renderings of the ritual of courtship formulated by Richardson appear in the plays of Mrs. Griffith, Kelly, and Bickerstaffe, during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, one of its cardinal elements, the delicate, hypersensitive heroine, began to appear with increasing frequency in plays otherwise devoted to the traditional comedy of situation and humor. An outstanding example is the character of Fanny in *The Clandestine Marriage* by George Colman and David Garrick. Although scholars have carefully investigated the sources of this play, the possible influence of Richardson has never been suggested. In an "Advertisement" prefixed to the play, the authors credit Hogarth's series of prints, *Marriage a la Mode*, for their inspiration. Bernbaum remarks the similarity of the central situation, the secret marriage with its attendant difficulties, to the one in Destouches's *Le Philosophe marié*, but Miss Stein thinks Garrick's farce, *The Guardian* (1759), is more likely to be the original source. The controversy over the dual authorship of the play seems to have reached an impasse, with most of the credit being given to Garrick, but a recently
discovered manuscript of the play gives Act I, in which the character of Fanny is established, to Colman, and shows that he had a large share in most of the later scenes featuring the heroine. While The Guardian shows that Garrick realized the dramatic possibilities of the delicate heroine, a similar interest in Colman has not been noticed. The delicately sensible and frail female anxious for a "pure and disinterested passion" (I,11) appears as early as 1763 in his farce, The Deuce is in Him, and in the year following The Clandestine Marriage he sought to epitomize delicate distress in the character of Amelia, heroine of the reworking of the Pamela plot called The English Merchant (1767). The evidence suggests, therefore, that Colman had a larger share in the creation of Fanny than Miss Stein, for one, would give him. In any case, whether they worked together or separately on the character in The Clandestine Marriage, the plays of both men indicate that, if for no other reason, the popularity of the Richardsonian heroine alone could have provided the impetus for the conception of Fanny.

A somewhat similar conclusion can be drawn from the early plays of Richard Cumberland. When his vast dramatic output is viewed in its entirety, it is evident that Cumberland found the works of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne more congenial than those of Richardson. In his first successful comedy, The Brothers (1769), only traces
of the ritual of courtship appear. Early in the play, Lucy confesses to the heroine, Sophia, "...with the most penitent remorse I confess it to you, that his affections to you were pure, honest, and sincere. Yes, amiable Sophia, you was unrivall'd in his esteem; and I, who persuaded you to the contrary, am the bases, the falsest of womankind; every syllable I tole you of his engagements to me was a malicious invention..." (I,v). Hesitating to "engage with a man" whom her father suggests (II,i), she temporarily rejects the hero. When asked why he has lost her "good opinion," she replies, "By a conduct, Sir, that must for ever forfeit not my esteem only, but yours and all mankind's: I am sorry to be his accuser, but I will appeal to you, Mr. Belfield, who are his brother, whether it is reconcileable either to honour or humanity to prosecute an affair of marriage with one woman, when you are previously and indispensably engaged to another?" (IV,xi). But the supposed "engagements" prove to be false, and the marriage is consummated in due course. Brief though these passages are, they constitute the only trace of the ritual of courtship in the plays by Cumberland that were performed during this period. The abundance of humors characters and the surfeit of incidents in The West Indian (1771), The Fashionable Lover (1772), and The Choleric Man (1775) preclude the elaborate development of courtship required by the ritual as
Richardson created it.

In the four plays Cumberland's heroines develop according to a similar pattern. Of Sophia in The Brothers it is said, "She seems exceedingly honest, and for one of so mean a condition, uncommonly sensible . . .," and the "qualities of her mind" are extolled over those of her "person" (III,1). Here, and in The West Indian, the heroine will settle for nothing less than a "rational" love. But the similarity to Richardson is seldom any stronger than this. Striving to increase the pathos, inherent in the image of the virtuous female in distress, Cumberland makes the heroines of his next two plays dependent, isolated, and poverty stricken. In The West Indian, Louisa chastises the hero, "To me there's nothing due, nor any thing demanded of you but your more favourable opinion for the future, if you should chance to think of me: Upon the part of virtue I'm empower'd to speak, but if hereafter, as you range thro' life, you shou'd surprize her in the person of some wretched female, poor as myself and not so well protected, enforce not your advantage, compleat not your licentious triumph, but raise her, rescue her from shame and sorrow, and reconcile her to herself again" (V,v). In The Fashionable Lover, the character of Augusta, "The last surviving orphan of a noble house," is sufficiently evident from a letter she leaves behind:
Sir, since neither Lord Abberville's testimony, nor my most solemn protestations can prevail with you to believe me innocent, I prevent Miss Bridgmore's threaten'd dismission by withdrawing myself for ever from your family: how the world will receive a destitute defenceless orphan I am now to prove; I enter on my trial without any armour but my innocence; which, though insufficient to secure to me the continuance of your confidence, will, by the favour of Providence, serve, I hope, to support me under the loss of it. (II,i)

Insofar as Lastitia in The Choleric Man has any individuality, she is more like Sophia Western than any of Richardson's heroines, but this brings up the question of Cumberland's relation to the comic novelists, which must be deferred for the moment.

During the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the Richardsonian tradition in drama reaches a sort of ludicrous culmination in a play that combines characters, themes, and situations from the novels with such abandon that it can best be described as a gallimaufrey of Richardsoniana. Mrs. Jane Marshall, a young lady of the middle class, began her literary career by writing novels whose titles and themes reveal her allegiance to the master: The History of Miss Clarinda Cathcart and Miss Fanny Renton (1765) and The History of Alicia Montague (1767). Her first and only dramatic effort is Sir Harry Gaylove; Or, Comedy in Embryo (1772), which was refused performance by the London theaters. In this case, the 'tyranny of the managers,' so often criticized by
aspiring playwrights, seems to be justified. In the play, Belmour, a good young man who has squandered his fortune, aspires to the hand of Ophelia, whose parents block the match because of his spendthrift ways. But the hero has a minor role compared to that of the heroine. The beautiful Ophelia, virtuous, prudent, dutiful, and possessed of "a great deal of delicacy" (I.i), loves Belmour, but they have professed only "friendship and esteem" for each other. While the mother defends the daughter's freedom to choose a mate, her father threatens to "force her inclination" because he favors a boorish, greedy young merchant, who is a duplicate of Solmes in Clarissa. The scene of the first interview (II.1) represents an attempt to realize an exact epitome of Clarissa's first meeting with Solmes. Even the stage directions bear out the similarity: when the man enters, "Ophelia curtsies, sets a chair, then sits down at a distance." While he defends hypocrisy as one of "the genteel accomplishments of a sprightly young fellow," she listens in frigid, disdainful silence. With the plot of Clarissa established, the lascivious rake appears in due course in the person of Lord Evergreen, who resembles both Lovelace and Lord W. of Grandison: he is old, gouty, has a wily procurer like Joseph Leman for a servant, and a lewd old termagant as the housekeeper who assists with seductions (Jewkes and Sinclair). The servant tricks
Ophelia into the Lord's "vile house" where he attempts her virtue (III,1). The rescue is performed by Sir Harry Gaylove, whose surname is misleading because he is actually a type of Sir Charles Grandison, the benevolent, good man capable of untangling the most complex situations (IV). After her release from the clutches of the Lord, Ophelia writes letters to her "friends" explaining what has happened (Pamela, Clarissa, Harriet). At the reconciliation, her father behaves precisely like Goodman Andrews in a similar situation, and the Lord reads a badly spelled letter of contrite repentance from the wily servant (V,1). Throughout the play, Ophelia is set in contrast with Maria, a "mad girl" with "sense and good nature" (II,1) (Polly, Anna, Charlotte), and Lady Harriet, who is like Charlotte in her playful opposition to marriage (V,1).

In one sense, the indiscriminate concatenation of elements from Richardson in Sir Harry Gaylove can be taken as a symptom of that kind of decadence that arises from a surfeit. Actually this is only one of several indications that the tradition which had achieved its greatest development in the plays of Kelly and Mrs. Griffith was entering during the seventies a stage of decline that would culminate in a drama with only the
most general resemblances to what had gone before. In describing the nature of this decline, our point of view must be expanded to include the Richardsonian dramatic tradition in its entirety, the whole complex of elements, discussed here and in the previous chapter, which show the extent of the novelist's influence upon the drama. Insofar as the Richardsonian drama can be identified with the drama commonly called "sentimental," the opposition to this species heralded in the plays and other writings of Goldsmith, Sheridan, and others of like attitude is both a cause and a symptom of the decay. While scholars have long been aware of the general nature of the reaction, it has important aspects that have not been sufficiently recognized. One is the increasingly frequent appearance during the late sixties and seventies of indications that the Richardsonian tradition in drama had become so well known that it was regarded as a fit object for satire. One of the earliest signs appears in Kelly's False Delicacy, where the Lord Winworth-Lady Betty plot was quite obviously designed to burlesque the excesses of the movement. Several years later, in 1773, Samuel Foote showed, in the one act puppet play, Piety in Pattens, "how a maiden of low degree, by the mere effects of morality and virtue, raised herself to riches and honours." Thomas Davies overstates the case when he says this play was "a charm so powerful in demolishing
that species of comedy which the French term larmoyante, as The Rehearsal was in vanishing the rants and bombast of Dryden and other writers, but his association of the Pamela motif with 'weeping' comedy provides striking evidence of the extent to which Richardson was regarded as the originator of this kind of drama. While it was directed less at Richardson than at the whole sentimental movement, the most telling satire was written by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In his own day, the purport of the Faulkland-Julia plot in The Rivals (1775) was not clearly understood: The Town and Country Magazine called the characters "the most outré sentimental ones that ever appeared upon the stage," and the issue of Sheridan's true intention has long been debated by scholars. But there can be little doubt that Sheridan intended to ridicule courtship conducted by two persons of exquisite sensibility, and the satiric intention is made abundantly clear when the parts of Faulkland and Julia are acted in the stylized manner of the late eighteenth century theater. However, since Sheridan, unlike Kelly, does not make the ritual of Richardson the specific object of his ridicule, the satire has only limited application to the drama inspired by the novelist. This is also true of The School for Scandal. Many of the plays in the Richardsonian tradition, particularly those of Mrs. Griffith, contain at least one character whose primary function is to moralize in sententious fashion about the actions of others,
and to this extent the character of Joseph Surface embodies a satirical attack upon this kind of drama.

A second symptom of decadence appears when we consider the evidence of an increasing awareness that a fundamental conflict existed between the novel and drama as generic types, a conflict which manifests itself in the tendency to blame the pernicious influence of the novel for the appearance of "sentimental" comedy on the stage. One of the earliest instances of the charge that other forms of literature were responsible for the supposed degeneracy of the drama appears in the Prologue to Cumberland's comedy, *The Brothers* (1769), which complains of authors who, in their search for materials for "Operas, Farces, Pantomimes, and Plays,"

Gut every Novel, strip each Monthly Muse,  
And pillage Poet's Corner of its News.

Commenting on Foote's *Piety in Pattens* (1773), William Cooke explains the popularity of "sentimental" comedy:

The mass of the public saw the innovation with a kind of indolent pleasure not entirely devoid of self-gratification. It was so much like the light fantastic kind of novel writing which their wives and daughters read in the parlour, that they were thus far critics when they came to the theatre.

In 1775, Sheridan ironically remarks, in the Preface to *The Rivals*, "the successful morality of a thousand stage-novels;" and in the Prologue to Robert Jephson's tragedy,
Braganza, Arthur Murphy writes,

. . . in these days of sentiment and grace
Poor comedy in tears resigns her place,
And smit with novels, full of maxims crude,
She, that was frolick once, now turns a prude. 123

And as further evidence we may cite Walley Oulton's comment in *The History of the Theatres of London* on Mrs. Griffith's last play, *The Times* (1779): "This play, being more a "sentimental novel," than a Comedy, did not meet with success. . . ." 124 While these writers obviously lumped together under the name "sentimental" not only the novels of Richardson, Sterne, and their imitators, but also the works of Harivaux, Prevost, Rousseau, Mme. Riccoboni, D'Arnaud and others imported from France, the fact remains that much of the drama being criticized, such as that written by Kelly and Mrs. Griffith, used the novels of Richardson as the ultimate, if not the immediate, source of its distinctive style. It would be impossible to say how much such criticisms were responsible for the gradual disappearance from the stage of plays in the Richardsonian tradition, but in tracing this drama to its roots in an alien form, they imply that decay was an inevitable consequence of such an unnatural commingling.

A final symptom of decadence, and one that will require more documentation, arises from the evidence which shows that by the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century,
the Richardsonian tradition had become a commonplace and somewhat stale convention in comedy suitable for the tyro who indulged an avocation by writing one or two plays, or for the fledgling dramatist seeking to prove his talents in an established form before going his own way, but not for the writer possessed of truly original talent, nor for the professional dramatist, sensitive to popular taste, who combined several traditions. In any case, the Richardsonian dramatic tradition was never again to see the extensive development it had enjoyed in the plays of Mrs. Griffith.

A play that Bernbaum regards as marking the "triumph" of "sentimental" comedy is Sophia Lee's only comedy, *The Chapter of Accidents* (1780). The plot of this play represents a combination of motifs from Richardson: against the wishes of his father, a wealthy young man wants to marry a girl of low station, who suffers from having been forced to live in a state of dependency upon her lover. When she is discovered to be of genteel blood, the last objection to marriage is removed. The pattern of the play is established by an early speech of the heroine's father, which also shows how some favorite themes of Richardson had achieved by this time the status of a special convention. Of his wife he says,

...I will venture to tell you she was plaguy fantastical, and contriv'd to torment
me as much with her virtues, as others by their vices — such a fuss about her delicacy, her sensibility, and her refinement, that I could neither look nor speak, without offending one or the other; and execrated the inventor of the jargon ev'ry hour in the four and twenty: a jargon, I resolved my girl should never learn. . .(I,i).

But the criticism of the Richardsonian manner is more apparent than real: the heroine, though reared in a rural, a "natural," environment, still possess the familiar traits of the stereotype — "noble benevolence," great delicacy," "sincerity," "exquisite sensibility," and a penchant for voicing "noble sentiments" (I,i). She complains, "my sensibility first ruined my virtue, and then my repose. . .;" she urges the hero to marry according to his father's wishes, "while I by a voluntary poverty expiate my offence" (II,i). And at the climax, the "goodness of heart" and "greatness of mind" of the "generous," "amiable" girl gains for her the "approbation" of the hero's aristocratic father. In spite of the claim that the heroine lacks "refinement," the courtship is conducted according to the requirements of the kind of delicate virtues that Richardson had made familiar, and besides the language of the ritual, there is the usual emphasis on a love guided by "reason," on the superiority of "mind" to "person," and on "esteem" as a necessary preliminary to a place in the "affections" (V,i). In spite of the success of her comedy, Miss Lee must have found the restrictions
of a conventional form inhibiting, for she abandoned the drama to find her true metier in the Gothic novel.  

Further evidence that the Richardsonian tradition was becoming congenial only to occasional dramatists is provided by Joseph Richardson's comedy, The Fugitives (1792). This play presents a modified version of the Clarissa plot. The heroine is confined by an oppressive father, who claims that her "inclinations are at enmity with her duty" because she loves the hero, who is "kind and generous, capable of the most ardent, and disinterested passion. . .," and who offers a "fatal proof" of his "affection" by persuading her to elope with him from the "unnatural tyranny" of her father. On the point of stepping into the coach, the heroine experiences a kind of irresolution that is a poor imitation of Clarissa's in a similar situation; and after the elopement, she wonders "how one rash step has involved me in a labyrinth of difficulties. . ." (II, i). She has a brother bound by duty to aid the schemes of the father, but unlike James Harlowe, he has compassion for his sister (II,i). During the course of her wanderings, the heroine unwittingly takes refuge in a "vile house" (III,i), from whence she is abducted by a libertine lord (IV,i), only to be rescued by the hero (IV,i) whom she agrees to marry after everyone is satisfied that she has not been deflowered (V,i). The hero is a type of Tom Jones, and the incident
involving the libertine lord closely resembles Lord Fella-
mar's attempts to seduce Sophia in Fielding's novel so that
in this sense, the play represents a blend of elements
from Richardson and Fielding, but the emphasis remains
on the side of Richardson. In any event, though The
Fugitives enjoyed moderate success on the stage, the
reviewers found nothing unusual in it. They remark the
characters, of which "no one is conspicuous for novelty
of design,"129 or state, "we cannot admit its originality,
any peculiar art in the conduct of the story, or particular
spirit in the dialogue,"130 attesting to the conventional
status of the elements in the play.

While Sophia Lee and Joseph Richardson were occasional
dramatists, Hannah Cowley was a professional, and her works
illustrate how an individual talent experimented with the
Richardsonian tradition, soon found it wanting, and cast
it aside. Her first comedy, The Runaway (1776),131 fea-
tures an "exceedingly indecent situation" (III,i) in
the conduct of a courtship, and contrasting pairs of gay
and grave couples that include a heroine of "charming
delicacy" (I,i), whose "noble sentiments" are marked by
"enchanting frankness" (V,i). The plot includes an ab-
duction in the manner of Clarissa, and Mrs. Cowley's
familiarity with the language of the ritual is apparent
in her treatment of "matrimonial negotiations" (I,i).
Yet the same play presents, albeit in a smaller role,
a parody of excessive delicacy in the character of Lady Dinah, and the kind of robust good humor to be found in the novels of Fielding and Smollett. Mrs. Cowley's next effort in comedy, the farce *Who's the Dupe* (1779), show a further movement toward the comedy of manners and broad humor that culminates in *The Belle's Stratagem* (1780), where we find a heroine whose "delicate timidity" is her only connection with the familiar stereotype, and the formal dignity of language characteristic of the Richardsonian ritual appears only after the reconciliation of hero and heroine near the end of the play. Mrs. Cowley's later plays contain scarcely a trace of the tradition as we have defined it, and her Prefaces contain many a poignant defense of realistic character portrayal in defiance of an audience that had made delicacy a public virtue and expected the drama to emulate the official proprieties, however far removed from life they may be.

An evolution similar to Mrs. Cowley's appears in the plays of Thomas Holcroft, whose allegiance to the Richardsonian tradition was even more short lived. Only his first play, *Duplicity* (1781), shows any concrete indebtedness. Constructed around a theme long familiar to domestic comedy and tragedy, the reform of a gamester, this play contains contrasting gay and grave women, with the more sedate member of the pair being exalted for her "delicacy" and "sensibility" (II,1), and its courtship is conducted
in the familiar terms of the ritual. In I, i, the heroine says of the hero,

The attention which Mr. Osborne has shewn me, was not that of a man eager to gain the affection of his mistress by humouring her caprices, praising her beauty, and flattering her follies. He is obliging and well-bred, but sincere; yet his disapprobation is delivered with a delicacy that makes it more agreeable than some people's compliments.

And in Act V, scene 1, the eiron, of whom the hero says, "I am very sensible of the benevolence of your intentions, Sir" (IV, i), explains the motive for his actions:

I studiously avoided an interview . . . for fear the business should wear a face of precipitate indelicacy. -- And I thought if I could once bring (the hero and heroine) together, I would leave the contingent possibilities to love, and the superior good qualities and penetration of the parties, which I, rationally enough, concluded could not fail to produce the desired effect.

The play also contains many examples of the kind of gratuitous moralizing that became the bane of the tradition. After this comedy, Holcroft turned to foreign literature for inspiration, producing The Follies of A Day (1784) from Beaumarchais and The German Hotel (1790) from the German playwright, Brandes, while during the same period devoting much of his energy to prose fiction, Alwyn (1780), Anne St. Ives (1792). The plays of his most productive dramatic period, from about 1790 to 1798, present little
or no resemblance to the drama of the Richardsonian tradition.

In the works of the other professional playwrights active in the fourth quarter of the century, who share with Mrs. Cowley and Holcroft what little artistic energy there is in the drama of this period, the influence of Richardson is scarcely discernible. Even in their first dramatic efforts, Elizabeth Inchbald, George Colman the Younger, and Frederick Reynolds avoided the convention and turned to other sources for inspiration, mainly the comedy of manners and broad humor, and as their careers progressed, Colman and Reynolds turned with increasing frequency to prose fiction, and to the Gothic novel in particular, for the materials of comedies that were to be popular successes. As for Richard Cumberland, his later works place him even more firmly in the comic tradition exemplified by the novels of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. When all of these tendencies in the drama of the last quarter of the century are considered, it is clear that by 1800 scarcely a trace of the Richardsonian tradition remained. The process of decay that had begun during the seventies ended finally in extinction. It is significant to note that this decline in Richardson's influence in the drama coincides precisely with the turn of critical and popular opinion against him during the last quarter of the century.
VI

A major consequence of this study of the novel's influence on the drama must be a drastic revision of accepted notions about the evolution of eighteenth century drama. Of the frequently discussed "sentimental" drama in particular, a complex problem arises immediately from the difficulty of defining the descriptive adjective. It has been shown that the content and style of plays appearing after 1760, which scholars commonly place in this genre, actually bear more resemblance to the novels of Richardson than to the earlier plays of Cibber, Steele, and Lillo. The only important exception to this pattern is Cumberland, but as I will show later, his treatment of the emotions represents a logical elaboration of the methods of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. Elizabeth Griffith and Hugh Kelly, whom Bernbaum, Sherbo, and others regard as representative of the "sentimental" mode, are actually exemplars of the Richardsonian tradition in drama. My conclusions about the fate of this tradition seem to be at variance with those of Bernbaum, who states that after 1780, "sentimental" comedy "triumphs." If by "sentimental" he means a work permeated by the philosophy of benevolence with its concurrent emphasis on sensibility, then the term is hardly an adequate description because even the most cursory examination of plays and novels
published during this period reveals that such a philosophy was being suffused through all the branches of literature. If anything triumphs, it is the emphasis on melodramatic pathos latent in all doctrines of benevolence. When viewed in this light, Sherbo's effort to prove Bernbaum wrong by citing the performance records of arbitrarily defined "sentimental" dramas becomes valueless and wholly beside the point.\footnote{140} It is much more precise to say that plays like those of Mrs. Griffith and Kelly represent the Richardsonian phase within the genre of comedy. If there must be some sort of defining term for this kind of drama, then "Richardsonian" or Eric Erametsa's suggestion of "moral" comedy,\footnote{141} are far more adequate in describing the real nature of this comedy than the much abused term, "sentimental."

A second conclusion to be drawn from the study not only of Richardson's influence upon the drama, but from the influence of the comic novelists as well, concerns the evolution of eighteenth century drama as a whole, and it can best be described in the context of dramatic history. Tragedy, which had shown some signs of vitality in the plays of Otway and Rowe, and in the classical drama of Addison, gradually deteriorated until, by the second half of the century, only the stale pathos and hollow sentiments of Augustan and "psuedo-Romantic" tragedy remained.\footnote{142} Domestic tragedy of the kind written by
Aaron Hill and George Lillo never gained a firm footing in the drama, in spite of the efforts of such playwrights as Edward Moore, Thomas Hull, and Richard Cumberland. In comedy, the most significant achievement in the early part of the century is represented by the works of Cibber and Steele, who broke new ground in their efforts to satisfy the taste of the middle class, but on the whole it can be said that comedy, like tragedy, was gradually falling away from the heights achieved during the Restoration. Then, in 1740, Richardson, while working in the tradition of Cibber, Steele, Defoe, and Lillo, transcended that tradition in creating a new, powerful, and immensely popular literary form, the novel, and within the next fifteen years were published all the novels which were to have the most pronounced influence on the later drama. Clearly, the greatest creative impulse in English literature during this period is to be found in the works of the novelists, and the most significant fact about the later drama is that the new vigor to be found in plays first performed between 1760 and 1780 derives from the form that was rapidly becoming the most popular mode of literary expression. Even the plays of Goldsmith and Sheridan, usually regarded as the high point of dramatic achievement during the last half of the century, are not so much a reassertion of the Restoration comic mode, as is commonly supposed, as they are a new statement in dramatic form of
themes popularized by Fielding and Smollett, a conclusion which I will prove in the chapters to follow.

If, then, we take an overview of the evolution of the drama and novel during the first seventy-five or so years of the century, a coherent cycle, based on the relationships of the two genres, is clearly discernible. The creative impulse, dying away in the drama, is regenerated in the novel, which is immediately recognized as a type of superior vitality, even though it does not gain the formal recognition of critics. During the third quarter of the century, the drama, drawing on the new life in the novel, itself experiences a period of regeneration, but since it is largely derivative, it cannot match the artistic achievement of the novels which are its sources. Continuing to apply the somewhat arbitrary standard of artistic merit, a similar cycle emerges in the last quarter of the century, although on a smaller scale. After Sheridan the drama degenerates, and after the deaths of Sterne and Smollett, so does the novel. But then the novel gains new strength from Gothicism, and again we find the drama of the last decade of the century undergoing a period of regeneration, in which the major source of replenishment is the Gothic novel. During the nineteenth century, the adaptation of novels into plays becomes such a common practice that Scott's works, for example, are literally pillaged for materials that might
be useful on the stage. The poverty of artistic discrimination implied by this ransacking of prose fiction may account, in part, for the fact that during the nineteenth century, the drama undergoes no period of regeneration as a result of contact with the novel. Not until vital and original dramatic genius appears in the plays of Ibsen and Shaw does the drama rise above the mediocrity at least partly induced by its long period of obeisance to another literary form.

Since it lays such heavy stress on the role of the novel as an influence on the drama, this cycllical theory of decay followed by regeneration may be faulted for the way it seems to slight the influence of earlier drama. But while such traditional characteristics of structure as the five act form continued, dramatic history reveals that in regard to plots, characterization, and themes, the later eighteenth century found few things congenial in the earlier drama: just as Ben Jonson was derided because he was considered rough and indelicate, so Restoration comedy was rejected on moral grounds; only Shakespeare continued popular throughout the century, but even his plays were frequently altered to suit the taste of the age, often, we might add, according to the standards of decorum and refinement promulgated by Richardson. A second objection to the theory might arise from the question of influences from abroad. French drama and
prose fiction undoubtedly had considerable influence on the drama, especially after 1750, and so did the German "Sturm und drang" movement in the last quarter of the century, but when we consider the drama as a whole, these take their rightful place as isolated and occasional phenomena, which can compare in neither scope nor intensity with the continuing impact upon the drama of the English novel.

While Richardson was largely responsible for the regeneration of the drama after 1760, his was by no means the only influence. The comic tradition revitalized by the works of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, also contributed, and to complete the argument for the impact of the novel upon the later drama, the nature and extent of their influence must now be documented.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III

5 *English Sentimental Drama* (East Lansing, Mich., 1957), 132.
6 This conclusion is documented by Robert P. Utter and Gwendolyn Bridges Needham, *Pamela's Daughters* (New York, 1936), 20 and *passim*.
8 Utter and Needham, 22f., 45f., 96f.
9 Ed. Alan D. McKillop, Augustan Reprint Society Publication No. 21 (Los Angeles, 1950), 35.
10 Professor McKillop comments on this bias in his Introduction, *ibid.*, iv.
17 Utter and Needham, 171.
Title page reproduced in the Shakespeare Head edition, III.

The English Novel, 48-51.

The phrase is Watt's, Rise of the Novel, 162.

Utter and Neehan, 43-213.

Ibid., 173.

Early Masters, 89.


Watt, 148.

Ibid., 155.

Frye, Anatomy, 104.

The difference between a ritualistic and a literary symbol should be noted. Unlike the literary symbol, a commonly accepted metaphor prized for its evocative power, the symbols which make up a ritual lack semantic content; they tend to be repeated more for the sake of form than for any real contact they bear with reality.

Early Masters, 89.

Ibid., 83.

(London, 1755).

The volume and page references here are to the first octavo edition.

A Study of the Word 'Sentimental'... (Helsinki, 1951), passim.

A. D. McKillop, Richardson, 41-2.

Ibid., 144-54.

Drama of Sensibility, 1701

(London, 1696).

(London, 1705).
Since Richardson could not read French (McKillop, Richardson, 36), I have examined only the English translations of Marianne (London, 1734-41), and Prevost's Memoirs of a Man of Quality (London, 1738-42).


On this point Katherine Hornbeck makes a provocative distinction between Defoe and Richardson. She writes, "Defoe seems keenly interested in religion, the intimate relationship of man and God, while Richardson is concerned with the ethics of human relationships. Richardson is strangely indifferent to religion except as a supernatural sanction to morals," "Richardson's Familiar Letters," 6n.

Ronald S. Crane, "Suggestions toward a Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling,'" ELH, I (1934), 205.


James R. Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England (New York, 1949), 114. The role of French drama in the English theater of the period has been studied by Harold L. Bruce, Voltaire on the English Stage (Berkeley, 1918); Willard A. Kinne, Revivals and Importations of French Comedies in England, 1749-1800 (New York, 1939); Clarence D. Brenner, Dramatizations of French Short Stories in the Eighteenth Century (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1947). Only
Bruce makes an analytical comparison between English plays and their French antecedents: Kinne is less concerned with the content of plays than with stage history, while the work of Brenner is a bibliography.

52 XII (1762), 205.

53 See, for example, the comments in the Monthly Review, X (1754), 71.

54 The Wedding Ring; Or, History of Miss Sidney, cited by McKillop, Richardson, 233.

55 Popular Novel, 34.

56 Included in this group are Elizabeth Griffith, Frances Brooke, Thomas Hull, Hugh Kelly and Sophia Lee.

57 (London, 1762).

58 Bernbaum, Drama of Sensibility, 209.

59 Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle, Œuvres (Paris, 1762), VIII, 1-98.

60 London Magazine, XXXI (1762), 64.

61 Critical Review, XI (1762), 137.

62 XXVI (1762), 157-8.

63 For comments on her life and works, see J. M. S. Tompkins, The Polite Marriage (Cambridge, 1938), 1-38, and Foster, Pre-Romantic Novel, 152-3.

64 McKillop, Richardson, 84, 246-7.

65 (London, 1765).

66 (London, 1766).

67 (London, 1769).

68 (London, 1772).

69 (London, 1780).

70 London Magazine, XXV (1766), 30.

71 Gentleman's Magazine, XXXVI (1766), 19-22.
This point is discussed by Watt, *Rise of the Novel*, 150.

The text is in *Bibliotheque Populaire* (Paris, n.d.).

For biographical information on Kelly, see Thomas Cooke's "Table Talk" in the *European Magazine*, XXIV (1793), 170-1, 337-40, 419-22, XXV (1794), 42-8; Thomas Davies, *Life of David Garrick* (London, 1808), II, 133-47; and the *DNB*.


(London, 1768).

*European Magazine*, XXV (1794), 43.

Ibid., 45.

*Gentleman's Magazine*, XXXVII (1768), 80-1.

XXV, (1768), 146.


"Hugh Kelly: His Place in the Sentimental School," *P.Q.*, XII (1933), 392.

(London, 1773).

(London, 1774).

(London, 1774).

(London, 1761).

(London, 1765).

(London, 1766).

I have used the text of *The Plain Dealer* in the *Complete Works*, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1924), II, 89-196.

It is profitable to compare this play with David Garrick's alteration of *The Country Wife* as *The Country Girl* (London, 1766). Generally speaking, Garrick tried to excise the ribaldry while preserving the *vis comica* of the original; he made no attempt to cast the play in the terms of the Richardsonian ritual.


Monthly Review, XXXIV (1766), 78.

Public Ledger, October 19, 1771, cited by Avery, 249.

(Donald, 1768).

(Donald, 1766).

Drama of Sensibility, 219.

(Donald, 1759).

Elizabeth P. Stein, David Garrick, 211-12.


Bergmann, 155.

(London, 1763).

(London, 1770).

(London, 1770).

(London, 1771).

(London, 1772).

(London, 1775).

Some biographical information appears in Tompkins, Popular Novel, 23.

Cited by Foster, Pre-Romantic Novel, 152.

(Edinburgh, 1772).

In a long Preface, Mrs. Marshall describes with modest indignation the caprice and injustice of the London managers.

For a comprehensive account of the conflict, see Nicoll, History of English Drama, III, 154-62.
Ms. Larpent 10 L. (1773).


Life of Garrick, II, 141-3.


VII (1775), 43.

For a review of the debate, see the editor's comments, Plays and Poems, I, 15-7.

Ibid., II, 87-192.

Memoirs of Foote, I, 182.

Plays and Poems, I, 22.

(London, 1775).

(London, 1796), I, 110.

Drama of Sensibility, 284.

(London, 1780).

She had a tragedy performed in 1796 (Almeyda: Queen of Granada), which failed. Its tepid romanticism merely substantiates that her real talent lay elsewhere.

(London, 1792).

Monthly Review, n.s. VIII (1792), 313.

Critical Review, n.s. V (1792), 98.

(London, 1776).

(London, 1779).

(London, 1782).

See, for example, the Preface to A Day in Turkey (London, 1792).

(London, 1781).
136 (London, 1785).
137 (London, 1790).
138 McKillop, Richardson, 236-40.
139 Drama of Sensibility, 245.
140 English Sentimental Drama, 183.
141 A Study of the Word 'Sentimental', 67.
142 The type names are Nicoll's, III, 73, 91.
Chapter IV. THE COMIC NOVEL TRADITION IN DRAMA: ADAPTATIONS, AND THE EARLY PHASE

The conventions of the earlier drama in matters of structure and characterization are of some importance in the novels of Richardson, but they are of much greater magnitude in the works of his contemporaries, Fielding and Smollett, who were more firmly entrenched in the traditions of stage comedy. While Richardson was at most a reader and a spectator of the drama, Henry Fielding was actively engaged in the writing and production of plays for a long period before he turned to the novel, and this experience had a profound effect on his conception of the nature and function of prose fiction. Long ago, Wilbur C. Cross noted the analogy of *Joseph Andrews* with a conventional type of dramatic structure that Aristotle had called "procedure by 'revolution and discovery'"\(^1\) and he went on to observe of *Tom Jones* that Fielding, "being a dramatist, ... could not conceive of a novel without an elaborate plot."\(^2\) Since Cross wrote, all the major critics of Fielding have commented on the appearance and effect of elements from the drama,\(^3\) and recently, Ian Watt has even relegated the long heralded influence of the epic to a place of distinctly secondary importance:

The most specific literary debt manifested in *Tom Jones*, indeed, is not to epic but to drama: not so much because his main critical source, Aristotle's *Poetics*, was primarily
While Fielding's works reveal an unusually keen sense of dramatic techniques in plot construction, the novels of Tobias Smollett have often been criticized for being deficient in this quality. Nevertheless he did not lack experience in the drama: his first published work was a tragedy, *The Regicide* (1748), and even after his success as novelist was assured, he continued to write farce, *The Absent Man* (c. 1750) and *The Reprisal* (1757). Besides this active experience in the theater, Smollett's knowledge of the earlier English drama was a dominant factor in his theory of comic humor and in his conception of the function of satire. In contrast to Fielding and Smollett, Sterne never wrote a play, though his comments in *Tristram Shandy* show that he derived much pleasure from the theater of Garrick. Viewed from the standpoint of the earlier drama, Sterne's novel is less important as a new manifestation of long accepted structural principles in the drama than as a deliberate flaunting of one of the most fundamental of these principles: the concept of plot as a logical evolution of action according to a linear time scheme. Thus by denying one of its time honored dicta, Sterne contrasts negatively with the earlier drama. On the positive side, the process by which Sterne transmutes humor as ruling passion into humor as hobbyhorse places him in the mainstream of the
English comic tradition as it evolved from the doctrine set forth by Ben Jonson.\textsuperscript{10}

The tendency to modify and metamorphose the existing comic tradition, so strikingly illustrated by Sterne, is actually a characteristic trait of Fielding and Smollett, as well, and one that was to have widespread repercussions in the later drama. Each of them took from the earlier drama whatever best suited their individual artistic aims, and rendered it into a new and distinctive literary form. And as in the case of Richardson, their novels brought about not only a long series of straightforward dramatic adaptations, but supplied the drama with a host of character types, and ultimately inspired a tradition in comedy that would supplant the Richardsonian mode in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

I

Unlike \textit{Pamela}, whose initial publication set playwrights to work almost immediately on versions suitable for the stage, almost a decade elapsed between the appearance of Fielding's last novel, \textit{Amelia} (1751),\textsuperscript{11} and the first performance of George Colman's comedy, \textit{The Jealous Wife} (1761),\textsuperscript{12} based on \textit{Tom Jones}. In the "Advertisement" prefixed to this play, Colman admits the use of "Fielding's admirable Novel of \textit{Tom Jones}," thus attesting to a familiarity with the works of Fielding made evident in an earlier play, the
"dramatick novel of one act," Polly Honeycombe (1760),
which will be discussed later. In spite of all the humor
at the expense of prose fiction in Polly Honeycombe, Colman
was obviously aware of the dramatic potentialities of the novels,
and he sought to realize them by making his next play an adapta-
tion of a novel most congenial to his own temper. Nevertheless,
The Jealous Wife is no slavish rendering of Tom Jones; Colman
made many changes, not the least of which was the introduction
of a taming of the shrew plot featuring a married couple
drawn from The Spectator. As far as the debt to Fielding
goes, the main plot derives from the last third of Tom Jones,
which describes Tom's experiences in London, the pursuit
of Sophia by Squire Western, the attempt by Lady Bellaston
and Lord Fellamar to seduce Sophia, and the final reconciliation
of Sophia and Tom. Colman concentrates on the pursuit (I),
the seduction plot including the press gang (III, IV), while
developing the hero as the good hearted youth with libertine
ways, who, after various struggles, finally reforms and
achieves the object of his desires (V). Some of the charac-
ters more or less correspond to those in Fielding: Charles
Oakly is the Tom Jones of the piece, although he is more
passive and more ostentatiously moral than the original, and
Harriot Russett as Sophia likewise shows a greater concern
for the hero's libertinism. While Lady Bellaston and Lord
Fellamar stand as the prototypes of Lord Trinket and Lady
Freelove, in drawing the other blocking characters, Colman
diverges widely from Fielding. Squire Western is split into
two characters: his rough and hearty manners, though not his Somersetshire dialect, and his attitude toward his daughter are given to Harriot's father, Russett, while his passion for horses and hounds is given to Sir Harry Beagle. The hypocritical Blifil is eliminated altogether; his place as the approved suitor for the heroine is taken by Sir Harry, a type of the booby squire common in stage comedy, whose humor for horsemanship is carried to absurd lengths. Colman elaborates yet another type in Captain O'Cutter who, as an Irish seaman leading a press gang, occupies a role that is barely sketched in Fielding's novel. Colman's modern biographer traces this character to Congreve's Sailor Ben in *Love for Love*, but a better source lay nearer at hand in Smollett's character of Tom Bowling in *Roderick Random* (1748), a novel mentioned in *Polly Honeycombe*.

One of Colman's innovations in *The Jealous Wife*, and one that is rarely seen in the dramatic adaptations of novels, is a plain dealing *eiron* in the character of Major Oakly, who not only serves as a link between *The Jealous Wife* and *Tom Jones* plots, but develops in such a way that a remarkable correspondence appears between his function and Fielding's assumed role as narrator in the novel. As a character, Major Oakly undergoes the most elaborate development of any in the play. His high degree of worldly wisdom and refinement is resented by the maligned husband (I, 1), yet his perspicuity and sagacity finally bring
about the establishment of the husband's sovereignty (V, i),
as well as the squelching of the seduction plot and the
reconciliation of the hero and heroine. He has the omnisci¬
cence and the ability to manipulate the outcome of events
of Fielding's narrator, and he defines his own function as
a healer in the terms of a familiar metaphor: "My Medicines
have been somewhat rough, I believe, but they have had an
admirable Effect, and so don't be angry with your Physician,"
(V, i). His benign and good-humored tolerance of human
folly, a manner so characteristic of Fielding, is apparent
here and throughout the play. It would appear that Colman
was fully aware of the importance of the narrator in a
novel like Tom Jones, and of its usefulness as a technical
device in drama.

Though The Jealous Wife, unlike most eighteenth century
versions of novels, enjoyed instantaneous and continuing
popular success, the contemporary reviewers gave it only
grudging approval. While one finds the plot improbable
and forced, another quibbles with the portrayal of high
life, and a third weighs the implications of the play
for dramatic writers: "they need only recur to the stalls
in Moorfields, where they will meet with old novels and
plays, that will furnish them with plots, characters, and
incidents, from which they may cull and chuse what they
like best; then deliver it to the actors, who are to be
the Cooks, and who will take care to season it according
to the palates of the audience." Apparently the feast
originally prepared by Fielding was unpalatable on the stage. Partly because of their concern for details and matters of taste, none of Colman's contemporaries approached as near the nub of the critical problem posed by *The Jealous Wife* as did William Hazlitt in the next century. His comment reveals a keen awareness of a fact largely unrealized at the time, that novel and play simply cannot be judged by the same criteria: "There is all in the novel that there is in the play; but there is so much in the novel that is not in the play, that the total impression is quite different, and loses even an appearance of resemblance."\(^{18}\)

In its next appearance on the stage *Tom Jones* underwent even more radical changes than those wrought by Colman. The Preface to Joseph Reed's comic opera, *Tom Jones* (1769),\(^ {19}\) attests to the author's "extreme veneration for the memory of the truly witty and ingenious novelist," and his esteem for his source, "Nay, when it was thought necessary to shorten the piece, lest it should be too long in representation, I readily parted with my own, to retain as much as possible of the invaluable Original." But his obsequious respect for the authority of the original gives way to another authority of superior rank: he has "stripp'd its hero of his libertinism" and purged Western's character of its "coarseness and indelicacy . . . in conformity to the refined taste of the present age." But "refinement" is only one of the criteria by which Reed adapted the novel. In constructing his opera, he drew most heavily
on the first twelve books of the novel, with only the courtship of Nightingale and Nancy Miller being taken from the last third. In compressing the action into the confines of three acts, Reed chose to emphasize the love story, while omitting everything extraneous to Tom's courtship of Sophia. The first two acts are set in Somersetshire, and the third in the Inn at Upton. The first act describes the secret love of Tom and Sophia, the proposal of Blifil as a suitor, Mrs. Western's misunderstanding about the feelings of Sophia, along with some development of the humors of Squire Western and his sister. The act concludes with a referent to Jones's rescue of Sophia's bird, and a duet between the lovers. The beginning of Act II marks a change in Fielding's basic pattern, for at this point Reed introduces Nightingale, whom Jones tries to persuade to marry Nancy Miller, instead of merely seducing her. The rest of Act II concentrates on Blifil's courtship of Sophia, and includes the report of Jones's misconduct and his consequent turning away by Allworthy. Reed elaborates the courtship motif even further by introducing Supple, whom he makes a country squire, as a suitor to Mrs. Western. In Act III, Reed brings all the characters together in the Inn at Upton, and after the familiar misunderstandings between Tom and Sophia, the ragings of Western, and the appearance of Lawyer Dowling with the secret of Tom's birth, all the conflicts are resolved in multiple betrothals.
Five years before Reed's play was performed, Antoine Poinsinet transformed Tom Jones into comédie lyrique, which was produced in Versailles (1764) and Paris (1765) and enjoyed considerable success. From Poinsinet, Reed took the idea of giving Jones a legitimate birthright, which would give the plot a certain degree of wholeness and unity, while satisfying the reigning desire for "refinement." Reed achieves unity in another way that is more in accord with Fielding's own method by a skilful placing of the scenes involving Sophia's muff. In the novel the muff is a "stated" symbol of the divided minds of Tom and Sophia; in the play it has precisely the same value, but without the elaborate structure of the novel to support it, without therefore the meaning that Fielding imparts to it, the muff would become less a symbol of emotional states than just another stage prop. The muff is only one indication of an assumption evident throughout the play: like the dramatists of ancient Greece, Reed assumed that his audience would know the implications of the story before coming to the theater. As the critic in the Monthly Review noted, this approach has many advantages: "...the dramatic persons, and their relations to each other, being known, (Reed) was freed from the unhappy necessity of making great part of his first act a disguised narrative, relating parts of the fable antecedent to the action, and describing the characters and situation of the persons that carry it on." A significant fact about the popularity of Tom Jones is to
be noted here: within twenty years after its initial publication, the novel had achieved a status in the popular imagination quite like that enjoyed by the ancient Greek myths.

The consequences of trying to judge Reed's opera as drama alone, without the novel to support it, is revealed in the caustic remarks of the critic in the London Magazine, who evidently held rigid beliefs about the ingenuity of the drama as a literary form. On "the Conduct of the Fable," he remarks, "Whatever reads the fable of (the opera), must be unaboidably disgusted by its incoherence and stupidity; and how it was possible for the utmost ingenuity of ignorance, to render so sensible a novel, so contemptible an opera, will ever remain a matter of the highest astonishment to me." He is irritated by many details of the plot, including the symbol noted earlier: "...indeed the whole plot, to borrow a hint from Mr. Bayes, seems to lie in the muff. —For, is it not the grand engine in manufacturing two of the most important events? — the discovery of the hero and heroine's mutual affection — and their mutual reconciliation at the inn at Upton?" He pounces with equal vigor on other elements in the play: the "characters" are "to the last degree unnatural and contemptible — — if we except Western and his sister — — nor indeed have they any other claim to toleration, than a remote tinge of their originality;" the "manners" are "universally exceptionable," for example, "Tom Jones has ill-exchanged a thousand amiable qualifications for a legitimacy, notwithstanding it was a
French improvement;" the "sentiments" are "most commonly
indelicate, and more commonly out of character;" and the
"diction" is "perhaps the poorest that ever gained admittance
on the stage." But in spite of all his reservations and
objections, the reviewer concludes that the "Moral" makes
amends for every deficiency -- -- for does it not contain
a lesson of admirable instruction both for daughters and
fathers?"\footnote{25} In the light of what has gone before one may
suspect irony at this point, but none appears because this
critic, like many of his contemporaries, made sound morality
the ultimate criterion of judgment, and the most wretched
piece of literature could be commended if its moral base
was sound.\footnote{26}

Within a few years a novel of Fielding's again appeared
on the stage in the version of \textit{Amelia} by William Kenrick,
\textit{The Duellist} (1773).\footnote{27} Kenrick follows the course of
Fielding's novel fairly closely, while adding a subordinate
plot that presents the familiar courtship pattern: the
struggle of a poor but good young man to win the hand of
the beautiful ward of a wealthy squire, who wants her to
marry a boor. Kenrick joins this subordinate action to
the \textit{Amelia} plot by making the squire the father of Mrs.
Boothby (Amelia), and by having the young suitor serve the
function of Captain Trent in the novel without emulating the
vicious amorality of that character. In Act I, Boothby
(Booth) appears as the indigent half-pay officer seeking
preferment, who is possessed of a virtuous and beautiful
wife, "one of the best and most amiable women in the universe" (III, I). Most of the action revolves about the attempted seduction of the wife, under the pretense of gaining preferment for her husband, by Lord Lovemore, in whom Kenrick combines the characters of the libertine lord and Colonel James in Fielding's novel. The lord, who believes that "by providing for the husband, I secure an interest in the gratitude of the wife" (II, I), conducts his machinations with the unwitting assistance of Lady Lovemore and the secret complicity of the Boothby's landlady, Mrs. Goodwill (Mrs. Ellison). While Act III concentrates on the attempted seduction of Mrs. Boothby at a masquerade, Act IV is mainly concerned with the complications attending the false report of a duel between the Lord and Boothby. The Lord's amorous intentions are finally ended by Lady Lovemore, who borrows a device used by Miss Bennett in the novel by posing as Mrs. Boothby. When his own wife is revealed as the object of his amour, the chastened lord hastily returns to the role of dutiful husband, and shortly thereafter, other revelations make Boothby independent for life (V).

For comic effect in the play, Kenrick elaborates the humor of Fielding's version of the *miles gloriosus*, Major Beth. Like his original, Colonel Gantlet is "unaccountably exceptious" (I, i) and a "blusterer" (I, ii) of whom it is said, "He is so fond of duelling, that some antagonist or other will soon kill him, or he will come to be hanged
for killing his antagonist. ..." (I, i). The general makes a great cause out of the honors and accolades due his rank in the world, and he is frequently "in his dignity-stilts" (III, i). But in Act IV his cowardice is exposed, and when he appears in woman's clothes (IV, V), the comedy arising from the incongruity between his pretensions and his real nature is dissipated in a spate of the crassest buffoonery. He becomes less like Fielding's good natured Major than like the rude clown of the commedia dell'arte.

Partly because of the author's reputation as a scurrilous and unprincipled journalist, The Duellist was damned after the first representation, but personalities and politics were not the whole cause of failure. While one reviewer laments that "we are always sorry to see, for the sake of literary efforts, private character raked into, for the purpose of hunting down public abilities," another suggests the real difficulty:

Had Dr. Kenrick trusted more to his own strength, had he been more original, we imagine he would have been more successful. Had he not leaned upon Henry Fielding, it is probable he had not fallen.

But as the critic in the London Magazine noted, Kenrick lacked a talent that Fielding possessed in abundance: "It is true, the incidents are pretty closely copied from the Amelia of Fielding; but what can even this advantage avail, in the hands of a man who is deficient in dramatic judgment
and art?" Perhaps Kenrick, by confining himself to the shadow of a master novelist, was doomed to failure from the start.

The Duellist was the last full length play drawn from one of Fielding's novels to appear on the stage in the eighteenth century. The novelist Samuel Jackson Pratt wrote a farce, Joseph Andrews, which Fielding's biographer, Wilbur Cross, believes was based on the novel of the same title. The play was performed for an actor's benefit at Drury Lane Theater, April 20, 1778, but it was never published. Frederic T. Blanchard cites the mention of a new "comic opera of TOM JONES" in 1795, but I can find no record of the play. Pending the appearance of some record of performance or publication, it can only be surmised that the reference is to a revival of Reed's comic opera.

II

Like those of Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne, the first novel of Tobias Smollett, Roderick Random (1748), enjoyed immediate, widespread popularity. Additional proof of its initial success is provided by the appearance in the year of publication of a dramatic piece with elements deriving from the novel. Apparently designed for performance in one of the booths at Bartholomew Fair, The Northern Heroes; or, The Bloody Contest, Between Charles the Twelfth, King of Sweden, and Peter the Great, Czar of Muscovy contains a
"comic interlude" called The Volunteers; Or, the Adventures of Roderick Random, and his Friend Strap... which appears in scenes that alternate with those presenting the story of the battle. In the "Argument" prefixed to the play, the author states that he intended the "Fable of the comic Part" to be "a Sequel to the Life of Roderick Random, and his Friend Strap, whose Wives he supposes to prove bad Women, which occasions their going a volunteering, and gave Rise to the several diverting Incidents, which compose this Interlude." As a "Sequel," the interlude bears a closer relation to Smollett's novel than has been generally believed. 35

It has often been observed that Smollett's hero is rarely anything more than a callow and unscrupulous adventurer given over to rash, impetuous action and a lust for the satisfaction of the grosser appetites. Less an individually realized character than a vehicle for the author's satire, 36 Roderick appears in a story "in which the immediate quality of the action outweighs its ultimate significance." 37 This concentration on the actions of the moment, with its attendant stress on 'practical satire' and earthy realism, is precisely the quality that would appeal to an audience at Bartholomew Fair, or so The Volunteers would indicate. Roderick and Strap, having tired of domesticity, go "volunteering" and find themselves in the familiar situation of being forced by poverty to rely on their wits. Among the camp followers, they discover a widow, a veteran of nine
husbands, whom Roderick resolves to bilk of her cash by feigning a courtship. Faced with the competition of two other suitors, he immediately hits on a plan to have the widow "marry by Measure: Tell Garbage you'll not marry him, unless he reduces himself to the Size of Slim; nor Slim, till he eats himself up to the Bulk of Garbage; and recommend me and Strap as proper Persons to instruct 'em" (I, III). In the manner of his prototype the surgeon's mate, Roderick assumes the guise of a doctor and makes the prescriptions that bring about the success of his plot. Throughout the play he is amoral, insufferably proud, and completely unscrupulous. Thus he justifies his actions:

..wise Men physick Fools out of their Pelf. The Maxim all pursue is, Love Yourself. (II, iii)

Roderick is the protagonist of a play in which the comedy is predominantly of the coarse and bawdy variety; one notices in particular the consistent emphasis on the humor arising from bodily malfunctions that is characteristic of Smollett. In more than one way then, The Volunteers may be viewed as a sequel to Roderick Random.

Aside from passing references, individual characters, plot situations, and other elements in later plays, the novels of neither Smollett nor Sterne inspired any adaptations until over a decade after both had died. Performed at Covent Garden Theater in 1783, Leonard Macnally's Tristram Shandy: A Sentimental, Shandean Bagatelle, is the only
eighteenth century attempt to dramatize Sterne's novel.\textsuperscript{39}

As long as the drama continued to adhere to Aristotelian principles of structure, it was perhaps inevitable that the dramatist undertaking to dramatize such a novel as Sterne's would have as his primary task the imposition of a linear plot upon the materials provided by the novel.

Insofar as Macnally's play has a plot, it centers around the courtship of the Widow Wadman by Tristram's uncle Toby, but true to the manner of the novel, the affair is carried on with much elaboration. The opening lines of the play announce that the affair of Toby and the Widow is well along, and the subsequent developments contain many of the elements familiar in Sterne's novel, particularly in volumes VI, VIII, and IX. The second act includes Trim's assertion that Toby must launch an attack on the widow, the incident of Toby and the Widow's eye, the discussion of the uncle Toby's wound, the destruction of the fortifications, and even passing references to the story of the King of Bohemia and his seven castles, and the attack by the Widow Wadman upon uncle Toby in his sentry box. Macnally distorts the novel by making Susannah the matchmaker, and by elaborating her affair with Corporal Trim. He even goes so far as to have Uncle Toby make an out right proposal, "Widow, will you marry me," a king of direct assertion antithetical to Sterne's method which was necessary to round off the dramatic plot, and the final violence to Sterne appears at the end of the play: Uncle Toby and the Widow marry.
It is perhaps already apparent that Macnally sought
to include within the brief compass of two acts many of the
most cherished elements in the novel. In this respect the
first act of the play appears like a rendering in dramatic
form of such a collection as the vastly popular Beauties
of Sterne, for it includes Toby's pity for the fly,
the meeting of Obadiah and Dr. Slop, Corporal Trim's re-
flections on death, and the story of Le Fever. In this
last instance particularly, it is apparent that Macnally
stayed as close to the original text as the dramatic form
would permit. Thus he casts Tristram's famous apostrophe
to the "accusing spirit" (VI, x) in the form of direct
address and has Captain Sandy say, "Your hand, brother -
the accusing spirit which flew up to Heaven's chancery with
thy oath, blush'd as he gave it in, and the recording angel,
as he wrote it down, dropp'd a tear upon the word, that
blotted it out for ever - But consider, dear Toby, all
must die. . . (I, 1)." At other crucial points in the
story, such as Uncle Toby's show of compassion for Le Fever's
plight, Macnally makes only minor changes, as a comparison
of the tow texts will demonstrate. Sterne has Uncle Toby
say to Trim, "In the first place, when thou madest an offer
of my services to Le Fever, --- as sickness and travelling
are both expensive, and thou knowest he was but a poor
lituenant, with a son to subsist as well as himself, out
of his pay, --- that thou didst make an offer to him of
my purse; because, had he stood in need, thou knowest, Trim,
he had been as welcome to it as myself" (VI, x). Macnally gives this speech to Captain Shandy: "...when you waited on the Lieutenant, and made him an offer of my services did you offer him my purse? ---Sickness and travelling are both expensive, and thou knowest he was a poor Lieutenant, with a son to subsist as well as himself out of his pay --- Thou should'st have made him an offer of my purse, because if he stood in need, Trim, thou knowest he had been as welcome to it as myself" (I, i). The emphasis here is characteristic of the play as a whole: fidelity to the Sternean style and sentiments is more important than adherence to the characterization of the original. So long as the sentiments of Sterne were spoken, it seems to have made little difference to Macnally who said them.

Much less reliance on the wording of the original text appears in a dramatic version of Smollett's Roderick Random by Samuel William Ryley, that was performed a few years after Macnally's play (c. 1790). Like Macnally, Ryley compresses and tightens the action of the novel by concentrating on a love story, in this case, Roderick's courtship of Narcissa. Most of the first act follows the novel fairly closely. It includes the arrival in London of Roderick and Strap, some ridicule of their appearance and naive country ways, their appeal to Concordance, the Scots schoolmaster, for a recommendation to Cringer, the member of Parliament, and Roderick's subsequent employment
by Lavemant, the French apothecary, whose family includes a daughter and a wife whom he suspects of infidelity with Captain O'Donnell. Strap gains employment as a barber, and displays the special kind of cowardice that Roderick explains in the novel: "...my companion would have fought anybody, when his life was in no danger; but he had a mortal aversion to firearms, and all instruments of death" (I, 63). In Act II, Roderick meets Beau Jackson, who likewise aspires to be a surgeon's mate and sponges shirts and money from Roderick. Ryley then violates the chronology of the novel further by introducing Miss Williams, "A wretched woman made desperate by poverty and contempt," who tells a more pathetic version of her story to Tom Bowling. Like his original, he cloaks a soft heart with a rough exterior, but this quality becomes the trait of a class in Miss Williams's remark that "under the coarsest appearance, sailors in general have hearts replete with tenderness and humanity..." (III, iv). Ryley places the discovery of Bowling's relationship to Roderick at the end of the second act. In the third act, Roderick's father is discovered; he is betrothed to Narcissa and Strap to Miss Williams.

In the character of Roderick and in the conduct of the courtship, Ryley deviates considerably from the novel. In place of the rough manners and bitter railing of Smollett's hero, the play presents the cringing diffidence and stilted diction of the man of feeling. "A gentleman bred and
born" (I, i), with "genteel connections," Roderick pines in prose and song over his "hopeless love" for Narcissa (II, i). In the depths of his misery, he tells her, "Oh, Madam! should your contempt be added to what a friendless orphan has already experienced from the world, I should indeed be miserable" (II, iii). Appealing for Miss Williams, he says, "I come an humble suppliant, in behalf of betrayed innocence..." and delivers a speech that would have been little short of ludicrous in the mouth of Smollett's hero (III, ii). As Tyley's Roderick is hardly more than a pale shadow of his original, so is the heroine, Narcissa, and both are overshadowed by the character of Sir Tippy Twaddle, who appears as Narcissa's father. In the novel Narcissa has a brother, first subbed Squire Bumper, (I, 140) and later identified as Orson Topehall (III, 206), who is the conventional type of the booby squire given to fox hunting and hard drinking. In Sir Tippy Twaddle these traits are played down and a new humor is added: he is obsessed with the art of boxing and with his own supposed prowess as a rough and tumble man. Such as it is, the comic mood of the play polarizes in the squire, but his humor is so exaggerated that little comedy results from his actions. A trace of Smollett's practical satire appears in the Squire's habit of beating his helpless servingman for "the fine manly exercise" (I, ii), but its effect is diminished by the predominant emphasis on the love plot, in which the
Squire functions as the principal blocking character. Deceived by the fine appearance and dapper manners of his nephew, Beau Jackson, he offers him Narcissa, but when Jackson is exposed for a fraud, and Roderick is revealed as the son of a wealthy man, his blessing goes to Roderick. The emphasis on sensibility and pathos, and on a courtship conducted somewhat in the manner of Richardson are evident throughout Ryley's opera, and they constitute the principal means by which it can be distinguished from Smollett's novel.

With the publication of Ryley's play in 1790, the history of dramatic adaptations of the novels of Smollett and Sterne in the eighteenth century comes to an end. But as the example of Richardson indicates, the history of stage versions is only one phase of the influence exerted by the major eighteenth century novels upon the later drama. Like Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne contributed many elements toward the formation of a new tradition in comedy, a tradition which developed slowly while the ritual comedy inspired by Richardson predominated in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and which, in the fourth quarter of the century, gained new life from the example of Goldsmith and Sheridan and gradually supplanted the comedy of the followers of Richardson as the predominant mode on the English stage. It is now necessary to demonstrate how this pattern is
revealed in the drama of the period.

III

The new drama performed between the initial appearance of Pamela in 1740 and about 1760 reveals hardly more than the first signs of the development of a new tradition, as though the dramatists were groping toward a realization on the stage of the new techniques, characters, and themes, perfected by the novelists. But while Richardson soon had a host of imitators, the influence of the comic novelists was slower to form into what can be recognized as a distinct tradition. The most notable comedy of the decade prior to mid-century, Benjamin Hoadly's The Suspicious Husband (1747), is in the line of Farquhar and Gibber and reveals no connections with the early novels of Fielding. The case is different with Edward Moore, whose realization that the novel could provide useful materials for the stage is evident in the use he makes of Pamela and Clarissa in The Foundling (1748). For his next play, he turned to the picaresque novel, Alain-Rene Lesage's Adventures of Gil Blas of Ranville, because, according to his biographer, his interest had been aroused by Smollett's translation (1748). For his play of Gil Blas (1751), Moore dramatized an incident that Lesage himself frequently refers to as a "comedy." In his last play,
The Gamester (1753), Moore presents a new version of an old theme in domestic tragedy, the plight of a husband and father addicted to gaming, whose ultimate source is A Yorkshire Tragedy (1605), and which had appeared more recently in Aaron Hill's The Fatal Extravagance (1721).

Besides the background in earlier drama, The Gamester was apparently influenced by recent prose fiction as well. Earlier critics have noted the marked resemblances between Moore's hero and Booth in Amelia, between the heroine and Richardson's heroines as well as Amelia, and between the heroine's sister and Anna Howe, while the villain of the play has been represented as a combination of Lovelace in Clarissa and Trent in Amelia.

Certainly the relationship of The Gamester with Amelia seems a likely one. Like Fielding's heroine, Mrs. Beverly is trapped by marriage in a situation that puts her virtue and fidelity to the supreme test. Patient, self-effacing, unquestionably obedient to her husband, "the jewels that she values are truth and innocence." (II, iv). Like Booth, her feckless husband is completely deceived by those who would ruin him and seduce his wife, and he retains a dogmatic belief in the good intentions of the villain almost to the very end. Besides the internal evidence of a connection between the play and the novel, it should be noted that during the early fifties, Moore was one of Fielding's "good-natured parasites."
The novelist had been intimately involved in the production of *The Foundling*, and the friendship formed then became unusually close about the time of the initial publication of *Amelia*, which occurred on December 18, 1751. The first performance of *The Gamester* followed fourteen months later. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to conclude that Moore knew Fielding's novel, and allowed it to affect his conception of certain characters and situations in the play, but until more concrete information comes to light, the conclusion of J. H. Caskey about the tragedy as a whole remains a just one, "... comparisons ... prove nothing save that Moore used types and situations which were common in the popular new fiction."  

The difficulty of distinguishing one character type from another suggests a problem of paramount importance in the study of the influence of one author upon another, especially when the literature in question is comedy, and the problem is one that will force us to digress for a moment. Considering the nature of drama as a whole, it is apparent that characterization depends on function within a fixed plot structure, which in turn is determined by the classification of the play as either comedy or tragedy. From the time of Aristophanes onward, comedy in particular developed a repertory of stock situations and characters which were, and continue to be, endlessly perpetuated from generation to generation. For the prospective
writer of comedy then, the tradition provides a wide variety of types suitable for each function in the dramatic structure; he may use the traits and motives of the type, or vary them as he pleases. If we approach Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne from the standpoint of the earlier traditions in stage comedy, it is apparent that in spite of all the changes brought about by the differences between the genres, the comic novelists, insofar as they adhered to the structure of comedy, perpetuated at least the outlines of the conventional stereotypes, while making some unique contributions of their own. Thus Squire Western in Tom Jones is at once akin to the heavy father of Greek comedy and the booby squire of more recent native drama; Major Bath in Amelia is a direct descendant of the Plautine miles gloriosus; Mr. Shandy represents the old type of the pedant or obsessed philosopher, while Sophia's Aunt Western carries on the innovation immortalized by Molière, the femme savante; and Smollett's wide variety of national types, such as the Welshman Morgan in Peregrine Pickle and the Scotsman Lismahago in Humphry Clinker, are the heirs of a long series of such characters on the English stage.53 While the indebtedness of the novelists to the stock characters of earlier comedy is evident, their innovations are equally so. Fielding's characters tend to have an ethical as well as a comic function, and the latter undergoes much variation: Allworthy in Tom Jones serves the function of the heavy
father in comedy, but he has very few characteristics of
the stereotype; Mr. and Mrs. Tow-wouse, the inn-keeping
couple in *Joseph Andrews*, are descendants of the cooks and
hosts in ancient comedy, yet both undergo a remarkable de-
gree of individualization.

Many of the variations in character that the novelists
introduced are due to the modifications they effected in
the theory of the comic humors, which had been common in
English comedy since the days of Ben Jonson. In this res-
pect, it is helpful to consider the observations of Professor
Alan D. McKillop. Commenting on the "intensely visualized
grotesques" in Smollett, he suggests four ways of viewing
these and other similar characters: "as fantastic and
monstrous creatures, living in a world conditioned only
by their own obsessions and manias. . .; as more or less
corrigible members of society, who may here see their
errors as in a glass. . .; as natural variations of the
human stock, to be viewed with sympathy and toleration. . .
and as documentation, as representatives of race, national-
ity, social class, vocation, and milieu. . . ." In Smol-
lett's early novels, this last group "is almost always
connected with satire."54 The major innovation to be
noted here lies in the character whose foibles are to be
viewed with toleration, such as Parson Adams and Sterne's
Uncle Toby, who represent the kind of "amiable humor"
that was to predominate in the later eighteenth century.55
Humor as obsession, as corrigible trait, and as documentation, is more an integral part of the earlier tradition, and poses therefore a greater problem in distinguishing the novelists from their predecessors in comedy.

Some of the difficulties involved, along with the best mode of procedure in a study of this kind, can be illustrated by a comparison of Smollett with a playwright of the period unusually close to him in comic technique, Charles Macklin. In the presentation of humors, Smollett's usual method is to define the nature of the humor, and then to portray it in action, as we see in the prison scene early in Volume II of Ferdinand Count Fathom, where Smollett introduces a group of originals. One is "Major Macleaver, an Irish gentleman, who has served abroad; a soldier of fortune, sir, a man of unquestionable honour and courage, but a little overbearing, in consequence of his knowledge and experience" (p. 5). At the outset, the character is identified by nationality and vocation, but the Major is set up so that the appearance of his real humor will mark him as a fit object for satire: "He is a person of good address, to be sure, and quite free of the mauvaise honte, and he may have seen a good deal of service...; if he speaks five or six languages, he does not pretend to any taste in the liberal arts, which are the criterion of an accomplished gentleman" (p. 5). The Major has a degree
of suavity and sophistication quite beyond the tawdry affectations of social class, but the disparity between appearance and real nature is brought into sharp focus when he is revealed to be obsessed by a gluttonous sensuality: among other habits, he maintains a "family" of "ladies of character," who are actually common prostitutes (p. 17). In this case Smollett heightens the irony of the character by delaying the presentation of the humor. The procedure differs, however, with Sir Mungo Barebones, "the representative of a very ancient family in the north; his affairs are very much deranged, but he is a gentleman of great probity and learning. . . ." (p. 5). By virtue of his nationality, his ancient lineage, and his vast knowledge, Sir Mungo is immediately identified with the traditional stereotype of the Scotsman. Yet while he represents a stock character, he is also differentiated from it by a humor suggested by the italicized word:

(He is) at present engaged in a very grand scheme, which, if he can bring it to bear, will render him famous to all posterity; no less than the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles. The project, I own, looks chimerical to one who has not conversed with the author; but, in my opinion, he has clearly demonstrated, from an anagrammatical analysis of a certain Hebrew word, that his present Majesty, whom God preserve, is the person pointed at in Scripture as the temporal Messiah of the Jews; and, if he could once raise by subscription such a trifling sum as twelve hundred thousand pounds, I make no doubt but he would
accomplish his aim, vast and romantic as it seems to be. . . . (p. 5).

The later appearances of this man obsessed by an "evil genius" (p. 12) merely heighten the comic effect of a humor already defined.

Much of Macklin's technique in Love-a-la-Mode (1759) is remarkably similar to Smollett's. The plot of this play is as simple as it is common. A young woman is beset by a number of suitors, one of whom she finally chooses. In her very first speech, the heroine defines the humors of the men in "Cupid's train:"

The first . . is a high-minded North British Knight, who sets up for a wit, a man of learning and sentiment: He bears himself fair while you are present, but abuses the whole world when their backs are turned; and withal, has so high a notion of the dignity of his family, that he would, no doubt, think me under a great obligation, in honouring me with his hand. . . .(I,i).

Besides the common characteristics of the stock Scotsman, the character is given a specific humor which is duly indicated by his name, Sir Archy Macsarcasm. The second suitor is a stock racial type, "a downright ideot, a fluttering, frivolous things, well known in most public places by the name of Beau Mordecai, an English Jew. . . ." In addition to his race, the character is akin to the common run of stage fops. The third suitor combines nationality and vocation: Sir Calloghan O'Brallaghan is an Irishman, "whose . . . voice and military aspect
make me fancy that he was not only born in a siege, but that Bellona alone could be his nurse, Mars his preceptor, and the camp the academy, where he received the first rudiments of his education." The fourth suitor is introduced later as a variant of the booby squire type. Squire Groom, a Newmarket jockey, is, naturally enough, obsessed with horses.

Not only does Macklin use the same technique as Smollett in establishing the humors, the ensuing action is wholly devoted to the comic effect arising from their display: the Scotsman practices his sarcastic manner at every opportunity; he argues with the Irishman about the merits of their respective nations; the Jew flits about displaying himself; and the jockey gives a breathless description of a horse race. The military humor of the Irishman turns out to be the only corrigible one: in winning the hand of the girl, he profits from the lesson of the satire.

While there is marked similarity in the techniques of Smollett and Macklin, the playwright's tendency to use undifferentiated stereotypes makes any positive connection with similar characters in the novels impossible. As far as national types are concerned, an argument could be made (however fallacious) to the effect that Macklin drew upon Smollett's own farce, The Reprisal (1757), rather than the early novels. If we turn to external evidence for
proof of a connection between the two writers, we find that Mackline was a longtime friend of Fielding's, but no mention that Macklin was ever acquainted with either the person or the works of Smollett. The catalog of the actor's library reveals a surprisingly large collection of classics, an even larger number of English plays, but none of Smollett's novels. Macklin's only connection with any of the novelists appears in the mention of the 1790 edition of Sterne's Works (item 744) and what is presumably an early edition of Smollett's Travels (item 755). It could be argued that since novels were much read and little valued in the eighteenth century, they might very well have been sold, lost, or merely worn out during the long period between their initial publication (1748-1753) and the sale of Macklin's library (1797). This is indeed a reasonable conjecture, but it does not constitute proof that Macklin knew Smollett and that he emulated the novelist in his plays. While admitting the possibility of a connection on the basis of internal evidence, the only verifiable conclusion that can be drawn is that both Smollett and Macklin were exponents of the humors in their original Jonsonian form, as elements in the kind of comedy that has a pronounced tendency toward scourging satire.

Except for the plays of Moore noted earlier, no other
full length plays appear during this early period which show the influence of the comic novelists, but as Love-a-la-Mode indicates, the situation is different in that lesser species of comedy often called farce. The early plays of Arthur Murphy, who was later to achieve fame (and notoriety) as the first editor of Fielding, reveal a familiarity with the works of Smollett as well as those of Fielding. His first farce, The Apprentice (1756), centers on the actions of a carefree, impulsive young fellow, a picaro who is stage struck. Like Roderick Random, he is apprenticed to an apothecary. His aspirations to become an actor seem confirmed when he is admitted to a spouting club (II,1) that is remarkably similar to the "College of Authors" in Peregrine Pickle (IV, 85-107). An obvious hit at Smollett appears when one of the members of the club, a Scotsman, asks, "What do'st lie at Mon? - I have had muckle Applause at Edenburgh, when I enacted in the Reegiceede...", referring to Smollett's first published work, the unsuccessful tragedy of The Regicide (1748). The career of the hero ends in a spunging house reminiscent of Smollett and Fielding, from which he is released after promising to reform. Two years later, Murphy includes a character from Fielding in The Upholsterer (1758). In this play the heroine has a serving woman, Termagant, whose aspirations to gentility are ridiculed by her inability to use the speech of a more cultured class. Her relation to the
prototype of the malapropist in Joseph Andrews is confirmed when the hero refers to the heroine's "Mrs. Slipslop of a Maid, with her unintelligible Jargon of hard Words, of which she neither knows the Meaning nor Pronunciation" (I, i). In the original manuscript of the play, the character is named "Slipslop," and Professor Dunbar takes this as "sufficient evidence that he (Murphy) was not ashamed of his debt and did not seek to hide it."66

In his handling of humors, his satiric manner, and in the execution of his plots, Murphy carries on the tradition of Fielding to a much greater extent than does Samuel Foote, whose personal relationship with the novelist was one of long standing enmity.67 While Foote consistently took as the target of his satire the many varieties of affectation, his method of presentation is almost invariably the harsh and pungent caricature characteristic of the early Smollett, a fact that his biographers, who consistently place him in the comic tradition of Fielding and Gay, fail to note.68 In spite of the lack of external evidence, the analogues in his plays to the novels of Smollett deserve to be mentioned, if for no other reason than that they helped to maintain the same kind of comic tradition as the novels. Taste (1752)69 satirizes the pretensions of pedants and virtuosos, and, like most of Foote's plays, it is pervaded by ridicule of grossness,
animality, and sensuality. The central character is a painter who, like Pallett in *Peregrine Pickle*, pretends to vast knowledge of the world of art while he in fact has none. By its title alone, *The Englishman in Paris* (1753), coming so soon after Smollett's novels, cannot but remind us of the adventures of Peregrine and Ferdinand Count Fathom in the French capital. The hero, young Buck, of whom "contradiction seems to be the Life and Soul. . ." (I,i), is accompanied to Paris by Classic, where they meet another Englishman, Subtle, who resolves to bilk his countryman of his funds by a mock marriage. The hero emerges as the usual uncouth and bumptuous English squire, obsessed with hounds and horses. He is finally rescued by a father, who moralizes on the folly of sending a profligate son to Paris. (II).

The success of this play encouraged the writing of a sequel, which duly appeared as *The Englishman Returned From Paris* (1756). Two characters reminiscent of Smollett are introduced in this play. The hero is accompanied by a travelling tutor or "Bear Leader," Macruthen, who is described as "a needy Highlander, the Outcast of his Country, who, with the Pride of a German Baron, the Poverty of a French Marquis, the Address of a Swiss Soldier, and the Learning of an Academy Usher, is to give our Heir apparent Politeness, Taste, Literature; a perfect Knowledge of the World, and of himself" (I,i). Although no particular character of Smollett's can be cited as the original of
Macruthen, the execution of the contrast between his appearance and his real nature is similar to the technique used by the novelist. Foote's hero in this play also has a guardian, Sir Giles Crab, whose type name gives away his character. In the manner of Cadwallader Crabtree in Peregrine Pickle, he protests that "Vice and Folly rule the World, . . . Fresh Instances, every Moment, fortify my Abhorrence, my Detestation of Mankind. This turn may be term'd Misanthropy. . . ." (I,1). The misanthrope as a type had of course a long stage history, and Smollett's character could hardly be termed the original. Actually the question of an influence of Smollett upon Foote seems to have been reversed in this case: by having his misanthrope reveal a secretly benevolent attitude (II,1), Foote establishes a germinal type of Matthew Bramble in Humphry Clinker.73

In Foote's most popular play, The Minor (1760),74 we again find traces of Smollett but no evidence of a direct connection. In a part especially created for himself, Foote introduces Samuel Shift, a man of many talents who, like Smollett's picaros, Ferdinand Count Fathom in particular, has had a rogue's education that has fitted him to assume almost any guise, no matter how nefarious its purpose may be. But it can only be assumed that Foote would agree with Smollett on the usefulness of a chameleon-like character as a vehicle for satirizing
the follies of mankind, because, for one thing, such characters are not confined to the novels of Smollett, and for another, Foote himself was applauded in later years as "the modern PROTEUS."

IV

These early plays of Macklin, Murphy, and Foote indicate that the comic tradition in the drama originating in the novels of Fielding and Smollett was still in its formative stages prior to 1760, but in this year it broadens to include Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, the first two volumes of which were published on January 1. On the evening of May 12, the audience at Drury Lane Theater witnessed the first performance of George Colman's *Polly Honeycombe*, a burlesque of popular fiction that signals the sudden emergence of the novel as a potent force in the drama of the third quarter of the century. Centering on the follies of a novel-reading heroine, the play is a witty burlesque of many of the characters and situations made famous by Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and their imitators. Within the familiar pattern of the girl who elopes from oppressive parents, the play unfolds around Polly, whose humor is the belief that "a Novel's the only thing to teach a girl life, and the way of the world, and elegant fancies, and love to the end of
the chapter" (I,i), and all her actions are justified by
the examples of prose fiction. She first appears reading
a parody of Fielding's initial description of Sophia in
Tom Jones; then she proceeds to justify her planned elope-
ment by citing the heroines who have done it and commends
her plebeian lover because "he writes as well as Bob Love-
lace." When her parents try to force a marriage with a
doltish banker, she exclaims, "I am now, for all the world,
just in the situation of poor Clarissa, - and the wretch
is ten times uglier than Soames himself," and when her sus-
picious father confines her to her room she laments, "Poor
Clarissa! poor Sophy Western! I am now going to be treated
just as you have been before me." The unexpected arrival
of her lover brings this response, "I was as much surprised
as Sophy Western, when she was Tom Jones in the looking
glass," and he reassures her, "Clarissa, and Sophy, and
the rest of them, were but mere types of you.!! When the
elopement fails, Polly defends her choice to her father,
"who knows but he may be a Foundling, and a gentleman's
son, as well as Tom Jones?" She assures her lover, "I'll
have you, though we go through as many distresses as Booth
and Amelia," and castigates the suitor proposed by her
father, "you are as deceitful as Blifil, as rude as the
Harlowes, and as ugly as Dr. Slop." Mr. Honeycombe, like
Smollett's Gamaliel Pickle, is a type of the dull, laconic,
uxorious tradesman, dominated by a wife whose outstanding
trait is the vacant, impervious quality of the habitual dram drinker, a type exemplified by Mrs. Trunnion in *Peregrine Pickle*. The play ends in confusion, with the father complaining that "a man might as well turn his daughter loose in Covent-Garden, as trust the cultivation of her mind to A CIRCULATING LIBRARY." 28

As a turning point in the history of the English stage, *Polly Honeycombe* marks the first appearance of what were to become two distinct traditions in the drama. One, largely inspired by Richardson, was soon to culminate in the plays of Mrs. Sheridan, Whitehead, Mrs. Griffith, and Hugh Kelly. The other, deriving from the comic novelists, develops more slowly, occupying on the whole a subordinate position for over a decade after 1760. George Colman established his own position in the comic tradition of Fielding with *The Jealous Wife* (1761). His next play, a farce called *The Musical Lady* (1762), 79 represents a witty, deftly structured satire of a fine lady obsessed by a passion for Italian music. Because of her humor, she has the naive susceptibility of Celinda, whom Ferdinand Count Fathom seduces with the aid of music (I, 219-30). In *The Deuce is in Him* (1763), 80 Colman takes a plot from Marmontel's *Moral Tales* and introduces a gossiping apothecary, a palpable fraud, who thrives as a parasite on the gentry in a manner reminiscent of Fathom's sojourn in a similar situation. The product of Colman's collaboration with David
Garrick, *The Clandestine Marriage* (1766), presents several familiar types - an aging roué, lawyers, and a parvenu and his miserly sister. The sister, Mrs. Heidelberg, is given to aping quality, and her affectation is revealed by her manner of speech. Her penchant for mispronunciation has been traced to Shakespeare, but analysis reveals that she not only mispronounces, she also confuses the meaning of words, and this trait places her in the tradition of Fielding's Slipslop. In *The English Merchant* (1767), Colman adds to the plot of Voltaire the gruff, good-hearted merchant, Freeport, who is important to the development of the good-natured misanthrope, but cannot otherwise be connected with the comic novelists.

One of Colman's last full length comedies, *The Man of Business* (1774), presents a Tom Jones type in the hero who is morally sound at bottom, but is temporarily led astray by imprudent management of money and trade. His follies and gullibility make him easy game for the greedy, amoral Denier, who says, "I love to husband my good offices, ... true policy! to gain the good will of others, without touching your own property" (III,1). Denier is also a lecher, and his attempts to seduce the hero's fiancé make the plot of the play analogous to the Fathom-Monimia-Melville triangle in *Ferdinand Count Fathom*. A later farce, *The Spleen* (1776), presents an aging citizen, a hypochondriac, who travels to Bath to take the waters.
with his daughter and old maid sister, Tabitha. Besides the characters and situation, the satire on medical quackery that culminates with the introduction of the spa doctor, Dr. Anodyne, is strongly reminiscent of Smollett's many similar scenes at the famous watering place, and the interview between the doctor and the hypochondriac (II,i) is remarkably similar to the scene in Humphry Clinker between Matthew Bramble and "the famous Dr. L____n" (I, 20-5).

The later plays of Arthur Murphy reveal his continued allegiance to the tradition of comic novelists. For the matter of his plots, Murphy was too often prone to rely on the earlier French drama, but he was at least selective and sought to embellish the imported material with characters and situations from the native stock. Thus All in the Wrong (1761) takes its central character from the Cocu Imaginaire of Moliere, while including a Squire Western type in the "tyrannical, positive, headstrong" Sir William Bellmont. The Old Maid (1761), drawn almost wholly from French drama, prompted the Critical Review to remark, "we commend Mr. Murphy for owning his obligations to the French author; but we cannot help wishing he would employ his talents on more original productions." It would appear that Murphy heeded the request in The Citizen (1763); though only two acts long, it is one of his best plays. While the title
character, Old Philpot, has no direct analogue in Smollett or Fielding, except perhaps Old Nightingale in Tom Jones, the technique of character presentation and the situation upon which the play turns produces the combination of comedy and satire that the novelists had established as the norm for lashing vice. Early in the play, the character of the old citizen is sketched by one of his clerks:

"...a miserly old rascal! digging digging money out of the very hearts of mankind; constantly, constantly scraping together, and yet trembling with anxiety for fear of coming to want. A canting old hypocrite! and yet under his veil of sanctity, he has a liquorish tooth left—running to the other end of the town slily every evening, and there he has his solitary pleasures in holes and corners..." (I, i)

In Act II, the citizen's son, a Tom Jones type, is tempted into the dingy room of a woman of the town. There he discovers his father, cowering under a table, and the scene exactly duplicates the striking dramatic effect of the sudden exposure of the hypocritical Square in the garret of Moll Seagrim by Tom Jones. The play includes a hard-drinking fox hunter, Sir Jasper Wilding, a country justice who has the abrupt, imperious manner and the rural dialect of Squire Western. He also has a beautiful, marriageable daughter.

For the plot and most of the other elements in No One's Enemy But His Own (1764), Murphy returned to the
French drama, and his next original play is *What We Must All Come To* (1764, revised and performed as *Three Weeks After Marriage* in 1776). As an object for his satire in this play, Murphy returns to the bourgeoisie and depicts Drugget, a retired tradesman with £100,000, who lives in the dust of London road, yet is obsessed with growing things and has made "a ridiculous gimcrack" of his house and gardens (I,i). Forever dissatisfied with the present arrangement, he says "I have a great improvement to make still -- I propose to have my evergreens cut into fortifications; and then I shall have the Moro castle, and the Havanna; and then near it shall be ships of myrtle, sailing upon seas of box to attack the town" (I,i). The nature of the fantasy and the mention of fortifications must inevitably remind us at this period of Sterne's Uncle Toby, with his passion for a similar arrangement of inanimate things. Aside from the humor of the citizen, most of the play is taken up by a fractious married couple, whose innumerable violent arguments are reminiscent of similar altercations between the Squire and Mrs. Western. Murphy's last comedy, and one that is at once his best and most original play, is *Know Your Own Mind* (1777), which has been overshadowed and undeservedly slighted by critics of the late eighteenth century drama, perhaps because it tends to be shunted aside in favor of another comedy produced the same year, Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*.
In the farces of Samuel Foote appearing after 1760, traces of the influence of Fielding, and particularly of Smollett, continue to appear. *The Lyar* (1762) is an impulsive young man with a ready ability to tell fantastic stories, but unlike Count Fathom, who has a similar ability, Foote's hero is not motivated by base intentions. The influence of Smollett is more apparent in the character of Papillion, the hero's tutor, a schoolmaster turned picaro. Like Smollett, Foote differentiates his rogue from such types in the earlier picaresque tradition by making him a man of property with just claims to gentility. Although the immediate quality of his experiences is more important at the moment, the stability and security of a "family seat" looms in the background. In accord with his character, Papillion often makes judgments that are remarkably similar to those of Smollett's picaros. When he and the hero approach London, he remarks, "...this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons are feign'd." The statement cannot but remind us of Ferdinand Count Fathom's conclusion after contemplating the city, "...this metropolis is a vast masquerade, in which a man of stratagem may wear a thousand different disguises, without danger of detection" (I, 203). In all of Foote's plays, there is a recurrent association of this theme of disguise in its many forms with the city and with the complexities of modern
society in general.

The Mayor of Garret (1764) springs from the complications attending a rural election, and the scene and situation bear a general resemblance to a similar affair witnessed by Sir Launcelot Greaves (94-105). Again, in The Patron (1764), we find an unparticularized resemblance to Smollett in the situation of the lordly patron, Sir Thomas Lofty, "a tedious, insipid, insufferable coxcomb" (I), whose pretensions to literary talent are encouraged by a motley assembly of needy poets, cranks, sycophants, and other similar types (II). In return for their flattery, the patron feeds them, and thus gets their encouragement for the performance of a play he has written about Robinson Crusoe. Needless to say, the play is an utter failure, and the patron's vanity is duly shattered (II). In The Commissary (1765), Foote carries on the burlesque tradition instituted by Fielding in Shamela by introducing a lascivious parson, Dr. Tickletext (II). As we have seen, Foote's expression in burlesque of his consistent opposition to the Richardsonian tradition culminated in the "primitive puppet shew," Piety in Pattens (1773).

In The Devil upon Two Sticks (1768), Foote turns to Fielding again for the characters of the argumentative country squire, Sir Thomas Maxwell, who belittles the intellectual pretensions of his old maid sister, Margaret, a lady with a passion for politics and world affairs.
Like their prototypes, the Squire and Mrs. Western, they argue furiously over the kind of training to be given the Squire's daughter, Harriet: while she objects violently to the unthinking tyranny of parents, he ridicules her "romantic republican notions" (I). Foote's usual practice, exhibited here, is to introduce characters, extract what comedy can be got from them, and then turn the action to other matters. In this play, for example, the squire and his sister give way to a satire on medical quackery in the manner of Smollett, in which Harriet and her lover appear only as observers. Another familiar type appears in a play which the historians of Mrs. Malaprop uniformly neglect, *The Lame Lover* (1770); Betty, the chambermaid, reveals the shallowness of her aspirations to gentility by her inability to use words according to their proper significations. In *The Maid of Bath* (1771), Foote draws his own version of the miser, and incarcerates a contemporary type in *The Nabob* (1772). The latter play contains a rowdy parody of the Richardsonian ritual of courtship: a lewd old procuress, Mrs. Match'em, "amorous agent" for a noble lord, loves her lecherous master, and thus she defines her feelings, "I am attracted not so much by the charms of his person as by the beauties of his mind. . . ." (I). Foote's later plays, *The Bankrupt* (1773), *The Cozeners* (1774), and *A Trip to Calais* (1776) perpetuate the comic and satiric manners of the tradition, and they reveal several
general resemblances to characters and themes in the novels, but the analogues are too imprecise to warrant mention here.

Turning now to the minor playwrights who contributed to the growth of the comic tradition during the period immediately after 1760, we find Joseph Reed, in The Register Office (1761) writing a farce about the abuse of an idea suggested by Fielding in The Covent Garden Journal - an eighteenth century version of the employment agency. A retired procurer, Mr. Gulwell, has turned his register office into "a pimping establishment," and like that most dedicated of villains, Count Fathom, he preys on the folly and credulity of men, believing that "there is no getting through the world without a necessary Portion of Trick and Chicanary" (I). In terms of the play as a whole, the register office is merely the vehicle for the display of a wide variety of character types, including a suave coxcomb who pretends to great learning while revealing his ignorance by his misuse of words; an arrogant Scotsman, a needy Irishman, and a bawdy house madam. One of the most amusing is "Mrs. Slatternella Doggerel, dramatic poetess" (II), who comes to the register office seeking an amanuensis. For Reed the influence of Fielding culminates in the comic opera of Tom Jones, performed eight years later.

Traces of Smollett's influence appear in a continuation
of Foote's *Minor* by Israel Pottinger, *The Methodist*, which though never performed was published in 1761. As the title suggests, the play satirizes the supposed hypocrisy of an evangelical sect by describing an almost unbelievable chasm between professions of piety and actual behavior. The character of Shift reappears as the hero's devoted serving man, and he is more than ever in the tradition of Strap and Partridge. In Act II, for example, there appears the familiar scene of the man who hesitates, stutters, and digresses while reporting important news to a master who chafes anxiously at the delay (II,i). The same act includes a long recitation of the sad story of a good woman gone wrong that agrees in most details with similar histories recited by Miss Williams in *Roderick Random* and Miss Matthews in *Amelia*.

Although he was among the most scurrilous attackers of Fielding during the lifetime of the novelist, William Kenrick did not hesitate to pilfer the novels for his own plays, as his version of *Amelia*, *The Duellist*, indicates. The man whom the *DNB* characterizes as "a superlative soundrel, but clever, who wrote with a bottle of brandy at his elbow," turned to *Tom Jones* for the plot of his first full length comedy, *The Widow'd Wife* (1767). The hero of the play is a Tom Jones type, "young and volatile" but with "sense and principle" (II,ii), who is, of course, a foundling. He narrowly escapes an incestuous
relationship (IV, i), and is finally revealed as the lost son of a rich father (V, i). Traces of Smollett appear in the ridicule of quack doctors at Bath (I, i), and the play includes a satire on pedantry reminiscent of Sterne in the character of Syllogism, "a catch-penny casuist" (III, i). It appears that Kenrick's contemporaries were well aware of the play's sources: the Critical Review remarks,

The plot is formed with all that romantic wildness and inconsistency which distinguishes the numerous novels that crowd the shelves of our circulating libraries; and yet it is altogether destitute of the art which keeps expectation alive, and carries on the reader from page to page, in those flimsy productions.

If Kenrick could not compare with the common run of hacks, he could hardly match the dramatic skill of Fielding by copying the plot of Tom Jones.

Apparently in an attempt to capitalize on the concept of humor as a hobby horse made current by Sterne, Edward Thompson wrote a farce called The Hobby Horse (1766), in which he puns intentionally on the title by making one of the obsessions featured in the play a passion for real horses on the part of a booby squire. The other humor appears in Lord Helicon, a patron surrounded by the usual coterie of sycophants, who displays all the insufferable vanity of the type. As if to hint at the source of the play's title, in response to a question
about anything new, Pamphlet replies, "Yes, your Honour. Two new volumes of Tristram, and a new poem call'd the Demi-rep, Sir." Thompson's next play is an adaptation of Charles Shadwell's comedy, *The Fair Quaker of Deal* (1715), performed in 1773 as *The Fair Quaker*. In the Preface to his alteration, Thompson states a theory of comedy that accords well with Smollett's own; he says, "...the pictures of the stage are rather caricatures of life, than faithful copies of people in general." Besides the stress on caricature, Thompson subscribes to the analogy with painting, as does Smollett in the Prefatory Address to *Ferdinand Count Fathom*. The influence of the novelist through some of his most inimitable characters is seen in Thompson's play as well. The only substantial change from Shadwell's original appears in the substitution of several differentiated types for a group of sailors who serve little more than a choral function in the earlier play. Thompson reduces the number to four: Derrick, a midshipman, Cockswain, Jack Hatchway, and Dick Binnacle. Besides some of the type names, Smollett's conception of the nautical man stands behind the character of Dick Binnacle, who develops as a younger version of Tom Bowling, the sage and experienced seaman whose rough manners and appearance cloak an abounding sense of compassion and benevolence. The *Monthly Review* remarked, "the new character of Binnacle is well hit,
strongly marked, naturally interwoven with the rest of the composition," a judgment that suggests that while Smollett's indignant satire had lost favor, his sympathetic characters lived on, particularly his sailors. Thus in a deservedly obscure farce of 1768, Thomas Boulton's *The Guinea Outfit: Or, The Sailor's Farewell,* we find a Tom Bowling and a Jack Rattlin, along with the usual dialogue in nautical metaphor, but little resemblance otherwise to the more fully developed characters of the novelist.

Even the most incompetent, occasional dramatists contributed something to the maintenance of the comic tradition originating with the novelists. After showing some signs of life in the dramatic history of the late 1750's, the tradition developed into an increasingly strong undercurrent in the comedy of the next decade. Continuity in the use of characters, themes, and situations from Fielding, Smollett, and to a lesser extent, Sterne, appears in the careers of the established comic dramatists whose careers extended into the seventies. And the conventions kept alive by Murphy, Colman, and Foote, were perpetuated by the lesser playwrights. Viewing the material presented here as a whole, the increasing signs of activity in the comic tradition after about 1765 can be seen to coincide almost exactly with the decline of Richardsonian comedy. As the world of the drama showed increasing signs of unrest with the prevailing mode in comedy,
a situation marked by instability and lack of direction
developed that is significantly comparable to the state
of prose fiction in the seventies, described by Miss
Thompkins as a period of "comparative stagnation," one
in which the influence of "the four great masters" is
apparent in most of the books that appear. While
the novel suffered from a dearth of authors who could
infuse new vitality into existing conventions, the
indecisive situation in the drama underwent a radical
change with the appearance on the stage of the plays of
two highly talented dramatists, Oliver Goldsmith and
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and a third, less dynamic
but equally devoted to the comic tradition of Fielding,
Smollett, and Sterne, Richard Cumberland. Notwithstanding
the fact that each of these dramatists made a signif-
icant individual contribution to stage comedy, their works
as a whole reveal that their most important contribution
in terms of dramatic history was the establishment of
the tradition of the three great comic novelists in the
English theater. It remains now to trace the emergence
to a dominant position of this tradition in the fourth
quarter of the eighteenth century.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV


4 *Rise of the Novel*, 257.


6 (London, 1748).


8 (London, 1757).


11 The editions of Fielding used in this study are: *Shemela*, ed. Sheridan W. Baker (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953); *Joseph Andrews* (New York, 1939); *Jonathan Wild and The Voyage to Lisbon* (London, 1932); *Tom Jones* (New York, 1950); *Amelia* (London, 1930).
(London, 1761).

(London, 1760).


London Magazine, XXX (1761), 61.

Critical Review, XI (1761), 145.

London Magazine, XXX (1761), 145.


(London, 1769).

Frederic T. Blanchard, Fielding the Novelist (New Haven, 1925), 172-3.


XL (1769), 65.

XXXVIII (1769), 5.

Ibid., 6.

Ibid., 7.


(London, 1773).

Lady's Magazine, III (1773), 603.

Monthly Review, XLIX (1773), 396.

Cross, History of Fielding, II, 208.


33 This is the conclusion of Howard Buck, "A Roderick Random Play, 1748," MLN, XLIII (1928), 111-2.

34 (London, 1748).

35 Buck, "Play," argues that the Roderick and Strap of the play are not "in any particular Smollett's Roderick and Strap;" and that the play is not "in any way either dependent on or connected with the novel," except in the names of the characters.


37 McKillop, Early Masters, 152.

38 (London, 1783).

39 The editions of Sterne used in this study are: Works, Shakespeare Head ed. (Oxford, 1927); Tristram Shandy, ed. James A. Work (New York, 1940).

40 10th ed. (London, 1787).

41 Roderick Random, a comic opera, and The Civilian, a Farce (Manchester, n.d.). Nicoll supplies no performance records, but he believes the play was published around 1790 (III, 304).

42 (London, 1747).

43 Caskey, Moore, 78.

44 (London, 1751).

45 Tr. Tobias Smollett (Oxford, 1937), I, 190, 228.

46 (London, 1753).

47 The relation of this play to Moore's in terms of the defining elements in the genre of domestic tragedy is presented in a perceptive discussion by Charles H. Peake in his Introduction to The Gamester, Augustan Reprint Society Publ. No. 14, (Los Angeles, 1948), 1-6.

48 Most of these possible analogues were originally
noted by Beyer, Edward Moore, 45-8. Caskey, Moore, ill, disagrees with Beyer, arguing that it is impossible to make any specific connections.

49 Cross, History of Fielding, II, 302.

50 Ibid., II, 90-2, 107-8, 244-6.

51 Ibid., III, 212.

52 Moore, ill.

53 The continuity of stereotypes in comedy is illustrated by some of the recent scholarship on the subject. On the squire, see Kenneth C. Slagle, The English Country Squire (Philadelphia, 1938), and John Harrington Smith, "Tony Lumpkin and the Country Booby Type in Antecedent English Comedy," PMLA, LVIII (1943), 1038-49. In The Braggart in Renaissance Comedy (Minneapolis, 1954), Daniel C. Boughner traces the historical evolution of the species of imposter that includes the miles gloriosus. On the learned lady, see Jean Elisabeth Gagen, The New Woman (New York, 1954). In "The Development of a Stock Character: I. The Stage Irishman to 1800," MLR, XXXVII (1942), 438-47, and "...II. The Stage Scotsman; III. The Stage Welshman (to 1800)," MLR, XXXVIII (1943), 279-88, J. O. Bartley traces the historical evolution of national types. Besides the fact that his typological criteria are of questionable validity, he makes no mention of the contributions made by the comic novelists of the eighteenth century.

54 Early Masters, 152-3.

55 Tave, Amiable Humorist, passim.

56 (London, 1782).

57 (London, 1757).

58 Cross, History of Fielding, 216.


60 In the standard biography, Tobias Smollett (Princeton, 1949), Lewis M. Knapp presents no evidence that the novelist and Macklin were acquainted.
61 A Catalogue of the Library of the Late Mr. Charles Macklin, Comedian (London, 1797).
62 (London, 1756).
63 The novel had been published in 1751. For bibliographical information on Smollett, I rely on Knapp, Smollett.
64 (London, 1748).
65 (London, 1758).
67 Cross, History of Fielding, II, 89, 231-3, 413.
68 See, for example, Mary Belden, The Dramatic Work of Samuel Foote (New Haven, 1929), 175.
69 (London, 1752).
70 (London, 1753).
71 Smollett's third novel was published on February 15, 1753 (Knapp, 153). Foote's play was performed on March 24, something over a month later (Nicoll, III, 259).
72 (London, 1756).
73 Preston, Good Natured Misanthrope, 91-2.
74 (London, 1760).
75 Monthly Review, XXXIII (1765), 83.
76 A bibliography of early editions appears in Wilbur L. Cross, The Life and Times of Laurence Sterne (New Haven, 1929), 596-611.
77 (London, 1760).
78 The first edition of Polly Honeycombe includes in prefatory material a list of novels to be found in a neighborhood circulating library, supposedly compiled by Colman's mother, which constitutes an invaluable bibliography of mid-century fiction. Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett are included. Its contents are discussed by Austin Dobson, Eighteenth Century Vignettes, Third Series (London, 1907), 83-103.
79 (London, 1762).
80 (London, 1763).
81 (London, 1766).
82 Stein, Garrick, 220.
83 (London, 1767).
84 Preston, 108.
85 (London, 1774).
86 (London, 1776).
87 (London, 1761).
88 (London, 1761).
89 XII (1761), 437.
90 (London, 1763).
91 (London, 1764).
92 (London, 1776).
93 (London, 1777).
94 (London, 1762).
95 (London, 1764).
96 (London, 1764).
97 (London, 1765).
98 (London, 1768).
99 (London, 1770).
100 (London, 1771).
101 (London, 1772).
102 (London, 1773, 1774, 1776).
103 (London, 1761).
104 (London, 1767).
105 XXV (1768), 144.
106 Larpent Ms. 11 M (1766).
107 (London, 1715).
108 (London, 1773).
109 XLIX (1773), 394.
110 (London, 1768).
111 Popular Novel, 55.
Chapter V. THE COMIC NOVEL TRADITION: TRIUMPH, CONTINUANCE, AND DECAY

The generic analogy of the novel and drama is, of course, fundamental to this study, and on more than one occasion we have seen how the chronological evolution of one genre corresponds with similar changes in the other. There is every evidence that in spite of the recurrent tendency to view the novel and drama as distinct entities, there has been a continuance pattern of interaction since the inception of the novel as a distinctive form, and just as the prevalence of the Richardsonian mode in fiction coincided with the predominance of ritual comedy early in the second half of the eighteenth century, so we find a similar coincidence between the rise to dominance of the comic novel tradition on the stage and the increasing popularity of the novels themselves. The historian of Fielding's reputation, Frederic T. Blanchard, observes, "in the decade after the appearance of Murphy's edition [1762], Fielding's fortunes, then, were growing brighter; yet, as we compare his fame with that of Richardson, we realize that he had not yet succeeded in wresting the palm from that popular moralist and sentimentalist."\(^1\) Around 1775 signs of a "counter movement" in favor of Fielding appear, and the trickle becomes a torrent in the last quarter of the century. The novelist earns widespread
scholarly recognition in England and France, he inspires an increasingly large number of adaptations and imitations, and the editions of his works multiply rapidly in number. The increase in popularity of Fielding corresponds with a similar rise in the fortunes of Smollett. Fred W. Boege concludes, "the frequency and the tone of the references to Smollett in the periodicals, the statement of such an unusual authority as James Lackington, the opinions of major literary figures like Burke, Boswell, Cowper, and Burns" indicate that interest in Smollett was becoming more widespread than ever during the last quarter of the century:

As between Richardson and Smollett, Smollett seemed to be assuming a leading position among three important groups: the major authors, the literary periodicals, and the general reading public. Richardson was still the favorite with conservative and orthodox circles, with the increasing number of literary ladies, and with many minor authors; and like their leader, his disciples were usually anything but reticent. Moreover, the fortunes of Smollett, like those of Fielding, were on the upgrade, while the number of Richardson's admirers seemed to be growing fewer and fewer.

As for Sterne, Alan B. Howes has shown that within a few short years after his death, *Tristram Shandy*, the *Sentimental Journey*, and the *Sermons* enjoyed a degree of fame that would rival Richardson's own, which did not begin to decline until near the end of the century, partly because of accumulated charges of immorality.

But in spite of all the indications, in either intensity nor duration did the comic novelists ever attain
the popularity that Richardson had enjoyed earlier and still retained to a large extent in certain circles. Naturally, this fact irritates their partisans: Blanchard, for one, remarks, "Richardson was regarded with an esteem and reverence well-nigh incomprehensible." The seeming injustice of the situation notwithstanding, the fact of its existence remains as an illuminating commentary on the strength of the tradition in the drama inspired by the comic novelists. As we shall see in a moment, the comic novel tradition in stage comedy never enjoyed the widespread acceptance shown by the ritual comedy of Mrs. Griffith and Kelly, and by the time it did become the dominant mode, intervening changes in the prevailing theory of humor had made adulteration rather more the rule than the exception.

In a study that brings a new clarity to the history of comedy, whether it appears in the novel or on the stage, Stuart M. Tave has articulated the evolution of "amiable humor" during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

In Restoration theory of comedy, largely a derivative and a reduction of Renaissance theory, it was a commonplace that the function of comedy is to copy the foolish and knavish originals of the age and to expose, ridicule, satirize them. By the middle of the nineteenth century, it was a commonplace that the best comic works present amiable originals, often models of good nature, whose little peculiarities are not satirically instructive, but objects of delight and love.

Relating this change to benevolist doctrines about "good nature;" "good humor," and laughter, Professor Tave de-
scribes how the displacement of caustic wit expressed in raillery and satire by an amiable humor motivated by sympathy resulted in the creation of such unique originals as the amiable Parson Adams and Uncle Toby, while bringing an extensive elaboration in the many varieties of humor.

It is important to note that the critical period for the rise of amiable humor is the second half of the eighteenth century; by the third quarter of the century for example, the Hobbesian theory of laughter based on pride and contempt had given way to a more benign theory, based on incongruity, which was established as a convention. The middle of the century witnessed the creation of two of the most notable of the lovable and laughable humorists in Parson Adams and Uncle Toby, and "vast numbers" of similar characters appear later in the period. The theory of humor which produced much of the satire in the early novels of Smollett, and to a lesser extent in the works of Fielding, was therefore undergoing considerable modification as the century progressed, and some of these changes are reflected in the plays of Goldsmith and Sheridan. Professor Tave goes on to show how "the embrace of humor and sweet philanthropy" joined with the persistent interest in the mingled mode of tragicomedy to produce the alliance of humor and pathos exemplified by Sterne: "...the examples that did most to evoke the recognition of a species of humor that draws forth smiles and tears were in Sterne," and the first dramatist to attempt this union of sympathetic and pathetic humor was
Professor Tave does not consider the concept of ami-
ability in other than comic contexts. It has been shown,
for example, that the trait is highly praised in the
Richardsonian ritual of courtship, where it appears in
contrast to the more emotional concept of loveableness as
an objectified element in a dispassionate theory of love:
an "amiable" lady is one whose sense of complaisance will
permit the approach of an equally amiable, equally complai-
sant, suitor. In yet other contexts the trait is equated
with sexual morality: Joseph Reed makes his version of
*Tom Jones* "amiable" by stripping him of his libertinism.\(^\text{12}\)
And finally, in an ironic context, as in *The School for
Scandal*, true and false amiability are contrasted: the
purveyors of vernon and malice claim to be "amiable" while
assassinating the characters of their peers. On the whole,
however, these are no more than variant manifestations of a
semantic change whose influence on comedy can best be de-
scribed in terms of comic theory, and in this sense, Pro-
fessor Tave's work provides a reliable explanation for the
changes wrought in the works of comic novelists of an ear-
lier day when elements from these works begin to appear with
greater frequency in the later decades of the eighteenth
century, and the rise of amiable humor is one more reason
why the comic novel tradition in the drama never achieved
the fidelity to the originals that we find in the plays of
the followers of Richardson.
I

The increasing strength of the comic novel tradition in the drama first performed during the waning years of the third quarter of the century is manifested in a number of ways, some of which have already been indicated. Another sign is the tendency of dramatists in the Richardsonian tradition to hint at some disillusion with ritual comedy by turning, late in their careers, to the species of humor promulgated by Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. In his last dramatic work, a farce called *A Trip to Scotland* [1770], William Whitehead foregoes the formal garden setting of ritual comedy in favor of the picaresque or Cervantic scene of adventures on the road, which has been further developed and thoroughly anglicized by Fielding and Smollett. The general analogies of this play to similar scenes in the comic novels are many and varied. The attempt of a hero, a brash and scheming picaro, to elope with a wealthy merchant's daughter culminates in an inn in Yorkshire, where most of the action of the play takes place. A familiar gallery of types appear: the landlady, an imperious but good natured widow; her chambermaid, whom she accuses of being "a pert trollop"; a doltish stable boy, a girl addicted to novels, a female pedant, and a strolling player (II, i). The play is a light-hearted spoof of contemporary romantic love, in which it is eminently fitting that Cupid should appear in the guise of a postillion to advise caution and restraint.
Unlike Whitehead, Elizabeth Griffith never abandoned ritual comedy in favor of another kind, yet in one of her most original plays, *The School for Rakes* (1769), she turned to Fielding for the characters which could provide the comic relief in an otherwise thoroughly lachrymose setting. The heroine is the daughter of a rude, unsophisticated country squire, who speaks in a rustic dialect, and is constantly embroiled in disputes about everything from the care of horses to the rearing of his daughter with his sister, an opinionated maiden lady, who is obsessed with both politics and genealogy. They frequently exchange insults, and each accuses the other of being "headstrong, obstinate, and tempestuous" [IV, i]. Mrs. Griffith's source was recognized by her contemporaries: the *Gentleman's Magazine* comments, "...the comedy arises chiefly from the strange conduct of Harriet's aunt, an absurd Welchwoman, proud of family, fond of quality, silly, and opinionated, a shrew, and a politician; just such a character as is Mrs. Western in Tom Jones, though not a copy of it..." Though she made changes, Mrs. Griffith did not modify the character enough to satisfy the increasing demand for a humor that mingled pathos with gentle comedy: "Some of the most tender and pathetic sentiments are uttered by the young lady, in the height of her distress, to her aunt, a ridiculous character, whose replies, which on another occasion would move laughter, must on this, for that very reason, produce disgust in the tender and sensible; and wholly preclude that melting of the heart, which is so much more lux-
urious than merriment, in those whom high spirits and a 
levity of temper tender less susceptible of pity.¹⁶

The later career of Hugh Kelly exhibits a gradual move-
ment away from the high point of ritual comedy registered in 
False Delicacy. The School for Wives (1773)¹⁷ includes an 
old maid, Lady Rachel Mildew, of whom Smollett's Tabitha 
Bramble in Humphry Clinker is the prototype,¹⁸ and a lawyer 
of whom it is said, "Torrington is one of the best creatures 
existing; he's a downright Parson Adams, in good nature and 
simplicity" (I, i), and this initial judgment is borne out 
by the way the character develops in the play. In the pre-
face to his last published comedy, The Romance of an Hour 
(1774),¹⁹ Kelly admits having taken his plot from Marmontel, 
but declares that the character is "entirely my own." The 
loud and boisterous Sir Hector is a slightly modified version 
of Smollett's Commodore Hawser Trunnion. He speaks in a 
"quarter-deck dialect", and commands the operations of his 
country home as though it were a ship at sea.

Although a less capable writer of ritual comedy, Issac 
Bickerstaffe's later plays, such as The Absent Man (1768),²⁰ 
The Padlock (1768),²¹ and Doctor Last in His Chariot (1769),²² 
reveal an increasingly consistent effort to adapt native and 
foreign sources to the prevailing demand for amiable humor. 
But in these plays we are on the fringes of the comic novel 
tradition in drama, which had already achieved new and vital 
expression in the first comedy of Oliver Goldsmith.
II

It was perhaps inevitable that Goldsmith's efforts to establish himself as a man of letters should lead him into a fairly intimate personal relationship with another journeyman literatus, Tobias Smollett. In any event, shortly after his arrival in London, Goldsmith met the novelist and was soon working for him on the Critical Review, and in 1760, he was writing for another venture of Smollett's, the British Magazine. It was Smollett's habit to hold frequent dinners for members of his staff, from which it can be assumed that Goldsmith and his editor enjoyed a high degree of comradeship. On this basis it is also not unreasonable to assume that he knew Smollett's earlier novels; in any case, he certainly knew Launcelot Greaves, a novel which he gracefully complimented in the Public Ledger in 1760. Although in later years the work of the two authors carried them down different paths, they remained in contact at least through 1771, the year of Smollett's death. While there is no evidence that they were ever acquainted, Goldsmith knew the work of Sterne: he was one of the few critics to attack Tristram Shandy upon its first publication, and the violence of his feelings about the book is illustrated in this anecdote recorded by his modern biographer. During the summer of 1760, Goldsmith was frequently in attendance at meetings in the Cheshire Cheese Tavern:

On one occasion he is said to have gone to Blackwall for a dinner of whitebait and, in the course of the evening, to have
fallen into a discussion of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, of which he had a low opinion. Others present disagreed sharply with him, and eventually the discussion degenerated into a fist fight, which was jokingly reported in the press.

While Goldsmith knew Smollett well, and was acquainted with the prose fiction of Sterne, Henry Fielding seems to have had the most pervasive influence on his novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), and his first stage comedy, *The Good Natur'd Man* (1769). Besides references to the novelist in the *Citizen of the World* essays (1762) and in *An History of the World and Animated Nature* (1774), the only prose fiction appearing in the sale catalogue of his library is "Fielding's Works, 12 vol. 1766." Critics of Goldsmith have often remarked the affinities of his work with that of the novelist. Ernest A. Baker, for example, views the Vicar as "a minor masterpiece in the line of Parson Adams and Uncle Toby," and says of the novel, "[it is] "a treatise on the art of life, as Fielding declared his own novels to be. . . ; essentially it is the same intellectual realism, exhibiting the latest threads of causation, contrasting characters and opposite views of life, and reproving shortsightedness by showing into what ironical situations it leads. Like Fielding's his fiction is self-authenticated, it has the seal of general verisimilitude." More recent critics have substantiated Baker's conclusion by showing, for example, how Goldsmith's use of disguise as a device for setting forth the theme of appearance and reality places his work squarely in the tradition of Cervantes and Fielding.
But Goldsmith's affinities to Fielding extend beyond techniques of authorship to the ethical function of literature itself, and it is necessary to return to Fielding for a moment to establish the background for Goldsmith, and Sheridan. Fielding's unique interpretation of benevolist doctrines has received considerable attention lately, and as a consequence we are nearer to an adequate understanding of his ethical outlook than ever before. Martin C. Battestin's recent study makes clear that the core of Fielding's ethics is his concept of good nature, which shares some features with the common doctrine of benevolism by being expressed as an active, universal benevolence motivated by the sympathetic emotions of compassion and pity, and having as its source the natural goodness of the heart. But complete adherence to such a doctrine has its disadvantages. For one thing it produces an outlook marked by simplicity and candor, what Fielding in Tom Jones called "a kind of sympathy in honest minds, by means of which they give an easy credit to each other" and a mind marked by candor is an easy prey for those less devoted to good nature. Fully aware that the honest mind was open to imposition by the crafty and deceitful, Fielding formulated an additional principle that distinguishes his conception of good nature from the cult of sensibility:

Good-nature requires a distinguishing faculty, which is another word for judgment, and is perhaps the sole boundary between wisdom and folly; it is impossible for a fool, who hath no distinguishing faculty, to be good-natured.
Thus the element of rational control is introduced; good nature, "the energetic predisposition to charity;"\(^\text{37}\) must be guided by true wisdom, or as Fielding more commonly expresses it, by prudence. There is no need to point out here the abundant illustrations of this doctrine in the novels; it will suffice to note that a major theme of *Tom Jones* is the education of a good natured man in the ways of prudence.

Fielding's ethics are an integral part of his conception of the function of comedy. It has been pointed out that by the time of the writing of *Joseph Andrews*, the comic spirit had assumed a didactic purpose: "its theme is social mal-adjustment caused by the deviations of individuals from a norm of rational morality."\(^\text{38}\) A fixed ethical purpose led to the writing of novels structured along the lines of the formal verse satire as it was written, for example, by Pope. This form embraces two distinct thematic strands interwoven and directed toward the same end; a thesis attacking vice and folly, and an antithesis embodying a positive ethical position which serves as a normative background for the satire. In the Preface to *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding defines a thesis made up of a form of deviation called "affectation," caused by vanity and hypocrisy, which is the source of "the true Ridiculous" in society. Fully developed, these deviations become the familiar humors, traditionally the objects of indignant satire, but more and more frequently in Fielding's day, the special type of amiable humor, exemplified by Parson Adams, which inspires sympathy and good natured tolerance rather than contempt and harsh ridicule. Of course both
the old and the new treatment of humors appear in Fielding. As Professor McKillop has observed, "for drama and fiction, the tolerant and sympathetic treatment of humors offered a middle way between the hard-boiled attitude and libertinage of Restoration comedy, and uncritical submissiveness to a supposed ideal in the presentation of virtuous characters." 39

Fielding's development of an antithesis embodying a formulated ethical doctrine is most obvious in Tom Jones, where many of the characters function as part of an elaborate ethical scheme. With Tom, the good natured man lacking prudence standing at the center, the other characters are arranged accordingly: "as far as the characters are good they are actual or potential helpers of Tom's cause; as far as the characters are basically vicious or insincere they oppose or thwart Tom's cause." 40

Allworthy, the rational benevolist, is supposed to be in control, but he has remarkably bad luck in his menage—his hypocritical sister, the two Blifil brothers, the Doctor and the Captain, who quarter themselves upon him, the latter marrying Bridget and begetting Allworthy's black-hearted nephew. Moreover, to educate Tom and Blifil he engages the pedant Thwackum, representing the authority of the Church and a harsh application of the doctrine of original sin, and his colleague Square, who represents a heterodox rationalism, the application of an abstract formula of "the fitness of things." Both have "utterly discarded all natural goodness of heart" [III,iv]. Allworthy, Tom, and the heroine Sophia all have this natural goodness, and in the long run like will to like.

The attempt on Fielding's part to arrive at a moral judgment about the resulting action produces a series of oppositions: "benevolence versus envy..., candor versus a suspicious and self-regarding prudence, and spontaneity versus
formalism." This consistent emphasis on characters functioning within a concrete ethical scheme emphasizes the dichotomy between thesis and antithesis, and sets up the series of contrasts that produces much of the comedy and satire in the novel. As Mrs. Van Ghent observes, this dichotomy can be expressed in terms of appearance and reality, "form and feeling ['form' as mere outward appearance, formalism, or dogma, and 'feeling' as the inner reality] engage in constant eruptive combat, and the battlefield is strewn with a debris of ripped masks. . . ." In terms of the overall structure of the novel, "the complications of the plot, the frauds foisted on the world by social pretense and convention and by selfish evil-doors, widen the gap between appearance and reality; the characters are largely engaged in revealing or concealing the truth about Tom." In staging the search for truth amidst a world beclouded by appearances, Fielding carefully apportions the information necessary for solution of the plot by an elaborate use of the common devices of comedy, lost parentage, mistaken identity, self-deception, disguise, darkness, among others, almost all of which are used to produce "one of the richest comedies in literature," the adventures in the inn at Upton.

Many of these distinctive features of Fielding's novels reappear in the comedies of Goldsmith and Sheridan. To a greater extent than Sheridan, Goldsmith shared Fielding's conception of the role of good nature in the ethical scheme of life and literature. W. F. Gallaway has shown that in all his writings, Goldsmith praises the spontaneous generosity
and sensitive humanity of the naturally good man, while demonstrating his opposition to the cult of sensibility by refusing to accept the doctrine of natural goodness innate in all men. Like Fielding, he realized that true good nature entails a rational control of the benevolent instincts, and much of his writing reproduces a familiar theme—the necessity for prudence or common sense in a world filled with wickedness. "Goldsmith himself, the Primrose family, the Man in Black, Honeywood—all are almost ruined by trust and generosity until saved by practical sense. . . ." More recent critics have pointed out that Goldsmith himself was a type of the good natured man, and have reiterated the persistence emphasis in the Vicar of Wakefield on prudence and the theme of appearance and reality.

The doctrinal and literary allegiances to Fielding and to Smollett as well, suggested by his other writings is borne out by Goldsmith's first comedy, The Good Natur'd Man (1768). In the Preface he identified himself with the humorist tradition: "Those who know any thing of composition, are sensible, that in pursuing humour, it will sometimes lead us into the recesses of the mean; I was even tempted to look for it in the master of a spunging-house. . . ." Goldsmith was undoubtedly aware that two of the greatest humorists of the age, Fielding and Smollett, had exhibited the varieties of humor in precisely such places. Though he may have wished to utilize the scope of the novelists, he would not do so: "... in deference to the public taste, grown of late, perhaps, too delicate; the scene of the bailiffs was retrenched
in the representation. In deference also to the judgment of a few friends, who think in a particular way, the scene is here restored. The author submits it to the reader in his closet; and hopes that too much refinement will not banish humour from our's, it has already done from the French theatre."

As Fielding and Smollett had demonstrated, a scene in a spunging house was an essential part of the ethical scheme, as well as the humorous effect, in comedy. In Goldsmith's play, Sir William Honeywood serves a function analogous to the narrator in Fielding. He is the omniscient observer who controls the action while establishing its ethical framework; he adjusts the thesis and antithesis layers of the satire, and sets the comic tone of the play. In the opening scene, Sir William and the servant Jarvis discuss the character of Sir William's nephew, Honeywood, who "loves all the world;" his is a heart "where every sharper and coxcomb find an easy entrance;" "he calls his extravagance, generosity; and his trusting everybody, universal benevolence;" he has in fact too much of the wrong kind of good nature: "his good nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate, than his desire of making the deserving happy." Since his nephew obviously lacks the common sense to control his benevolence, Sir William contrives a plan to teach him prudence:

Now, my intention is to involve him in fictitious distress, before he has plunged himself into real calamity. To arrest him for that very debt, to clap an officer upon him, and then let him see which of his friends will come to his relief.
What might be called the *locus classicus* of this kind of trial of benevolence appears in Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, where the open and generous Heartfree is subjected by the author to the machinations of the villainous hero. The ultimate test comes when Heartfree is lodged in Newgate Prison as a result of Wild's plot, and he emerges a much wiser man, presumably better able to control his generous impulses by recognizing the snares into which they can lead. The generous but gullible Billy Booth in *Amelia* is repeatedly subjected to the spunging house test, and likewise emerges more prudent than before. Imprisonment for debt, in addition to its other uses in the novels of Fielding and Smollett, stands out in Fielding as a device in the ethical scheme by which good nature is tempered with common sense, and Goldsmith found the device equally useful.

Sir William Honeywood then, representing the ideal blend of good nature and prudence toward which the hero must strive, sets the action going, reappears at the end of Act III to contrive yet a further test of the heroine's love for Honeywood, and completes his role by assuring a suitable denouement. At the same time that he controls the action, Sir William defines the middle ground in the ethical pattern of the play. On one side stands Honeywood representing the facile optimism of the natural goodness school, on the other appears Croaker, whose extremely risible humor is pessimism: "A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly night shade. . ."[I, i], he defines his outlook, "Life at the greatest and best is but a froward
child, that must be humoured and coax'd a little till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over". After telling Honeywood, "Ah, my dear friend, it is a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with you," he makes up a party of pleasure to go and view a corpse.

While the antithesis layer of the play carries forward the development of ethical alternatives, further contrasts produce comedy and satire in the thesis strand. Early in the play, Jarvis describes Honeywood's case as "the antithesis of self-love; [I, i];" he is utterly devoid of affection caused by vanity. At the other extreme is the character of Lofty, Goldsmith's version of Fielding's "great man," one who pretends to liberal and charitable use of his supposedly great political power, but who actually has very little influence and is at bottom vicious and immoral. The key to his character is the often repeated "promises," which he neither can nor will fulfill. At a crucial point in the play, Sir William Honeywood remarks, "they, who pretend most to this universal benevolence, are either deceivers, or dupes" [III, i], and it is obvious that at this point Lofty is in the first category, Honeywood in the second. For a time at least, Lofty deceives all the characters, particularly Mrs. Croaker, whose own vanity is ridiculed by her attempt to ride on the great man's coattails, and further justification for the analogy of Sir William Honeywood with Fielding's narrator appears in the fact that he is the only character whom Lofty never deceives.

Fielding had said that affectation had twin sources,
of which vanity is one. The other, hypocrisy, is represented not only by Sir Lofty, but in a less subtly insidious and more humorous way by the bailiff of the spunging house and his helpers. True to form the bailiff defends his "genteel practice" and gives casual lip service to the doctrines of benevolence: With Honeywood in his power, he tells him,

_Humanity, Sir, is a jewel. Its better than gold. I love humanity. People, may say, that we, in our way, have no humanity; but I'll shew you my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children, a guinea or two would be more to him, than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't shew him any humanity myself. I must beg leave you'll do it for me._ (III, i)

The "benignant irony" of Fielding that substitutes wry laughter for indignation appears here, as it does in the punning refrain of Timothy Twitch, the catchpole, about "us that practice the law." 50

Goldsmith emulates Fielding in his satiric technique and in the objects of his ridicule, but by the time of the _Good Natur'd Man_, a new species of affectation had arisen, having its wellspring in the doctrine of natural goodness as it was interpreted by the cult of sensibility. In addition to the opposition expressed in the character of Honeywood, 51 Goldsmith parodies the Richardsonian ritual of courtship in the language and manners of the two pairs of lovers in the play. Their special kind of affectation becomes one more element in the tissue of appearances that complicates the action of the play and is finally broken through in the denouement. A fitting testimony of his allegiance to the
comic tradition of Fielding and Smollett appears in the fact that for the scene of the last act of the play, when the complications of the plot reach a peak of intensity, Goldsmith chooses an inn on the edge of town. In this setting, Honeywood finally realizes the virtues of prudence, and wins the girl of his choice.

The device of the inn as a suitable setting for comic adventures assumes a much more prominent place in Goldsmith's next and last comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*; or, *The Mistakes of a Night*. (1773). The progenitor of such scenes is, of course, *Don Quixote*, but Fielding in particular made substantial changes, primarily by elaborating and tightening the logical sequence of the actions, and by giving characters, situations, and the setting a thoroughly English flavor.

From what has already been said about Goldsmith's relation to his fellow countrymen, the novels of Fielding and Smollett would be more likely as the immediate source. In any event, the comic spirit which has so often been praised in the play cannot be fully realized without an awareness of its background, and particularly the greatest of all inn scenes, the one at Upton in *Tom Jones*. Goldsmith strives to evoke this background in a number of ways. For one thing, it is significant that the manuscript title of the play is *The Novel*, or *Mistakes of a Night*. For another, the inn itself is a fiction, a deception perpetrated by a high spirited, fun loving character, Tony Lumpkin. Early in the play, Mrs. Hardcastle remarks the "old rambling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn," and when Tony decides to dupe the
visitors from London, he succeeds by telling them the house really is an inn \( [I] \). Scholars have taxed themselves to find a source for this device of mistaking a house for an inn, but recognition of the background in prose fiction renders the search largely unnecessary, especially when we consider that Fielding had shown that a country mansion, like Booby Hall in *Joseph Andrews*, could serve equally well as the scene for such adventures. Even in the first act of the play, before the deception of the house as an inn, another analogue appears in the alehouse scene in which Tony and his country fellows drink, sing, and enjoy hearty fellowship, and where Tony himself incubates his plot. We cannot but be reminded of another famous alehouse, Tunley's in *Peregrine Pickle*, where Trunnnion and his gang gather to drink and argue, and which serves as the base for everything from weddings to boyish mischiefmaking.

The comic spirit of the play is further illuminated by an analysis of its structure. Then it is compared with *The Good Natur'd Man*, we note the recurrence of two pairs of lovers, and of the humorous character, Mr. Hardcastle, and his vain wife, but Honeywood, Lofty, and the bailiff's crew are gone, and with them goes the pronounced ethical orientation of the earlier play. The place of Sir William Honeywood as omniscient controlling agent is taken by Tony Lumpkin, an embodiment of the comic spirit whose character justifies the predominant theme of the plot—appearances are deceiving. As the stepson of Mr. Hardcastle and the son of an indulgent mother, Tony enjoys the freedom from
parental restraint characteristic of Smollett's Roderick Random and Peregrine Pickle. His gay and carefree manner are excused by his mother as a somewhat childish "humour," and damned by his stepfather as "a mere composition of tricks and mischief." (I, i) All the characters, in fact, are convinced that Tony is a type of the bumbling and dullish booby squire; at one point, they all join together to abuse his supposed ignorance, when actually his native wit and intelligence are responsible for the whole situation in which they are involved (IV). Resolving to unravel the complications himself, Tony decides to prove himself "a more good-natured fellow than you thought for. . . .," and he of course succeeds.

Besides polarizing the comic mood of the play by controlling the evolution of the plot, Tony is also the focal point of the antithesis layer of the satire. As the supposed rustic booby who outwits his more sophisticated fellows, Tony represents one side of the country-city contrast at the heart of the play. In praising the country over the city, Goldsmith had antecedents in all the comic novelists. Martin Battestin locates the ultimate source of Fielding's castigation of city life in Juvenal's Third Satire, and his exaltation of the country in Virgil's Second Georgic.56 Although Miss Røstvig does not consider the novelists in her study of the Horatian beatus ille theme in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Fielding would undoubtedly hold a firm place in this tradition, especially when such characters as Wilson in Joseph Andrews are considered.57
In any case, the thematic antithesis of city versus country recurs in all Fielding's novels and has a pronounced effect on his comedy.

As A. D. McKillop has said, "the parish and the road proved to be a better vehicle for Fielding's humor than the town, where he was too much preoccupied with the shortcomings and vices of high life." This judgment is certainly borne out by Fielding's only "town" novel, *Amelia*. Of Smollett, Professor Preston has noted that before *Humphry Clinker*, the praise of rural life implicit in the return to the country motif is invalidated by its status as "a tacked on conventional formula of the typical romantic novel." But in the last novel, the "myth of the country" becomes "a carefully wrought out structural principle." Besides serving as the referent for Matthew Bramble's satire, the country serves as the logical consummation of the satire, of Bramble's "symbolic search for happiness," and of the novel as a whole. While Sterne does not make specific use of the country-city contrast, there is a clear suggestion throughout his work that the country provides the most suitable environment for the nurture and practice of the benevolent virtues he so highly praised. From this brief survey, it is obvious that Goldsmith could have found abundant material in the novels as the background for his own development of the country-city contrast, and again the most likely source is Fielding.

The tenor of the thesis strand of the play is set by the ridicule of "the genteel thing" in the alehouse scene in Act I, an attack on the affectation of refined taste.
characteristic of modern urban society which is carried forward by Mr. Hardcastle, who laments the deleterious influence of "the fashions of the times" on his daughter, Kate: "By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze, and French frippery, as the best of them" (I). He finds a similar baneful tendency in his wife, with whom he argues vociferously but ineffectually. The satire of affected manners continues in the action involving the lovers, where the perceptive Kate serves as the link between the genteel characters and Tony Lumpkin. At the base of the satiric attack is, of course, the refinements inspired by the cult of sensibility, and specific ridicule of the cold and barren sterility characteristic of Richardsonian ritual comedy appears in an exchange between Marlow and Hardcastle in Act B.

MARLOW

Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

HARDCASTLE

Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me.

But Marlow does not, and Hardcastle finally loses patience, exclaiming in an aside, "This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing." City manners defy common sense and good nature as well.

While social sophistication is ridiculed, the unadulterated simplicity and strength of the simple country life is exalted, primarily in the character of Tony Lumpkin.
The importance of this theme in the antithesis strand of the satire is intensified by Mr. Hardcastle, whose humorous obsession with the less complicated days of yore coincides with the prevalent emphasis on native simplicity. Ultimately all the characters recognized the superiority of the rural virtues epitomized in the character of Tony, whose pure and charming good nature emerges triumphant at the end of the play.

II

From what has been said of The Good Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer, it is obvious that Goldsmith was the first competent dramatist to realize a nearly complete embodiment of the comic novel tradition on the English stage, and his accomplishment was carried forward by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, in whose hands the comedy of Fielding and Smollett achieved its most artistic and aesthetically satisfying expression in the drama. External evidence that Sheridan knew the works of the comic novelists is lacking, but some leads are provided by the reading material of Lydia Languish, the novel reading heroine of The Rivals (1775). In the list three novels by Smollett appear, Peregrine Pickle, Roderick Random, and Humphry Clinker; Sterne is represented by "the second volume of The Sentimental Journey;" but no mention is made of Fielding. Such a list suggests that Sheridan was certainly aware of the popularity of the novels,
and *The Rivals* shows that Lydia's library, with its special emphasis on Smollett, has implications for the play as a whole. Earlier scholars have expended some energies searching for sources of the play. Walter Sichel believes that the play's setting and the character of Mrs. Malaprop were drawn from the last comedy written by Sheridan's mother, *A Journey to Bath*. Miriam Gabriel and Paul Mueschke believe that the main plot was derived from Garrick's farce, *Miss in Her Teens* (1747), and that Colman's *The Deuce is in Him* (1763) supplied the Julia-Paulkland plot, but they do not mention Smollett and fail to consider that any one of the novels in Lydia's list could have supplied material for the lovers, and one not in the list certainly seems to have had an influence, Mrs. Frances Sheridan's *Sidney Bidulph* (1761).

One of the most reasonable and perceptive studies of the sources of *The Rivals* is also the most recent. Miss Sailendra Sen, in "Sheridan's Literary Debt, *The Rivals* and Humphry Clinker," is fully aware that the business of finding originals for the characters in comedy is rendered uncertain at best by the tendency of the genre to perpetuate stereotypes for each function in the structure of a play. Following Sichel, with whom she agrees on this point, she argues to have a definite course in Mrs. Tryfort of *A Journey to Bath*; "the exact verbal correspondences constitute a kind of evidence that cannot be refuted." Making "significant parallels in situation" and not characters the basis of her com-
parisons, Miss Sen suggests several analogies between *The Rivals* and *Humphry Clinker*. One is the situation of the aunt and niece involved in an affair with the same man; in this respect, the Sir Lucius O'Trigger-Lydia Languish-Mrs. Malaprop triangle in the play corresponds well with the Mr. Barton-Lydia Melford-Tabitha Bramble triangle in the novel. It is also possible that Aunt Tabitha's affair at Bath with Sir Ulic Mackilligut affected Sheridan's conception. The incident of the mock duel involving the cowardly Bob Acres (IV, V) has a parallel in the adventure of George Prankley with Tom Eastgate in *Humphry Clinker* (I, 93-8), and the deception attending the courtship of Lydia by Sir Lucius, including the proposed duel with Sir Anthony Absolute, compare with the incidents attending Jeremy's challenge to the man whom he thinks is Wilson, while the travellers are in Gloucester (II, 176-179). In addition to these parallels in situation, both Mrs. Malaprop and Tabitha Bramble exercise their distinctive and markedly similar forms of language mangling on *Hamlet*: "It does not prove anything that *Hamlet* should suffer the same fate in the hands of two middle-aged ladies; but when taken with the highly suspicious circumstances of their being several parallel situations in the two works where this is found to happen, the fact acquires significance." On this basis, some analogies other than those noted by Miss Sen should be noted. Besides the likenesses of Lydia Languish to Lydia Melford and of Mrs. Malaprop to Tabitha Bramble, as the dominant parental figure in the
play, Sir Anthony Absolute compares in function and character to the good natured misanthrope who dominates *Humphry Clinker*, Matthew Bramble. The parallel is confirmed not only by Sir Anthony's bearish but essentially good hearted nature, but also by Mrs. Malaprop's accusation, "...you are an absolute misanthropy" (III, iii), which he neither confirms nor denies. It should also be noted that Mrs. Malaprop, like Tabitha Bramble before her, ridicules the lover of her niece as a mere "stroller" (III, iii).

Noting Sheridan's repudiation of the charge of plagiarism in the Preface to the play, Miss Sen remarks,

> It is therefore worth while to remember that it somehow happens that he can there think only of the possibility of being influenced by playwrights. This is proved by the fact that the one argument he employs in self-defense is that he is "by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre."

Yet Sheridan was a member of a highly literate family, one that included a mother who was an accomplished novelist in her own right. During the years prior to the writing of his first play, the novel had supplanted the drama in artistic merit and in popular favor, and the character of Lydia Languish shows that Sheridan had a real and lively interest in the evolution of prose fiction, even on its motliest and most pedestrian level. It is only natural that a man of his talents would turn to the most vital literary form of his day, and especially to the most skilled writers of the comic
novel, Fielding and Smollett, who were already well on their way to becoming classics of the genre. At the same time, his contemporaries, both playwrights and critics, were slow to recognize the influence of the novel on the drama, and as we have seen, when they finally did, it was to blame the "whining novel" for the excessive sensibility of certain stage comedies. Since that time, scholars and critics have taken an even more rigid approach to the genres, and only rarely do scholars like Miss Sen appear, who recognize the cross currents between the novel and drama. As I have consistently argued in this study, the course of dramatic history in the later eighteenth century cannot be fully comprehended without reference to the great novels which were its primary source of inspiration. As this conclusion applies to all the plays considered thus far, so it applies equally well to what is probably the greatest stage comedy of the period, Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* (1777).

Soon after the first performance of the play on May 8, *The London Chronicle* suggested that Joseph and Charles Surface are "the Blifil and Tom Jones of the comedy," and the analogy has been noted by a long succession of scholars and critics, including the most recent historian of the period's drama, James J. Lynch. Yet in spite of the frequent repetitions, no one has ever tried to substantiate or invalidate the similarity by a careful comparative analysis of the novel and the play, and in this respect we should include the often noted likeness between the famous screen
scene in the play and the revelation of Square in the
garret of Moll Seagrim in Tom Jones. Scholars either
tacitly confirm these two analogies by casual mention, or
assume a position of unalterable opposition, a stand which
may be represented by the example of Sheridan's modern
editor, R. Crompton-Rhodes, who seems to believe that
Sheridan had something like parthenogenetic originality.
After duly noting the analogies, he cursorily dismisses the
whole matter of Fielding's influence, "it would not matter
very much if he [Sheridan] had derived the germ of his
characters from Fielding, yet it is most unlikely that any¬
thing of the sort occurred." Needless to say, nothing
is offered in support of the denial. On the positive side,
we find Hazlitt again demonstrating his critical acuity by
approaching nearer the truth in his remark that Charles and
Joseph Surface have "a smack of Tom Jones and Blifill in their
moral constitution." As a matter of fact, it can be shown
that Fielding's ethical conception of the function of comedy
underlies the whole structure of The School for Scandal.

Using a principle identical to Fielding's own, the play
evolves around the theme of the superiority of honest good
nature to the variant forms of affectation motivated by
vanity and hypocrisy. While the thesis layer of the play
carries forward the ridicule of affectation, the antithesis
layer develops a plan of rational morality, which functions
as the structural referent for the satire. If we view the
play as a whole, it is apparent that within this structural
pattern, the characters fall into two groups, one represent-
ing good nature, the other affectation, which are developed according to the way they either help or hinder the hero, Charles Surface. In character and in dramatic function, Charles quite clearly emulates his prototype, Fielding's Tom Jones. Early in the play he is derided by Lady Sneerwell as "that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, . . . the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character" (I, i). In contrast to this judgment expressed by a member of the affected group is the attitude of Sir Oliver Surface, who serves precisely the same narrator-like function as Goldsmith's Sir William Honeywood. He has an intrinsic and lasting faith in the hero's good nature, "if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance" (II, iii). His trust in Charles innate sense of benevolence, which is demonstrated repeatedly by his actions, only falters in the portrait auction scene (IV, i), and receives its ultimate justification by the emergence of Charles in triumph at the end of the play.

Like Tom Jones, and Goldsmith's Honeywood, Charles must learn to exercise rational control over his benevolent instincts, and the process by which he does so demonstrates a highly important distinction between Sheridan, his fore-runner Fielding, and the Restoration comedy of manners. It is a commonplace in dramatic criticism that Sheridan 'revitalized' the Restoration comedy of wit, but in the handling of his hero, and in other ways as well, Sheridan is much
closer to the city comedy in the novels of Fielding than to any prototype in the drama of an earlier day. One proof of this contention lies in the difference in function of the hero. Norman Holland has observed that one of the most common devices in Restoration comedy is the tendency of the rake-hero to adopt a policy of dissimulation [conscious pretense] in order to gain his ends over the opposition of characters dominated by affectation [semi-conscious pretense]. In the comedies of Fielding, Goldsmith, and Sheridan, this pattern is completely reversed. Although the quest of their heroes is often rewarded with a girl, she is precisely that, a prize, a gift for having attained the highest goal, prudence. Blessed as they are with an innate sense of benevolence, it is impossible for them to dissimulate, and in fact, we find that only the opponents of the heroes can effect this manner. Almost uniformly in the works of Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith, the hypocrites dissimulate and the creatures of vanity suffer by their affectations, and this scheme is repeated by Sheridan. Again, in *Tom Jones* for example, the apparent effort of the hero to attain his goal is less an effort of will within the character, as it is in Restoration comedy, than it is the logical consequence of a series of actions into which the hero is forced by the circumstances of his environment, or stating it in another way, by the logical consequence of circumstances manipulated in Fielding's case by the narrator, in Sheridan's by Sir Oliver Surface. Thus external forces make the hero learn
to exercise wise and judicious control over his good natured impulses. Fielding stresses that this kind of wisdom, which he calls prudence, is not an innate sense; rather, it is a trait that man must learn in order fully to realize his charitable instincts and avoid the snares of the wicked world, or, in figurative terms, it is a useful limb grafted on to the human stock. Sheridan expresses an identical conception of prudence in his play. Thus the tolerant Sir Oliver remarks of Charles, "...I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree" (II,iii). Like Fielding, Sir Oliver can realize the necessity of prudence, while deriving much pleasure from the wanton display of unleashed good nature. As the rest of the play makes clear, though prudence does in a sense 'spoil the growth,' the pitfalls of life will make it inevitably necessary.

In Charles's group on the side of good nature, in addition to Sir Oliver Surface, Maria and the gentle servant Rowley appear. In contrast to them, there are the characters who function as opposition to the fortunes of the hero. Central in this group is Joseph Surface, the man of "sentiment and hypocrisy" (I,ii), who, like Fielding's hypocrites, is finally proved to be "destitute of faith, charity, and gratitude" (V,iii). Joseph does not depend from Blifil alone, his envy, self-regarding prudence, and formalism make him the embodiment of hypocrisy as it is described by Fielding in the characters of Square and
Thwackum as well. Thus he stands in direct contrast to the candor, spontaneity, and benevolence of Charles, and a series of oppositions result which, exactly in the manner of Fielding, produces a moral judgment in favor of good nature. Joseph Surface is one of the hypocrites who thrive for a time on dissimulation; the other, less fully developed, is Lady Sneerwell's agent, Snake. Lady Sneerwell herself is the embodiment of social snobbery, an affectation that appears in her constant expression of lip service to good nature. It is important to note that in age, social position, and plot function, she is remarkably similar to Lady Bellaston in Tom Jones. She abuses the supposed libertinage of Charles, yet his robust youth makes him irresistibly attractive to her amorous nature, and the analogy of her character to that of Lady Bellaston is finally confirmed when she admits that to gain Charles, she "would sacrifice everything... (I, i). Among the scandal group itself, Sir Benjamin Backbite appears to be original, but it is impossible not to see Smollett's Cadwallader Cabtree behind Backbite's "odious uncle," Crabtree, whose misanthropy thrives in a social circle made up of snobs, climbers, scandalmongers, and would-be wits (I, i). The good natured Maria has an antitype in Mrs. Candour, who "with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree" (I, i). The whole of this group, including Joseph Surface and Snake, is united by its devotion to affectation, whether motivated by hypo-
crisy or vanity, and Sheridan repeatedly points the contrast with the good natured group.

A link between the two groups, and consequently between the contrasting levels of the satire, is provided by the characters of Sir Peter and Lady Teazle, who move from one side to the other in the parallel strands of the play's ethical scheme. The nearest thing to a humors character in the tradition of Fielding is Sir Peter Teazle, whose obsession is cocksureness, "I was never mistaken in my life. . ." ([I, ii]). His humor is responsible for much of the difficulty he experiences with his wife, yet when it is not holding sway, she remarks, "good nature becomes you" ([III, i]). And Sir Peter establishes his ethical position as an opponent of scandal when he tells Lady Sneerwell, "Ah! Madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good-nature than your ladyship is aware of." ([II, ii]). Lady Teazle is similarly on the borderline between the two groups. Her attempt at recognition in the scandal group is so successful that Mrs. Candour asks, "How can you be so ill-natured?" ([II, ii]). Lady Teazle has the characteristic trait of good nature as the concept was developed by Fielding and Goldsmith, the ability to deceive a deceiver. Yet she admits the truth of her character privately to Sir Peter, "When I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humor. . ." ([II, i]).

As one who can disguise her true nature, Lady Teazle stands at the center of the thematic opposition of appear-
ance and reality that Sheridan, like Fielding and Goldsmith before him, uses as the vehicle for his ethical purpose. At this point, it is illuminating to recall Mrs. Van Ghent's remark about Tom Jones and apply it to The School for Scandal: "form and feeling . . . engage in constant eruptive combat, and the battlefield is strewn with a debris of ripped masks . . .". If for "masks" we substitute "reputations," we have a more accurate general description of Sheridan's play, for the reality or mere appearance of reputation is at the core of the thematic contrast which produces much of the irony often cited as an example of Sheridan's "wit." The character most concerned with appearances is, logically enough, Joseph Surface, and he is the one for whom the surname has the most meaning. If we were to require a key concept in his quest for reputation, it would be connected by the word "character," which can be best understood against the background provided by Fielding. The superiority of pure and unadorned virtue had a special attraction for the novelist, and the symbol of naked virtue standing in splendid isolation from the sordid tangle of society constantly recurs in his writings. Mark Spilka has demonstrated the symbolic equation in Joseph Andrews between human nakedness on the one hand, and innocence and worth on the other: "men would love virtue if they could see her naked." For Fielding, affectations are clothes; they can be "put on," and displayed, and can then be "stripped off" by the satirist to reveal the virtue or vice under-
wealth. For the scandal group in Sheridan's play, "character" is something "put on;" it is the deceitful covering used to hide an ugly interior, and this characteristic is most fully realized in Joseph Surface. In the opening scene of the play, Lady Sneerwell establishes the pattern in expressing her opinion of the brothers, "the eldest [Joseph] possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of; the youngest, [Charles] the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character" (I, i). But she has found out the truth about Joseph and tells it, "I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious - in short, a sentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence" (I, i). True to their characters as representatives of the ethical positive, good nature, neither Lady Teazle or Sir Oliver are deceived by Joseph. She forces Joseph to exclaim, "Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rascgeries that I doubt shall be exposed at last" (II, ii). And Sir Oliver remarks of Joseph, "...he has too good a character to be an honest fellow" (II, iii). Even after exposure has finally come in the scene (IV, iii), he cannot bring himself to realize that all his efforts at dissimulation have gone for naught. Awaiting Sir Oliver, he reassures himself, "Well, at all events my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly ---..." but Sir Oliver enters, and the exposure of his real nature
is completed (V, iii).

The prime concern of the other members of the scandal group is, of course, character assassination, and endless debate about "reputation" and all its attendant complications. Sir Peter Teazle, fully aware of the hollowness of their affectations, expresses it in a figure characteristic of Fielding. He says that he must leave the group, "but I leave my character behind me" (II, ii). The character about which such a pother is made can actually be stripped off as simply as clothing, and the implication is that in any case the inner reality of virtue and good nature remaining unspoiled by the contact. The figure occurs again when Sir Oliver remarks of the modern servants, "...they have their vices, like their Birthday clothes, with the gloss on" (IV, ii). The ultimate irony arising from Sheridan's use of this device points up the helpless futility and impotence of the victims of affectation; in contrast to the positive ethical worth presented by the play, they are reduced to an endless quest for something of no more worth than a heap of dirty clothes. Even the lowly Snake is infected by the group for whom he works, but the irony of his position is humorous:

Sir Peter T. Hey! --- What the plague! --- Are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life? Snake. Ah, sir! consider,--- I live by the badness of my character; I have nothing but my infamy to depend on! and if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world. [V, iii]
The recurrent emphasis on "character" is only one part of the larger thematic contrast that is integral to the plot of the play. Soon after his arrival, Sir Oliver resolves on a familiar test, of his nephews, "to make some trial of their dispositions" [IV, ii], and to find out the differences between appearances and real nature, he resorts to disguise. In the resulting action, the structure of Act IV is of particular importance to the ethical scheme of the play. The scenes here form a triad: the first, the auction of the family pictures by Charles, constitutes the test of his character; there follows a brief scene involving Sir Oliver and the servants in which they plan the test of Joseph, which occurs in the scene immediately following (IV, iii). It is important to note that the ethical positive, good nature, embodied in the character of Charles, is proved first so that it can contribute to the essentially negative quality of Joseph's viciousness revealed in the subsequent action. If we examine the scenes individually, we find that the thematic contrast of appearance and reality is integral to both. In the auction scene, Charles's remarks about the family portraits at once justified the apparent carelessness with which he dispenses with them, and carries forward the emphasis throughout the play on the superficial shallowness of modern society. Sir Oliver [disguised as Premium] comments that the pictures make "a goodly collection," to which Charles replies,

Aye, aye, these are done in the true spirit of portrait painting; --no volentier grace and expression. Not like the works of your
modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness --- all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Besides having more substance than a mere "resemblance," true good nature is also independent of time; it is a quality that transcends both such seemingly lasting memorials as portraits, and the complexities of society as well. The sale proceeds but when the turn comes for Sir Oliver's picture to go, the ideal of good nature gives way before its perfect expression in real affection. The portrait, "as honest a looking face as any in the room," Charles refuses to part with,

No, hang it; I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've room to put it in.

Sir Oliver is convinced, and he never again doubts the innate "Generosity" of Charles. This scene then marks the climax of the antithesis strand of the plot, in which the ethical norm for the following action is finally and completely established.

At the beginning of the screen scene, [IV, iii] the degeneration of Joseph Surface is completed when he reveals his naked lust by suggesting an adulterous relation with Lady Teazle. He argues, "... your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health." This constitutes the climactic violation
of the ethical norm, and from this point onward, Charles Surface and Sir Peter "Teazle combine to systematically undermine Joseph's position until all that remains standing of the appearances he has tried so hard to maintain is their material symbol, the screen. At this point, the ethical gap between good nature and affectation expressed in the thematic contrast of reality and appearance, along with all the dramatic tensions it has aroused, gradually diminishes until only the screen remains to separate good nature from the affectation motivated by hypocrisy. In this sense, the ethical purpose is satisfied by the fact that Charles throws down the screen, and it is equally fitting [and doubly dramatic] that Joseph is at one and the same time the hypocrite revealed, and the witness of his own exposure. As Aristotle would observe, peripety and discovery coincide.

The analogy of this scene to the situation in Moll Seagrim's garret in Tom Jones is sufficiently obvious. There are, of course, significant differences: Moll is a liquorish country strumpet, Lady Teazle is a fine lady; the dilapidated rural house can hardly compare with the fine city apartment; and the person exposed in Tom Jones is the philosopher, Square, not Blifill, who is more likely the analogue of Joseph Surface. But with this last point, the superficial differences become less important than the larger scheme of which they are a part. It has already been shown that as the embodiment of hypocrisy, Joseph represents less any single character, than Square
and Thwackum, as well as Blifil. It is no accident that just prior to the falling of the screen, the development of Joseph's character has reached a point exactly analogous to that of Square in the same situation. As Mrs. Van Ghent observes, Square's pursuit of a hollow philosophy "has corrupted his instinctive nature into the narrow channel of lust."\(^8\) The curtain and the screen have the same symbolic value, and the ethical consequences of their respective falls are identical.

The technical skill made evident by the way all the elements in the play point toward this climactic moment illustrates how brilliantly Sheridan made use of the materials provided by the novel. In contrast to almost all the adapters of novels considered thus far, Sheridan made the economy of the dramatic form work for him instead of against him. By withholding information about Square's animal appetites, Fielding manipulates the falling of the curtain so that it creates an effect of utter and complete surprise. The narrative form permits him to do this while developing the essential hypocrisy of Square at odd moments. But the dramatic form does not permit narration; the characters must develop themselves through dialogue. Sheridan was fully aware of this convention, yet he achieves an effect quite as powerful as Fielding's by brilliant use of one of the most important principles of drama, concentration, which finds its most obvious illustration in Joseph. Because he represents all their affectations, he becomes a much more thorough hypocrite, more vicious, more detest-
able, than any one of Fielding's characters.

Considering The School for Scandal as a whole, one other apparent difference between Fielding and Sheridan should be accounted for. One reason the play is often identified with the Restoration comedy of manners is because it concentrates on the sophisticated social life of the city, and it lacks the humorous characters that seem to flourish in a rural setting. But once again there is greater similarity to Fielding than to earlier comedy. At this point, it is instructive to recall Professor McKillop's comment about how Fielding's absorption with the viciousness of the city diminishes the comedy and increases the satire in his writing. This effect is obvious in the third, or town, section of Tom Jones, and even more so in the least humorous novel, Amelia. Amelia does, however, include one humor in Major Bath, but the miles glorious had long since been a stereotype, and this is one reason why he produces much less comedy than any one of the earlier originals, such as Parson Adams. Sheridan then had a likely prototype for his whole conception in the city comedy of Fielding, and he also includes one humorous character in the person of Sir Peter Teazle. This last analogy merely confirms that The School for Scandal, insofar as it is taken from any source, finds its ultimate basis in the novels of Fielding. In fact, it is difficult to fully comprehend the meaning of the play without considering it against its background in prose fiction. When all the parallels are considered, it is evident that Sheridan's comedy represents the supreme em-
bodiment of the eighteenth century novel on the English stage. The example of Sheridan, and of Goldsmith as well, inspired a host of less competent imitators, who were among those who kept the comic novel tradition in a position of dominance on the stage during the remaining years of the century.

III

In the rankings in order of importance common in dramatic history, Richard Cumberland follows Sheridan and Goldsmith in the late eighteenth century, and since his prolific dramatic career extends beyond the last thirty years of the century, his work provides a useful link between the earlier and later phases of the comic novel tradition in stage comedy. Cumberland's sensitivity to the charge of plagiarism was so notorious that Sheridan immortalized him in caricature as Sir Fretful Plagiary in The Critic (1779). We can therefore attach more than the usual amount of importance to the mentions of the comic novels in his Memoirs (1807). His long allegiance to Fielding culminated in his own novel, Henry (1795), which he wrote using "...the admirable novel of Tom Jones as my pattern in point of detail." Cumberland's remarks about Tristram Shandy, "the most eccentric work of my time," illustrate not only his own majestic sense of pride, but those parts of the novel which he valued the most, and which were to appear time after time in his later plays.
As for *Tristram Shandy*, whose many plagiarisms are now detected, his vant of delicacy is unpardonable, and his tricks have too much of frivolity and buffoonery in them to pass upon the reader; but his real merit lies not only in his general conception of characters, but in the address, with which he marks them out by those minute, yet striking, touches of his pencil, that make his descriptions pictures, and his pictures life: in the pathetic he excels, as his story of Lefevre witnesses, but he seems to have mistaken his powers, and capriciously to have misapplied his genius.

The 'minute touches' were not easily transferable to the stage, but the 'pictures' were, and especially "the pathetic," which would become in time Cumberland's most historically significant contribution to the English drama. Cumberland had much less regard for Richardson than for either Fielding or Sterne. Of his own first novel, he remarks,

> I believe that *Arundel* has entertained as many readers and gained as good a character in the world as most heroes of his description, not excepting the immaculate Sir Charles Grandison, in whose company I have never found myself without being puzzled to decide, whether I am most edified by his morality or disgusted by his pendancy.

Cumberland's failure to mention Smollett is not hard to account for. Smollett had never ranked as high in popularity and critical acclaim as the other three novelists, and when Cumberland was writing his memoirs, the apex of his fame was still several decades away. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that so vain a man as Cumberland would not stoop to mention so 'low' a novelist as Smollett, even though he had used the novels in his own dramatic work.
Before turning to Cumberland's first play, something more should be said about what has already been mentioned as his most significant innovation in the comedy of the period, melodramatic pathos. By its very nature, comedy is averse to careful analysis of the emotions, and recent authorities on Fielding and Smollett, such as Alan D. McKillop and Ian Watt, repeatedly stress how truth to the feelings of men is sacrificed to a larger scheme of comedy and satire. A. B. Strauss has recently shown how Smollett's language contributes to this comic externalization in a tendency toward formulaic expression of emotional states, a pattern which communicates reactions to stimuli by means of exaggerated physical activity. Depending on the context, such a display of feeling heightened to grotesque proportions can be very comic, or equally pathetic. In any event, the line between comedy and pathos is a difficult one to draw, especially in the late eighteenth century. As the doctrines of benevolence became more and more widespread, interest in the display of pathos for its own sake increased. Stuart Tave has shown that the development of amiable humor is marked by a gradual joining together of humor and pathos, a conjuncture that attained its consummate expression in the works of Sterne. Even the indignant satire of Smollett gave way before the wave of sensibility: Matthew Bramble, the satirist in his last novel, Humphry Clinker, is a good natured misanthrope who assumes the mask of the bitter satirist to hide a heart too prone to benevolence and sensibility.
The rise of amiable humor was accompanied by another change that was to have a pronounced effect on Cumberland's conception of comedy. This was the increasing tendency of eighteenth century literature to express a moral purpose. The externalization of emotions occurs within a comic ethos that is itself controlled by didactic function, and this set of conditions encourages the presentation of conflict between polar opposites of virtue and vice, a situation especially obvious in the rogue pieces of Fielding and Smollett, Jonathan Wild and Ferdinand Count Fathom, but more or less evident in all their novels. It is reasonable to conclude that either latent or manifest in all the comic novels were all the elements that Cumberland was to fashion into what has since been known as melodrama. Scholars concerned with its origins who commonly stop with Cumberland, would do well to look beyond to the comic novels in the background, and for the pathos of the seduction plot to Richardson as well.

Cumberland's first full length comedy The Brothers (1769) contains all the elements we have been discussing, and more besides; as Thomas Davies remarks, "The Brothers is beholden to more than one English author: I will not presume to charge him with stealing foreign and contraband goods, for the world ... ." but Cumberland is not as original as he would have us believe. Among other possible sources, the plot bears some striking resemblances to Tom Jones. First, the play is set in the country, presumably
somewhere on the south coast of England. The brothers are Belfield Junior, a Tom Jones type given to impulsive, headstrong action but fundamentally good natured, and Belfield Senior, a type of Blifil, who is self-seeking, vicious, and hypocritical. The brothers compete for the hand of Sophy Dove (Sophia Western), whom Cumberland, like Fielding, holds in the background until the story is well along. Prior to her appearance in Act III, two of the other characters make a lame attempt to imitate Fielding's elaborate introduction of the heroine in Tom Jones (IV, ii). The Squire and Mrs. Western are represented by Sir Benjamin and Lady Dove. Besides altering their humors somewhat, Cumberland involves them in the hackneyed taming of the shrew plot. Sir Benjamin, like Squire Western, is dogmatically set on marrying his daughter Sophy to Belfield Senior, solely because the villain's estate "...lies so handy and contiguous to my own." (V, vii). Molly Seagrim appears as Lucy Waters to tempt the hero away from his beloved (II, vi), and the solicitor, Paterson, like Lawyer Dowling, arrives at precisely the right moment to untangle the plot (V, iii).

To this otherwise uniform reworking of the Tom Jones plot, characters, and situations, Cumberland adds several elements. For apparently no other reason than the gratuitous emotionalism they might evoke, there appears a Pamela group, a fisherman, Old Goodwin, of whom his languishing daughter, Fanny, proclaims, "...a good conscience in a coarse drugget is better than an aching heart in a silken gown" (I, i). A second addition is the foreign woman of mystery, the passion-
ate Violetta, actually the wife of Belfield Senior, who has prototypes in Smollett's "fair Monimia" (Serafina) in Ferdinand Count Fathom and in Richardson's Olivia in Grandison. Cumberland made yet a third addition which changes the appearance of the play's opening scene in a manner immediately recognized by contemporary reviewers: "The plan of this play borders upon the marvellous, and the two principal characters of it are copies of Roderic Random and his uncle captain Bowling." As we have seen, the comparison of Roderick with Belfield Junior diminishes as he becomes more like Tom Jones in the developing plot. But with the most fully realized character in the play, Captain Ironsides, the comparison holds good. Without suggesting a source, the Gentleman's Magazine voices the chorus of approval that greeted the character:

Captain Ironsides, is a rough, honest, generous old tar, who loves the smoke of tobacco and gunpowder, who distinguishes what is right by feelings that approve it, and acquires dignity and importance in drunkenness and dirt, by the nobleness of sentiment which he does not know to be noble, and acts of benevolence and liberality which he performs by the happy necessity of his nature, just as he eats when he is hungry, and drinks when he is dry.

In regard to the source of this "natural" man, the London Review says the prototype is "...Smollett's Commodore Trunnion or rather Captain Crowe," while the London Chronicle observes, "...the features of the part, in our eye, seem to indicate no more than a blunt, warm-hearted, sea-work mariner, such a one as Smollett says Capt.
Bov/ling was. . . .”94 And writing some twenty years after the play's first performance, Thomas Davies says, "... Captain Ironsides is our old friend Tom Bowling dramatically dressed, and taken from a well-known work of Dr. Smollett; and I see no harm in that; Tom had never trod the stage before, and I was glad to see him make so good a figure upon the theatrical boards."95 In this case, the consensus seems to be correct, and the confusion as to source may be attributed to the fact that Bowling, Trunnion, and Crowe share the quality of rough hewn good nature in Smollett. The analogy of Ironsides to Bowling can be confirmed, however, when we consider that Cumberland's character is younger than Trunnion or Crowe, he is still actively engaged in his profession, and after his initial appearance he scarcely figures in the action except to return near the end to insure that the denouement turns out in favor of his ward.

The somewhat indiscriminate eclecticism of source displayed in The Brothers is not so apparent in Cumberland's next and most successful play, The West Indian (1771),96 but it is apparent that Cumberland remained unable to deny the dramatic possibilities of the Tom Jones plot. The West Indian, Belcour, is another version of Fielding's hero with, as Hazlitt observes, "... an infusion of the romantic from his transatlantic origin, and an additional excuse for his extravagance in the tropical temperature of his blood."97 Belcour has the candor to admit, "... my passions are my masters; they take me where they will; and oftentimes they leave to reason and to virtue nothing but my wishes and my
sighs" [I, v]. Cumberland offsets the apparent evil tendency in such a character in a number of ways, mainly by constantly emphasizing that his hero's abounding sense of benevolence needs only the discipline that a parent and wife can provide to channel it into the streams of modest virtue, a form of guidance that is duly provided in Act V. Although for four acts of the play, Belcour appears to be a foundling, it is finally revealed that he is actually the son of the generous Stockwell, a merchant, who is in many ways Cumberland's version of Fielding's Allworthy.

Cumberland continues to stress the pathetic, especially in the character of the beleagured heroine, Louisa, and his impulse to unite humor and pathos very likely derives from a source mentioned early in the play. Captain Dudley, like Billy Booth, an indigent officer in search of preferment, converses with a bookseller:

DUDLEY.

Mr. Fulmer, I have borrow'd a book from your shop; 'tis the sixth volume of my deceased friend Tristram: he is a flattering writer to us poor soldiers; and the divine story of Le Fevre, which makes part of this book, in my opinion of it, does honour not to its author only, but to human nature.

FULMER.

He is an author I keep in the way of trade, but one I never relish'd; he is much too loose and profligate for my taste.

DUDLEY.

That's being too severe: I hold him to be a
moralist in the novlest sense; he plays indeed with the fancy, and sometimes perhaps too wanton-ly; but while he thus designedly masks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart; refines, amends it, softens it; beats down each selfish barrier from about it, and opens every sluice of pity and benevolence.

FULMER.

We of the catholic persuasion are not much bound to him. ---. . . (II, i)

Since the character of Dudley develops as the raisonneur of the play, it is likely that his praise of Tristram's appeal to the finer feelings expresses the sentiments of the author, and such a conclusion finds further confirmation in Cumberland's next play.

The heroine of The Fashionable Lover (1772) has been discussed earlier to illustrate how Cumberland's method diverged from the usual manner of drawing the Richardsonian stereotype. In one sense, the orphaned and distressed innocent, Augusta Aubrey, might be taken to represent Cumberland's effort to resurrect the pathetic heroine of the she-tragedies of Otway and Rowe. Yet it is difficult not to see the influence of Sterne, if not his character of Maria, in the inordinate amount of emphasis on her pitiable condition in this play. Another reason for seeing Sterne as the source of the pathetic impulse appears with the ghost of Lefever in an exchange between Mortimer, the good natured misanthrope, and his servant, Jarvis, (II, i).

Mor. . . . You found out the poor fellow then, the half-pay officer I met last Sunday ---
Jar. With difficulty; for he obtruded not his sorrows on the world, but in despair had crept into a corner, and, with his wretched family about him, was patiently expiring.

Mort. Py'ythee no more on't: you sav'd him; you reliev'd him; no matter how; you made a fellow creature happy, that's enough.

Jar. I did, Sir; but his story's so affect¬ing

Mort. Keep it to thyself, old man, then; why my heart be wrung? I too am one of Nature's spoilt children, and havn't yet left off the tricks of the nursery. [II, i]

Not only is a story of Sterne's imitated: the expression of deep sensibility, the affectation of a childish delight in secret benevolence, the hesitant, gasping dialogue, even the punctuation - all indicate that Cumberland was also striving to evoke the spirit of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim in a similar situation. If the play presented only passages like this one, it would be likely that Uncle Toby provided the prototype for Mortimer, were it not for the fact that Cumberland's character is also a misanthrope.

Mortimer is one of the unique types that Professor Preston calls the good natured misanthrope, who uses the mask of the satric moralist to hide a heart wholly taken up with benevolence. Now the greatest of the good natured misanthropes, Matthew Bramble, had appeared in Smollett's last novel, and for this and other reasons to be noted later, there is reason to believe that Cumberland drew upon Humphry Clinker, even though variations of the good natured misanthrope type had appeared in English drama and fiction
since the original in Sarah Fielding's *David Simple* (1744). The novel was published on June 15, 1771. On January 19 of the same year, *The West Indian* had had its first performance. This production undoubtedly took up most of Cumberland's time during the early part of the year. In June *Humphry Clinker* was published. Early in July Cumberland wrote to Garrick that a "growing comedy," *The Fashionable Lover*, was being written, and he reported the play completed on September 8. It was performed at Drury Lane on January 20 of the following year. The chronology of novel and play suggests an intriguing possibility. As we have seen, Mortimer is more a man of feeling in the vein of Sterne, than a creature with the hearty benevolence of a Matthew Bramble, and an examination of his speeches which establish the guise of the misanthropic satirist shows that they could very easily have been altered or inserted to bring about a modification in the character, which would strengthen his function in the plot, while heightening the moral effect of the whole play.

One other possible connection with Smollett should be noted. In his *Memoirs*, Cumberland repeatedly preens himself on having been the first to introduce favorable portraits of national and racial types on the English stage, such as the Irishman, Major O'Flaherty in *The West Indian* and the Scotsman Colin Macleod in *The Fashionable Lover*. This merit he can claim, but he cannot, as he implies, claim it for the whole of earlier literature. On no occasion does Fielding present national types as the objects of ridicule,
and as for Smollett, some of his greatest, most sympathetically presented characters are constructed within the frame of stereotypes long since common on the English stage: Tom Bowling is a Scotsman, and Morgan and Matthew Bramble and his family are Welsh. And when we consider the persistent emphasis on the intrinsic merit of the Scots nation in the second part of *Humphry Clinker*, it seems likely that even if Cumberland's characters had already been conceived, the publication of Smollett's novel could have provided the impulse for their completion. And on the same basis, the novel may stand behind the character of the Scotsman, O'Connor MacCormuck, in Cumberland's next play, a farce, *The Note of Hand; Or, A Trip to Newmarket* [1774].

For the next ten years, Cumberland tried his hand in tragedy and comic opera with indifferent success. In the meantime, with the death of Goldsmith and Sheridan's retirement from active playwriting, he had become the principal supporter of the comic novel tradition in stage comedy. His title to this role is confirmed by his first successful comedy of the next decade, *The Natural Son*, which, as the title suggests, marks another return to *Tom Jones* for the materials of a play. As the *Critical Review* remarks,

"The miser has been said to have picked money from his own pocket, to add to the sum in his chest; and the needy merchant continues to draw bills on his banker, as long as his former credit will support him, after his own stock is exhausted. We should be sorry to style Mr. Cumberland either a bankrupt in invention, or parsimonious of his exertions; but his present comedy so nearly resembles the others, that, 'to make a third, he joins the former two.' The plot is taken from
Tom Jones. The hero is a foundling, maintained by charity, and at last appears to be the nephew of the gentleman who had hitherto supported him, and who differs from Allworthy, only, in being acquainted with his secret; this variation is not advantageous, since the reader is at once aware of the termination, and of the means by which it is produced.

Blushenly is duly introduced as "a dependant, a foundling, destitute of every thing but what the Graces have bestowed; Nature his only parent, Charity his Nurse, and the wide world his inheritance" (I, i). Here, and throughout the part of the play that derives from Tom Jones, Cumberland uniformly deviates from Fielding by laying heavy stress on the pathos latent in the original. The plot unfolds according to the usual pattern, including the false alarm incest device (V, i), but there are some curious variations, particularly in the character of Phoebe Latimer, who serves the function of Mrs. Western in the novel. Early in the play, she develops like her prototype: she is the pedant devoted to an ideal of female learning, who argues furiously with her brother about the rearing of her niece (I, i). She resolves to break free, assert her independence, but the quarrel is soon made up. But with the beginning of Act II, her character begins to change, she becomes like Mrs. Grizzle in Peregrine Pickle, and then the very image of Tabitha Bramble in Humphry Clinker. To describe her, Cumberland even uses a favorite figurative device of Smollett's, the nautical metaphor: "...my aunt Phoebe is out of port, and has set all sails in full chace; ribbons and gauzes streaming at her top, signals of distrest virginity on its
cruise for a consort." [II, i]. Later, her brother speaks with the voice of Matthew Bramble, "...the good lady, it must be own'd, is rather on the down-hill passage toward the vale of years, and has cast the eyes of her affection on the young gentleman we just now parted with..." (III, i).

In the end, Phoebe is betrothed to a man who is akin to Lismahago in being an old bachelor and a pedant.

As to the other characters in the play, the Critical comments,

The characters are those of the West Indian, and The Fashionable Lover. Lady Paragon courts Blushenly the foundling, almost in the language of Charlotte Rusport; and he has all the coolness, from the same motives, of Young Dudley. Ruefull has the feeling heart with the harsh outside of Mortimer, and Major O'Flaherty preserves both his name and his manners.

T. R. Preston notes that Ruefull is in the tradition of good natured misanthropes for more than one reason: "Also typical of the misanthropic tradition Ruefull as a youth has been a libertine, and as a plot device this early straying from virtue enables him to be the natural father of the benevolent young Blushly [sic], just as Bramble discovers that Humphry is his natural son." 107 Thus we find one more reason why The Natural Son is less a Tom Jones play than a blend of Fielding and Smollett.

Cumberland's next comedy, The Impostors (1789), 108 is his rogue play in the tradition of Jonathan Wild and Ferdinand Count Fathom. The two impostors have all the effrontery and genius for deceit to carry off a monstrous fraud exactly in the manner of Count Fathom and his partner in villainy,
the Tyrolese Ratchcali. The play includes a Tom Bowling type in Captain George Sapient. Five years later, in 1794, The Box-Lobby Challenge was performed, and its popularity was so great that it requires seven editions before the year was out. The hero of the play is a Smollettian picaro, the son of a printer, "... rather more cunning than witty, usher to a country school, then tutor to a rich woman's booby son on tour of Europe" (I, i). What may be an allusion to Smollett himself appears when we learn that the hero published his travels in two great quarto volumes at his return, pirated from the journals of other travellers, and stuffed with drawings of temples, bridges, aqueducts, and amphitheatres, most of which he had never seen, and none of which he had ever examin'd (I, ii). In light of Cumberland's pronounced bias in favor of Shandean sensibility of the kind displayed in the Sentimental Journey, this passage may refer to Sterne's caricature of traveller Smollett as Smel fungus.

The cast of the comedy includes an Aunt Western type in Miss Diana Grampus, "a virgin in the bloom of half a hundred; vain, rich, pedantic..." (I, ii). The pair is completed by her brother, Sir Toby Grampus, an irascible country squire, a type of Squire Western. Their frequent altercations culminate in a climactic argument in which much passion is displayed, the lady threatens to assert her independence, but then all is made up. In the meantime, the picaro has continued along his brash way, exercising his skill at deceit to win the girl.
Cumberland's humanitarian purpose reasserts itself in the presentation of a benevolent Israelite in *The Jew* (1794),\(^{111}\) for which he apparently expected payment from the Jewish community in London.\(^ {112}\) In his study, *Jewish Characters in Eighteenth Century Fiction and Drama*, H. R. S. Van der Veen cites Sir Walter Scott's belief that the prototype of Cumberland's Sheva is Joshua Manessah in *Ferdinand Count Fathom*.\(^ {113}\) He traces the progress of the type through the later eighteenth century and concludes that besides Smollett, Cumberland's only possible sources were Rudolph Raspe's prose translation of Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* and "the spirit of the age."\(^ {114}\) Since it has been shown that Cumberland very likely made use of Smollett from the beginning of his dramatic career, it seems equally likely that the novel is the source of *The Jew*, especially when Sheva's character as a version of the good natured misanthrope is considered.

Cumberland's later plays in this century contain only traces of the comic novel tradition. There is a possibility that the misanthrope in *The Wheel of Fortune* (1795)\(^ {115}\) depends on Smollett. *First Love* (1795)\(^ {116}\) presents a Tom Bowling type in David Mowbray and features the usual pathetic heroine. *False Impressions* (1797)\(^ {117}\) contains some mild satire on apothecaries and presents a version of Humphry Clinker in the farmer's son, Isaac Gawdry, who announces his humble abilities in a manner almost identical to that used by his prototype in the same situation. From this point onward, Cumberland continued to write, but there is hardly a sign of the comic novel tradition in his plays. Already he had
lost the leadership in the tradition, the mantle having passed to younger, more vital dramatists, notably Frederick Reynolds, in whose works it received its last fully discernible expression.

IV

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, before Reynolds had been established in the nineties as the most popular dramatist of the day, a number of other writers of comedy and farce joined with Cumberland in keeping the comic novel tradition in a position of dominance in the theatre. One of the foremost in this group is Mrs. Hannah Cowley, whose early comedies have already appeared in this study to illustrate her early allegiance to the Richardsonian tradition. Though her first play, The Runaway [1776],\(^{118}\) is predominantly a ritual comedy, the comic relief roles indicate the direction the authoress was soon to take in exploring a familiar vein of humor. The father of the hero is an amiable, bumbling fellow, a type of the unthinking benevolent, who is easily imposed upon by others less scrupulous about charity than he is. The predominant humor in the play is a type of Squire Western, an affluent country squire, a justice of the peace and hard-drinking lover of horses and hounds, who laments in dialect the passing of stronger, heartier generations [I, ii].

Mrs. Cowley's next play, the farce Who's the Dupe? [1779],\(^{119}\) illustrates her further movement toward
realization of the humor in the comic novel tradition. The play evolves around the competition of a Smollettian picaro and a Shandean pedant for the hand of the wealthy heroine. In its allusions and humorous pomposity, the pedantic jargon is reminiscent of Sterne:

...believe me, Lady, I have more satisfaction in beholding you, than I should have in conversing with Gravius and Gronovius. I had rather possess your approbation than that of the elder Scaliger; and this apartment is more precious to me, than was the Lyceum Portico to the most zealous of the Peripatetics. (I)

The competition culminates in a test of merit by which the suitors attempt to prove their worth on the basis of their knowledges of languages. (II). The picaro is, of course, at a gross disadvantage, but his ready wit carries him through. The scene is quite similar to several similar situations in Smollett, what might be called the archetype being the test contrived by Roderick and Morgan for the exposure of Doctor Machshane in Roderick Random (II, 77-81).

In The Belle's Stratagem [1780], Mrs Cowley forgoes the comedy of humors for a combination of ritual comedy and the older, but now chastened, comedy of manners. Sterne reappears in the masquerade scene (IV, i) in which the stage direction reads, "Enter Folly on a Hobby-Horse, with Cap and Bells." The dominant humor in Which is the Man? [1782] is a variant of the good natured misanthrope, a "dear, morose, charming, quarrelsome, old friend," a satirist who apparently sees only the "dark sides of human character"
yet repeatedly demonstrates his penchant for secret benevolences. The play includes a country squire and his daughter, with whom Mrs. Cowley begins to use the country-city contrast for purposes of satire in the manner of Fielding and Smollett. The play also presents a novel-reading heroine, who justifies her actions by citing "Hoderic Random," among other novels [IV, iii]. Ultimately the country tradition asserts its superiority, and the vehicle is the familiar contrast of appearance and reality. The rural lady remarks, ". . . I prefer the internal worth of an uncorrupted heart, to the outward polish of a mind too feeble to support itself against vice, in the seductive forms of fashionable dissipation" [V, i].

For her next two comedies, A Bold Stroke for a Husband [1783] and A School for Greybeards (1786), Mrs. Cowley turned to the comedy of intrigue in a Spanish setting—the kind popularized in the previous century by Aphra Behn. The Preface suggests a reason for her temporary abandonment of the comic novel tradition. In this respect it is pertinent to note a remark made by Thomas Holcroft five years earlier, when he analyzes the problem faced by the playwright who would try to put the humor of the comic novel on the stage: "Where the humour of Smollett, which never fails to excite laughter in the closet, spoken upon the stage, it would frequently excite universal disgust." Amiable humor required an allegiance to a standard of public morality that the grotesques of the novelist could hardly fulfill. Mrs. Cowley was less concerned with moral-
ity than with the artistic problem of fidelity to human nature created by the demand of the audience for what she considered an unnatural degree of refinement. In the Preface to The School for Greybeards, she protests against those critics who would have her make "low", i.e., humors, characters speak elegant language:

This is a criterion which happily no author is subjected to, but those of the drama. The Novelist may use the boldest tints; — seizing Nature for her guide, she may dart through every rank of society, drag forth not only the accomplished, but the ignorant, the coarse, and the vulgar-rich; display them in the their strongest colours, and snatch immortality both for them, and for herself. I, on the contrary, feel encompassed with chains when I write, which check me in my happiest flights, and force me continually to reflect, not, whether this is just? but, whether this is safe?

Such a combination of artistic credo and protest could very well have been written by Fielding, Smollett, or Sterne, had they found themselves in similar circumstances. As far as the state of comedy in the last quarter of the century is concerned, the most significant thing to be noted here is that when the need arose for a defense of the art, the comic dramatists turned not, as might be expected, to the earlier tradition in stage comedy, but to what was the greatest repository of humor in the earlier eighteenth century, the comic novel. Quite evidently, the stage tradition had been supplanted by the more vital tradition of the novel.

In the Preface to A Day in Turkey (1791), Mrs. Cowley continued her protest against unreasonable critical strictures, while directing her own comic opera down the exotic
paths laid out by earlier opera and the Gothic novel. But in her last full length comedy, *The Town before You* (1795), she marks off the drama as a hopeless cause and bids defiance to the critics by a confident final assertion of the comic spirit of Fielding, Smollett, and Stetne. The play satirizes the current humanitarian impulse by showing that "poverty is sometimes the source of wickedness; and that squalid wretchedness is as capable of debasing the heart, as affluence and splendor" ([I]). The products of poverty are two picaros in the tradition of *Ferdinand Count Fathom* and Smollett's other early heroes, who capitalize on the romantic notions of the hero and heroine, only to be defeated by the shrewd good sense of the play's dominant humor, a good natured Welshman who has a passion for the antiquities of his native land. Coming at this time (1795), the play is a poignant reminder of the comic tradition soon to be dissipated in melodrama and extravaganza.

The early career of Thomas Holcroft has been referred to earlier. His first play, *Duplicity* (1781), contains a country squire whom he differentiates from the stereotype in the manner of Fielding and Smollett. Squire Turnbull is a Welshman whose father was so intent on getting money that "he bred his children in the most stupid ignorance;" the son "has commenced gentleman and squire, by virtue of the father's industry, and a pack of fox hounds." Scarcely articulate yet believing himself a shrewd fellow, "his conversation is vociferous, and patched up of proverbs, and out of the way sayings, which he strings together without
order or connection; and utters, upon all occasions, and in all companies, without respect to time, place, or person" (I). The squire's character is borne out by the rest of the play, and he becomes the only object of comedy and satire in a comedy otherwise devoted to domestic pathos. During the next ten years Holcroft finally found his true metier. The Road to Ruin (1792), met a degree of acclaim not seen since The School for Scandal: ten editions were required during the year of its first performance. In more than one way the play marks the revival of the tradition of Sheridan and Fielding. It is a city comedy that pits a battery of hypocritical sharpers against the wastrel son of a wealthy merchant. The hero is a type of Tom Jones, as that character was modified by Sheridan: "The absurd, extravagant benevolence of [the hero] . . . may be excused by the admirers of a similar unjustifiable generosity in the popular character, Charles Surface, but it can never be approved of by the cooler reader." Victimized by his undiscriminating generosity, the hero involves himself and his father, a type of Allworthy, in financial ruin. When his fortunes are at their lowest ebb, he behaves like Tom Jones to Lady Bellaston, offering to sell himself to a rich widow in order to preserve his father and the Sophia-type whom he loves. The humor, the satire, and the unusually fine dialogue in the play are Holcroft's own, yet in their way, they too contribute to the continuance of the comic novel tradition.

In his next plays, Holcroft foregoes comedy for more bitterly ironic satire; humor gives way to misanthropy.
Love's Frailties (1794), the central character is Sir Gregory Oldwort, whose "benevolence is self love; who has given us shelter only to make us slaves; at once a cynic and a sensualist, severe to others, indulgent to himself; arbitrary in principle, libidinous in practice; . . . his preaching and his practice are so opposite that he dreads detection and hates ridicule" (I, i). He is guilty of lechery and sexual hypocrisy as well (II, i). The Deserted Daughter (1795) gives the function of a dominant humors character to Mordent, a misanthrope overcome by self pity: "Earth is wholly inhabited by Harpies, and I am eternally haunted by the most malignant of them; What a den of misery is this world! (I,i) . . . the whole is a system of exquisite misery and I have my full proportion (I, iii); "universal nature is universal agony" (II, i). A similar situation appears in Knave or Not? [1798], where misanthropy is active, used for a premeditated purpose. Monrose announces, "I have travelled, know the world, and mean to profit by my knowledge. Fools and knaves are the two general classes: for the honest men are too insignificant, and too few, to form a class. Poverty and disgrace are got by keeping them company; and he that would thrive must shun them, as he would the plague" (I,i).

This last speech in particular could very well have been spoken by Smollett's satiric persona in Roderick Random. All these plays in fact mark a resurgence of the kind of indignant satire written by Swift and Smollett. Modern historians of the drama, such as Virgil Stallbaumer and Dougald MacMillian, find themselves unable to classify these plays because of their
uniqueness in an otherwise pedestrian dramatic period. Modern scholars tend to resort to modern terminology, such as "social problem drama," and suggest that Holcroft is an anomaly, a somewhat unaccountable predecessor of Robinson and Pinero. As a matter of fact, the evolution of his plays from humors to ironic comedy, which is a reversal of Smollett's development from ironic comedy to good natured misanthropy, remains logically consistent when we consider that the doctrines of benevolence were waning in their influence on writers possessed of strong talent, and social forces were combining to bring on a period of disillusionment. In such a situation, it is equally reasonable that Holcroft should turn to a tradition with which we know he was familiar: the indignant satire within the ethos of comedy as it was written by Smollett.

V

During the last quarter of the century, the comic novel tradition in drama was perpetuated by a number of lesser playwrights, two of whom are Frederick Pilon and John Dent, who assumed the mantle of Foote as writers for the summer theatre in the Haymarket. Pilon makes his own allegiance clear in the Preface and in the text of his first farce, The Invasion; or, A Trip to Brighthelmstone (1778). In reply to critics, he says,

The humour and characters of the Invasion in some places have been censured as low,
but surely the same charge holds good against the most [sic] celebrated writers. Smollett, Fielding, Gay, Cervantes, all descended to the humble walks of life in search of Humour, and never rejected her for the homeliness of her garb. It is true, that if painting low life be a fault, those distinguished wits were possessed of beauties sufficient to eclipse little spots in their reputation.

Again it is to be noticed that the tradition of prose fiction, and not the drama, is given the place of first importance. In the play, Sir John Evergreen, fearing an invasion from overseas, "intends sinking a trench round Evergreen Hall, and converting it into a garrison" (1). The patent absurdity of the situation is exploited to produce the simultaneously grotesque and hilarious humor of Smollett, and the military obsession of the central character is developed in such a way as to make him, in this respect, a type of Uncle Toby. Sir John has a servant, Drill (Trim), who suggests to him that they make field pieces out of jack boots and makes a long recital of his experiences in war, while his master patiently listens (1). The play includes a Tabitha Bramble type, and some touches of comic dialogue characteristic of Smollett: When asked, "Do you speak French, Sir?" Sir John replies, "French! no nor none of my family except my son, and him I have discarded for extravagance and disloyalty" (II).

The Liverpool Prize (1779) presents Commodore Trunnion in Captain Teneriffe, "a great sea-calf" (1), and Pipes in his servant, Midships. In the opening scene, there is the spectacle of mature men playing at war, a situation
identical with the one involving the King of Corsica in the prison episode of Ferdinand Count Fathom, and with the games of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim throughout Trinfram Shandy. When the game is over, the Captain speaks in the nautical metaphor of Smollett, and his servant replies with the diffidence of Corporal Trim:

**Ten:** Ay, Midships, the lubbers struck, just as my boys found themselves in a trim for fighting.

**Mids:** I was never so sorry for anything, in all my born days, your honour."

The play continues the burlesque tradition of Shamela by including a young woman of the town who constantly protests her "vartues."

In The Humours of an Election (1760), Pilon brings the satiric technique of Smollett to bear on political corruption. The play includes a scene out of Roderick Random, in which a Scots tutor burdened with a heavy dialect tries to teach a booby squire good English. At the core of the play is a savage attack on the corrupt hypocrisy latent in all political actions. For example, Harrowbone, a butcher, says, "I can darken any man's day-lights, at a blow, have every mob in the kingdom at my command — — but all in the way of trade, and for the good of old England; for I hate bribery, d'ye see me, and undue influence" (I, iii). But he promptly and calmly sells his franchise to the highest bidder. Later in the play, an incident involving a jackass loaded with apples is strongly reminiscent of the episode in Peregrine Pickle,
where Pallet rides through the halls of a darkened inn on a jackass, hung with bells. In a similar way, the hero of *Aerostation* (1784) cannot but remind us of Roderick Random upon his first arrival in London. His brother recalls, "I shall never forget the figure he cut the first time I saw him, with his broad accent, his long Scotch face, and such a red head, that you might have lit a candle at his pole." [I, i]. Again the satire in this play is reminiscent of Smollett, but there are no other specific details.

Pilon's last play, *He Would be a Soldier* (1786), is more carefully constructed than the others around a brief version of Fielding's foundling plot. The humors include Sir Charles; "...the best of him is, the talent he possesses for discovering the ridiculous, wherever it is to be found" [I]; and Sir Oliver Oldstock; who embodies the spirit of contradiction: "...since I can remember, I always delighted to be of a different opinion from other people; there's something wonderfully flattering to human pride in being singular" [II, i]. After Pilon's retirement from active playwrighting, the comic novel tradition was carried on by John Dent, who had already established his debt to Fielding as a critic of lawyers and the legal system in *The Candidate* (1782), *Too Civil by Half* (1782), *The Receipt Tax* (1783), and *The Lawyers' Panic* (1785). As the title implies, his last play, *The Telegraph* (1795), tries to turn contemporary events into the materials of farce.

The comic novel tradition appears even in plays otherwise wholly dependent on foreign sources. Commenting in
1775 on the "highly finished originals" among Smollett's characters, The Westminster Magazine concluded that the best of all is Tom Bowling: "This is indeed Nature itself; original, unique, and sui generis." Either Bowling or Trunnion could serve as the prototype for the best dramatic version of a Smollettian sailor to appear during the period, Commodore Capstern, the deus ex machina in the only comedy by Dr. Thomas Francklin, who has achieved some fame as a writer of tragedies. This is the last play of the Doctor's career, and it would appear that he had been meditating the character for some time. The plot and all the characters save one are taken from Destouches's comedy, L'Amour use. The exception is the Commodore, an amiable humor in the tradition of Parson Adams, Tom Bowling, and Uncle Toby. His appearance and manners draw the ridicule of one of the servants: "sea-monster" with his "force-castle jests;" "...throw out some tub to the old whale." But once she learns his true character, she exclaims, "he's such a good creature. Why do you know he gave me half a crown?" Another agrees, "he is the best creature in the world." [I, i]. On the surface, the Commodore is loud, brash, and imperious, but his real nature contradicts superficial appearances. He believes, "The pleasure of riches is to be able, to give to those that deserves 'em, and the more shiners one has, the more pleasure there is in deepening 'em; that's my maxim." After making the young lovers independent for life, he says, "...the greatest pleasure an honest man can enjoy aboard of this world, is to contribute to the happiness of the whole crew" [II].
The Commodore is Trunnion stripped of his more outlandish oddities and rude physical appearance, and to compensate for the loss, Francklin makes more good natured, more perceptive, and certainly more benevolent that the original.

Francklin altered his French source by adding a uniquely English character, whose presence dominates the comic mood of the play. A similar effect is wrought in The Disbanded Officer (1786), a free adaptation of Lessing's Minna von Barnhelm, order das Soldatengluck [1763] by James Johnstone. The Critical Review tries to distinguish the distinctly English from the German elements in the play:

The play is greatly enlivened by the surly affection and rugged honesty of [the hero's] servant Rohf, who resembles, in some measure, Pipes in Peregrine Pickle, though without the peculiarities of the seaman: it is relieved, by the selfish cunning of the landlord, and the sincere affection of his serjeant-major Warmans. We can find no resemblance between this character, and any of the personages in Tristram Shandy, which we suspect the English author hints at in his preface. Warmans possesses the benevolence of uncle Toby; but it is not that general, that unlimited affection which distinguishes captain Shandy; nor does his behaviour display the respectful distance, yet the eager fondness of the corporal. He is inferior perhaps to both, but the character is admirably drawn.

Excepting only the comedies of Goldsmith and Sheridan, a similar judgment of inferiority to the originals could be made about most of the plays in the comic novel tradition;
like the followers of Richardson, those who wrote in the
wake of the comic novelists faced an almost insuperable
task in trying to duplicate the artistic accomplishments
of their masters.

VI

The comic novel tradition in drama received its last
substantial and fully discernible expression in the com-
edies of Frederick Reynolds, whose loyalty to the tradi-
tion is definitively established outside his plays by the
Life and Times... written after his retirement from the
theatre and published in 1826. Reynolds describes his
own birth "in the words of Tristram Shandy," and Sterne
is a ubiquitous element in the part of the memoir describ-
ing the early life of the dramatist: he quotes the novelist
repeatedly, and in relating his travels on the continent
tries to imitate the style of the Sentimental Journey: he
meets a Frenchman, "I was full of Sterne, and this was
Sterne's Dessein. I desired eagerly to converse with him,
about the former, but knew not how to commence." He
carries the identification with Sterne as far as possible,
even to naming his French valet, La Fleur; "thus, affording
me the opportunity of fancying myself, either a Sterne, or
a Glorieux." But Sterne did not completely dominate his
thoughts. Faced with an awkward situation in the apartment
of a beautiful woman, he playfully invokes a triad of deities:
Observing my confusion, and evidently imagin¬
ing it to proceed from my ignorance of the
language, with a vivacious expression in the
eye, and an impatience in the manner, which
I partly mistook, she pointed to my watch-
chain, and --oh, STERNÈ! -- FIELDING --
SMOLLETT! --had I lived in those envied
latitudinarian days, when ye were allowed,
freely to indulge your gay and sportive
fancies, I might, though with far humbler
powers, have attempted to proceed from
this facetious, innocent equivoke; but
as it is, I stop -- merely adding that I
blushed and stole out of the room. . . 152

But in his memoirs, as in his dramatic career, his allegi-
ance to Fielding and Smollett increases as time goes on.
Having difficulty with some severe critics in 1801, he says,
"Oh, ho, thought I, with Fielding when, on a first night,
he heard one of his scenes hissed, "they have found me out,
have they."\(^{153}\) His persistent and regrettable obsession
with money continues to the very end of his autobiography,
where he includes a lengthy statement of his dramatic in-
come in hopes someone will recognize his poverty and be-
queath him a legacy. In other respects, however, his ten-
dency in maturity to forego the youthful extravagances of
Sterne for what he apparently regarded as the more enduring
worth of Fielding is confirmed when he closes his account
with a farewell from Tom Jones: "And here, gentle reader,
'in the words of Fielding, 'we are arrived at the last stage
of our long journey. . ."\(^{154}\)

Reynolds began his dramatic career by writing tragedies,
making \textit{Werter} [1785]\(^{155}\) from Goethe's novel and \textit{Eloisa} [1786]\(^{156}\)
from Rousseau's. But since the total profits from his career
in tragedy amounted to only eight pounds, he resolved to try
his hand at comedy.\textsuperscript{157} It should be noted here that Reynolds was one of the first professional writers of full length plays, professional in the sense that the theatre was the primary source of his livelihood. Since he was "compelled by necessity yearly to produce one comedy," it was inevitable that he should turn to the greatest and most successful fountainhead of contemporary comedy, the comic novels of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, which he had known since youth. He used them successfully for over a decade, and when the critical tide began to turn against him, he could justifiably retort that his comedies were "not stolen from the French but founded on English character."\textsuperscript{158}

His first comedy, \textit{The Dramatist; Or, Stop Him Who Can!} [1789],\textsuperscript{159} represents a combination of elements from stage comedy and the comic novel. The plot evolves around the efforts of a libertine to seduce a novel-reading heroine, and the arrangement of characters reveals an attempt to ridiculing the affectation resulting from vanity and hypocrisy characteristic of Fielding. A hypocritical lady of fine sentiments is contrasted with the vain libertine, who is affected with a grand sense of fashion. The ghost of the Squire and Mrs. Western appears in the contrast of the fine lady of sentiment devoted to the mancipation of women with her brother, a sour old misogynist. The contrast continues in the two dominant humors of the play: one, with violent prejudices, who hates authors and actors; the other, the hero, who is obsessed with the drama. The latter is a Smollettian picaro of sorts whose humor turns out to be corrigible, for he wins the heroine and reforms in the end,
largely because of a windfall in the funds.

For his next play, Better Late Than Never (1790), Reynolds collaborated with Miles Peter Andrews. The comedy is more or less a hodgepodge, but the central situation, whoever wrote it, is pretty certainly taken from Smollett, in particular from the plot of Peregrine and Crabtree to expose the follies of society by having Crabtree pose as a magician. The pattern of the novel is varied in the comedy by the fact that the central figure in the fraud is a pretentious, but incompetent, painter, closely akin to Pallet in Peregrine Pickle. True to the novel, the setting for the fraud is arranged in an old house, "at the top of a steep staircase" (III, ii). In the comedy, the painter is addressed as "little Pallet" (III, ii). The plot succeeds, and later the potential seducer is foiled, upon which the novel-reading maid, Diary, comments, "he is now quite stripp'd as bare as Parson Adams himself" (IV, ii). Earlier, she has listed "Roderic Random" among a group of "eminent historians" (I, i).

In Reynolds' next original play, How to Grow Rich (1793), a modification of Fielding's ethical scheme for the comedy of humors emerges in fully developed form. The plan of the play is suggested by the title: a number of characters are introduced whose ethical function is to point the contrast between their way and the ideal way of acquiring wealth. Miss Dazzle strives to make her way by gaming; her brother thrives on influence peddling; together they conspire to prey on the credulity of others. A third character, Pave, a young man of good family, has spent a fortune
seeking preferment in government, and is now a dependent of Dazzle's. In Dazzle's employ is the hypocritical lawyer, Latitat, who always likes "to do the thing genteely;" his method of growing rich is never to pay what he borrows. His accomplice in various schemes is a "genteel" bailiff. Taken all together, these characters form what might be called the "city" group; as types they are all commonplace, but the method by which they are drawn is the method of the city comedy of Fielding and Smollett. The analogy becomes much stronger with the country characters, the leader of whom is Sir Thomas Roundhead. He is nearest in type to Squire Western in his more heartless moments, but in other ways he can find a counterpart among any one of a number of rapacious squires in Fielding and Smollett. Again the way in which he is presented is important.

The central incident in the play has its nearest analogue in Tom Jones. Sir Thomas, as country justice of the peace, is cruel, heartless and indifferent to real suffering, and the loss of a hare from his manor throws him into a violent rage [III, i]. When Hippy, the Miller's son and a type of Humphry Clinker, is found with the hare, the justice declares he will hang him for poaching. Serving the function of Sophia in this situation is Rosa, the Squire's god-daughter, who enters immediately after the discovery of Hippy to report that she has slain a great quantity of game, and will kill the rest next day. Torn between love, duty, and monstrous
selfishness, the Squire sends Hippy off to jail anyway, and
punishes Rosa by sending her back to her father, not be-
cause of her poaching, but because she has failed to make
a marriage that would benefit his estate. The portrait of
hypocrisy and self-interest is not so severe and unilateral
as it would be in Fielding and Smollett—both Hippy and
Rosa are at least partly guilty—but the inconsistent and
contradictory nature of the Squire's sense of justice re-
 mains the prime object of the satire. The Squire is gulled
by the appearance of Dazzle into calling a fraudulent elec-
tion, which is duly staged in Act V so as to provide a medium
for satire of corrupt election practices. Needless to say,
the plot is defeated.

The characters move in and out of the usual seduction
plot, in which Warford is the grave, benevolent hero. He
represents the ethical ideal by advocating that the best
way to grow rich is by "prudence and economy" (IV, i).

The country-city contrast exists in this play, but
it is not a major element in the satire. The emphasis
changes in Reynolds's next comedy, The Rage (1795),162
the plot of which is unique because it marks the first
attempt by Reynolds to duplicate the episodic quality of
the picaresque: the first two acts are set in the country
and in a manor house; the third moves the scene to a resort
town, probably Bath; the fourth sees much rapid movement in
the town and around the countryside; and the fifth features
a tavern and a garden. The major source of inspiration for
the play is Fielding's Amelia, though Smollett's influence
may be seen in the movement of the play and in other ways as well. The type of Billy Booth is Darnley, who has sold his army commission, married Maria and settled in a country cottage, where he praises the peace and solitude. Maria had only a small portion and now, after three years of rural bliss, Darnley must get his commission back so that he may attain independence for himself and his growing family. His desires are blocked by Sir Paul Perpetual, his uncle, who holds the keys to fortune and has abandoned Darnley since the selling of the commission. Into this scene is introduced Sir George Gauntlet, a rakish soldier and old friend of Darnley's, who a compound of traits from Smollett's Godfrey Gauntlet in *Peregrine Pickle*, and Fielding's Major Bath and Colonel James in *Amelia*. He conspires to seduce his friend's virtuous wife. Clara Sedley, whose prototype has the same name in *Amelia* says of Sir George, "What a coxcomb it is! - and if he wasn't a duellist into the bargain, I'd tell Mr. Darnley all my suspicious, ... but he's so fond of fighting, that I heard him say he once sent a man a challenge for wafering a letter instead of sealing it" (I, i). As a seducer, George compares with Colonel James; as a duellist with Major Bath. Reynolds tendency to melodramatize appears in Clara's remark of George, "he has stole into our cottage like the Arcg-fiend into paradise. . . .(I)."

In the following scenes, Reynolds introduces the city group, which includes the boorish and cruel absentee landlord, Savage, and his sister, "one of the modern breed of fine-ladies, who, instead of being feminine and tender, have
Rage for confidence and boldness - Look at her dress - she's more like a man than a woman, and her language is as masculine as her manners" (I, ii). Like the railing persona in Smollett's early novels, Reynolds's anger forces him to make his grotesque homosexual. Together with her brother, Lady Savage represents the impudence, callousness, and foppery of the beau monde, and Gauntlet serves to link them with the virtuous country group.

In Act II the Darnley's are enticed to the manor house of the city group, who aid Gauntlets in his attempt to seduce Maria. Here we see Reynolds's not wholly unsuccessful attempt to emulate the fine points of characterization in Fielding. When Gauntlet tempts him with Lady Savage in order to get him out of the way, the confused, indecisive Darnley replies, "...I love my wife - I do - I tenderly love her - and I chuse to play the fool, let me express my self, but not wound her for heaven's sake!" (II, i), so concerned for his wife's virtue, he emulates Billy Booth in failing to take care of his own, and almost falls into the trap set for him. But also like Billy Booth, he has little reason to fear for his wife, for she has the power of exceptional virtue which can pierce through appearances to the evil underneath. When Gauntlet attempts to seduce her by telling of her husband's supposed infidelity, she rebuffs him, saying, "my constancy and honor shall be so exemplary that I will shame him from his follies! make him repent: and when reclaim'd, he proud to say he is my own again" (II, ii). Her philosophy of life strikes the median of Amelia's own,
"I have now pass'd hours in the humble and exalted scenes of life, and I find that good breeding is confin'd to no rank or situation! It consists in good sense, and good humour, and I believe we may see as large a share of it under the roof of the cottage, as in the splendid mansions of the great" (II, ii).

Having exhausted the satiric possibilities of one group of city types, Reynolds introduces another in Act III in the person of Flush, who conducts all kinds of nefarious operations under the guise of honest trade, and has now turned man of fashion. Reynolds describes him in phrase that echoes Matthew Bramble, "...he, who formerly could scarcely get necessaries, is now not satisfied with luxuries."

Flush has an apprentice Gingham, whom he describes as "crust, ingenuous, candid, in disposition; he learnt it in the country, the dog would speak the truth, and his simplicity so injuri'd our trade, that I threatened to turn him out of doors. " (III, i). As in Humphry Clinker, the country emerges as the structural referent for the satire; the virtues it symbolizes establish the ethical norm of the play. But as is increasingly the case in Reynolds, the truth of the satire is reduced because of the exaggerated emphasis on virtue in the country. Gingham becomes the embodiment of a benevolent goodness so powerful that the most hardened misers become spendthrifts before it (V, ii). Needless to say, the character embodying the rural ideal wins out in the end.

The Raga was performed in December, 1794. In the interim Reynolds had performed another collaborative effort with Miles
Peter Andrews, this time using Ann Radcliffe's Gothic novel, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, for the materials. *The Mysteries of the Castle; a Dramatic Tale*, a species of drama that John Genest calls "a strange jumble of Tragedy, Comedy and Opera," was performed on January 31, 1795, and Bertrand Evans has shown that over the years, it proved to be the most popular stage adaptation of a Gothic novel. The process of redacting a Gothic story must have had a pronounced effect on Reynolds, for his plays from this point onward show that the influence of the newer, more sensational and popular form of prose fiction partly supplants the comic novel tradition in his plays. On November 7, 1795, *Speculation* was performed, and throughout most of the play, the heroine, who has been defrauded of her fortune by the speculator, is confined in a remote part of the country house, and it is rumored that the abuse has driven her insane. The persistent emphasis on the thematic contrast of appearance and reality appears in the play's predominant humor, a nabob, who judges every thing and every person solely on the basis of outward appearances. But his turns out to be a corrigible humor, most of the satire in the piece, such as it is, being directed toward the villain and his accomplices.

The plot of *The Will* (1797) is constructed around a familiar device of the Gothic novel and drama: the principal character has a mysterious past involving a lost will and unknown parents and much of the play involves the quest for the truth of the past. Traces of *Tom Jones* appear in the character of the careless but good natured hero, who nearly
loses the love of the heroine over a supposed affair with
the gamekeeper's daughter, whose father has been accused
of poaching. Most of the action takes place in the country-
side surrounding a great rambling castle, and the climactic
revelation of the plot secret occurs in "an old Gothic Chamber"
(V, iii).

In *Cheap Living* (1797) Reynolds returns to the city-
country contrast for comedy and mild satire. The plot turns
on the efforts of a dissipated couple from town to convince
their rich and benevolent but prudent rural uncle that they
can live simply. The tendency to concentrate on one humorous
character reappears in Spunge, who exemplifies the title of
the play as accomplished free-loader. Consistently now,
Reynolds makes the setting of his plays the country, and
when he wants to ridicule modern society, he brings repre-
sentative types into an alien environment, and makes good
use of the spotlighting effect that isolation produces.

Reynolds casts aside the trappings of Gothicism in his
next, and one of his best plays, *Laugh When You Can* (1798). The comedy in the first three acts is in the best tradition
of Fielding and Smollett. The motto of the title page states
the direction of the satire, "Sentiment is a simple common
place business, but cutting a Joke is the most serious under-
taking this side of the grave." In the first act appears
Miss Gloomly, "the first of sentimental writers," who says,
all my works are calculated to excite sights, and tears, and
terror, and distress - in short, to make people unhappy -
and I hold laughter to be of so low and immoral a tendency,
that in the thirty-six volumes I have published I defy you to produce a single joke." She believes that "real fine writing" is that which makes one most unhappy. In contrast to Miss Gloomly is Mr. Gossamer, the antithesis of the "serious melancholy swain," who is a devotee of laughter and a practical joker in the tradition of Peregrine Pickle. He remarks, "Sentiment! psha! - where one rascal is preach'd or lectur'd cut of his vices, thousands are laugh'd and ridicul'd out of them: and because I'm cheerful, don't fancy I want feeling? - no; I've as much sensibility as graver men; but the world is full enough of misery, and rather than add to it, I often dress sorrow in smiles I promise you" [I]. His is the philosophy of the amiable humorist.

The ease with which the nature of these humors can be extracted from the play illustrates a serious deficiency in the method of Reynolds. Following the practice of Smollett, he describes the humor, then illustrates it in action, but as the novelist was well aware, it is difficult to keep up the comedy of a humor over a long period, especially if it inclines to caricature. Thus we find in this play that Reynolds is forced to shunt the humors aside after three acts, and introduces a modification of the Lefever story in which a frail, pathetic child saves his debt-ridden father from suicide (V, i). Humor gives way not to sensibility but to gratuitous emotionalism. The play retains its historical interest, however, for the way it illustrates the need for another defense of laughing comedy some quarter of a century after Goldsmith and Sheridan.
The later plays of Reynolds continue to show traces of the influence of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, but the comic novel tradition never again achieves the coherence of expression it enjoyed before *The Mysteries of the Castle*. Reynolds apparently found the standard Gothic plot an easy one to duplicate.

*Management* (1799)\(^1\) contains a Smollettian picaro with a devoted comic servant named Worry. *Life* (1800)\(^2\) presents some emphasis on the country-city contrast, but its predominant tendency can be illustrated by such scenes as the "Outside of a Cottage, standing in a romantic Vale, surrounded by Mountains" (IV, ii). *Folly as it Flies* (1801)\(^3\) presents a type of Matthew Bramble's friend, Baynard, in *Humphry Clinker*, one whose affection for his wife blinds him to her follies until the course of her ways nearly ruins him. The predominant humor is also Smollettian. Shenkin, a Welsh pedant, the son of a schoolmaster, opens a school in London to teach English to Englishmen. The school fails, and he concludes, "I do find there is great difference between English-English and Welch-English" (I, i). There is also some lively satire at the expense of the quack doctor, Infallible. *Delays and Blunders* (1803)\(^4\) features a type of Lefever in the "poor half-pay lieutenant" in great distress. In this year Reynolds discovered that other kinds of theatrical fare could be more profitable than legitimate comedy. He had great success with a play that featured the rescue of a drowning child from a real pool of water by a live dog. The later comedies, *The Blind Bargain* (1804),\(^5\)
The Delinquent (1805), and Begone Dull Care (1808), hardly a sign of the comic novel tradition that Reynolds had used with such great popular success earlier in his career. The School for Scandal represents the high point of the tradition; The Rage marks a second but lower crest of the wave; and after that the impulse is dissipated among the thorny shoals, immaculate white beaches, and gloomy abandoned lighthouses of melodrama.
NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

1. Fielding the Novelist, 186.
2. Ibid., 188-236.
3. Ibid., 237-66.
4. Ibid., 268-9.
7. Fielding the Novelist, 271.
8. Amiable Humorist, viii.
9. Ibid., 74.
10. Ibid., 146.
11. Ibid., 222.
12. The claim in the Preface for an "amiable," i.e., sexless, hero in the comic opera of Tom Jones is borne out by the play.
13. [London, 1770].
14. [London, 1769].
15. XXXIX [1769], 199.
17. [London, 1774].
18. The novel was published in London on June 15, 1771 (Knapp, 295).
19. [London, 1774].
20. [London, 1768].
21. [London, 1768].
22. [London, 1770].
23. Ralph M. Wardle, Oliver Goldsmith (Lawrence, Kan., 1957), 77-112.
24 Ibid.
27 Cross, Sterne, 233-4.
28 Wardle, 121.
29 (New York, 1957).
30 (London, 1768).
35 Professor McKillop points out the importance of candor in Tom Jones, Early Masters, 122.
36 The Champion, March 27, 1740, cited by Battestin, 74.
37 The definition is Battestin's 78.
38 McKillop, Early Masters, 102.
39 Ibid., 104.
40 Ibid., 126.
41 Ibid., 121-2.
42 Ibid., 131.
43 English Novel, 68.
44 McKillop, Early Masters, 126.


49 Dahl, "Disguise."

50 The phrase "benignant irony" belongs to Miss Tompkins, Popular Novel, 47.

51 The satire directed toward the cult of sensibility has been analyzed by Robert B. Heilman, "The Sentimentalism of Goldsmith's Good-Natured Man," Studies for W. A. Read, ed., N. M. Coffee and T. A. Kirby (Baton Rouge, 1940), 237-53. Heilman distorts the meaning of the play by writing an argument heavily biased in favor of its own thesis.

52 (London, 1773).

53 On the inn as a device in Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones, see McKillop, Early Masters, 114, 124.

54 MS. Larpent 13 M. (1773).

55 Gertrude Van A. Ingalls, "Some Sources of Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer," PMLA, XLIV (1929), 565-9, cites The Spectator, No. 289, as a possible source but admits that it is remote. She concludes that Forster's anecdote of an experience in Goldsmith's youth is a more likely source. Mark Schorer, in "She Stoops to Conquer: a Parallel," MLN, XLVIII (1933), 91-4, suggests Susannah Centlivre's play, The Man's Bewitched (1709);"however, since there is no evidence that Goldsmith was even acquainted with Miss. Centlivre's work, the similarity in the two plays can only be considered remarkable coincidence" (p. 94).

56 Battestin, 46.


58 Early Masters, 112.

59 Good Natured Misanthrope, 153.

60 Ibid., 154-7.
I have found no mention of any connection in contemporary sources, and in their presentations of his background and education, none of Sheridan's biographers mention the comic novelists. These include the most scholarly modern accounts, Walter Sichel, *Sheridan* (London, 1909), and Richard Crompton-Rhodes, *Harlequin Sheridan* (London, 1931).

Since period editions contain almost uniformly unreliable texts, I have used modern editions exclusively in this study, although some comparisons have been made with eighteenth century printings. In his edition of *The Rivals* (Oxford, 1935), Richard L. Purdy prints the Larpent MS. and 1775 texts in parallel columns. The definitive modern edition for all the plays is *Plays and Poems*, ed. R. Crompton-Rhodes (Oxford, 1928).

Sheridan, I, 491. The text of Mrs. Sheridan's play was printed for the first time by W. Fraser Rae in *Sheridan's Plays* (London, 1902).

"Two Contemporary Sources of Sheridan's The Rivals," *PMLA*, XLIII (1928), 237-50.

MLQ, XXI (1960), 291-300.


The quoted phrase is Goldsmith's, *She Stoops to Conquer* (V,ii).


*Box, Pit, and Gallery*, 218.

I have been unable to uncover who originally noted this likeness. It was obviously made before Walter Sichel wrote *Sheridan* in 1907. Sichel does not believe the comparison is valid, II, 175.

*Plays and Poems*. II, 10.

*Works*, VI, 165. (italics mine)


Cited above, n. 43.

Spilka, "Resolution," 14-6.

(Italics mine).

*English Novel*, 70.


*Amiable Humorist*, 187.


(London, 1770).

*Life of Garrick*, II, 291.

*Critical Review*, XXVIII (1769), 443.

XXXIX (1769), 596.


January 16, 1770, cited *ibid.*, 56.
See his stuffy expression of vexation with the Jews for not responding to his charitable presentation of one of them in the Memoirs, I, 199.
(London, 1783, 1786).


(London, 1791).

(London, 1796).

(London, 1781).

(London, 1792).

Nicoll, III, 271.

*Critical Review*, S.2 IV (1792), 327.

(London, 1794).

(London, 1795).

(London, 1798).


The phrase is MacMillan's, *ibid.*, 333.

(London, 1778).

(London, 1779).

(London, 1780).

(London, 1784).

(London, 1786).

(London, 1782).

(Dublin, 1783).

(London, 1783).

(London, 1785).

(London, 1795).


(London, 1786).

LXII (1786), 294.
The Life and Times of Frederick Reynolds. Written by Himself (London, 1826).

Ibid., I, 6-7.

Ibid., I, 180.

Ibid., I, 231.

Ibid., I, 207.

Ibid., II, 333.

Ibid., II, 422.

Larpent MS. 29 M. (1785).

Larpent MS. 41 M. (1786).

Life and Times, I. 324.

Ibid., II, 333.

(London, 1789).

(London, 1790).

(London, 1793).

(London, 1795).

(London, 1795).

Some Account of The English Stage (Bath, 1832) VI, 204.

Gothic Drama from Walpole to Shelley (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1947), 110-5.

(London, 1796).

(London, 1797).

(London, 1798).

(London, 1799).

(London, 1799).


Ibid., II, 287-353.

(London, 1803).

(London, 1805).

Modern Theatre, I, 75-142.

(London, 1808).
Chapter VI. CONCLUSIONS

The transformation of novels into plays and films has become so commonplace a practice during the twentieth century that even schoolboys can decide with \textit{elan} that the movie was better or worse than the book. But schoolboys, their parents, and even some literary critics who should know better, tend to be notoriously shortsighted when it comes to judging those modes of expression that in their best moments aspire to the condition of art. In this case, the fundamental appeal of drama to the sense of perception and of the novel to the power of conception has brought into existence literary forms which in their totality are incompatible; an aesthetically satisfying translation from one form into the other can only result if the writer carefully modifies his materials according to the requirements of the genre in which he has chosen to work. These conclusions about the critical problem posed by the inter-genre movements of the novel and drama are equally valid for James Dance's original stage version of \textit{Pamela} in 1741 and for the most recent movie based on a Faulkner novel.

The critical issue thus stated is essentially timeless, but when considered historically during the period in
which it first arose to prominence, it provides a broader, more truly definitive insight into the evolution of later eighteenth century drama than we have ever before possessed, and when this drama is considered in the light of the great novels that preceded it, a pattern of development emerges that transcends the question of mere influence alone: Richardson and the comic novelists contributed to the formation of dramatic traditions that controlled and determined the content of all that was new and vital in the genre almost to the end of the century. Historians of the drama, such as Dougald MacMillan, recognize that as the century progressed, comedy began to "look forward, while tragedy continued to look backward, and thus made it possible for English drama at last to move out of the heavy, depressing shadow of the Elizabethans." Tacitly admitting a gap in our knowledge that this study bridges, MacMillan believes comedy moved forward because it reflected "contemporary life."

It did, indeed, reflect life, but life as it had been metamorphosed by the works of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne.

The body of scholarly opinion which Professor MacMillan represents is not the only one which must be drastically revised. Richardson proved almost as popular a source for the later drama as he did for the later novel; in fact, his novels constitute the single most important point of origin for the comedy that dominated
the stage in the period immediately after 1760. While Bernbaum, Nicoll, Sherbo, in fact all the historians of the so-called "sentimental" drama, suppose the existence of a continuous tradition from the Restoration period through Steele and down to Whitenead, Kelly, Mrs. Griffith, and Cumberland, the earlier phase of the development actually culminated in the novels of Richardson. What emerged from his novels is not "drama of sensibility" but drama informed by the doctrines of benevolence and overlaid with the rituals of the bourgeois Court of Love. The "sentimental drama" was not "revived" around 1760; rather, a new species, Richardsonian ritual comedy, received its definitive expression in the hands of Mrs. Sheridan and Whitehead and very soon became the predominant mode on the English stage. But hardly had this form become well established on the stage before it entered a period of decadence. Part of the reason might lie in the fact that no Goldsmith or Sheridan appeared to keep it alive, but in any case, it seems safe to say that the increasing tendency toward abstraction of language and situation alone would have made the decline of ritual comedy inevitable.

As to the external causes of the decay of ritual comedy, the prevailing view of historians of the drama is to regard the criticism of such comedy as a part of a "war," in which the comic traditions of the Renaissance
and Restoration stages strove to assert themselves against the "comédie larmoyante," or "sentimental drama," or "drama of sensibility." In this view of the conflict, Goldsmith is accepted as the champion of "laughing" comedy who asserted the age old prerogatives of the comic mode against the proponents of "weeping" comedy. But Goldsmith did not, as it is generally believed, suddenly appear in vacuo; his real title to recognition comes from his having been the first competent dramatist whose works and critical pronouncements embody the comic philosophy of Henry Fielding and Tobias Smollett. The supposed "war" of the seventies is no more at bottom than a sudden recognition that a fundamental antagonism in existence ever since Richardson and Fielding wrote their first novels had appeared on the stage and was, therefore, a conflict worthy of open discussion. The altercation cannot be understood except against the background of the prose fiction from which the drama of the seventies had developed. In 1750, the author of The History of Charlotte Summers, the Fortunate Parish Girl, had remarked, "Tom Jones was pleased when he laughed, and Clarissa when she cried," and there could be no simpler or more telling explanation of the later conflict between laughing and weeping comedy.

The appearance of Goldsmith and Sheridan on the side of the comic novel tradition undoubtedly aided the decline
of ritual comedy, and it seems certain that the artistic merit of their accomplishment, together with the vast popularity of their plays, contributed toward keeping the tradition alive much longer than the vogue of ritual comedy had lasted. Yet even before the tradition of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne had seen its fullest expression in dramatic form, the seeds of change had been set in the increasingly widespread acceptance of amiable humor, with its emphasis on a union of laughter and tears, and the process of modification was carried further by the appearance of a new and vital source of inspiration, the Gothic novel. These changes resulted in the writing not of what Dougald MacMillan calls "sentimental satire," but in the gentle satire characteristic of amiable humor, a form of ridicule further meliorated by the exotic trappings of Gothicism. MacMillan further observes that in the last years of the century, "... comedy... became more serious, but not more sentimental, the method became once more that of correction by ridicule, as distinguished from the "exemplary" method of Steele or the genteel sentimentalizing of Kelley (sic). ..."^5

The results of this study make it imperative that such generalizations be qualified. Obviously all comedy did not become "more serious;" alone among the comic dramatists, Thomas Holcroft revived the tradition of
Swift and Smollett and wrote ironic comedy, the seriousness of which is beside the point. Again it should be emphasized that Holcroft is the exception to the general pattern in comedy that generally tended to emphasize the pathetic element in amiable humor, or, as we have seen in the case of Reynolds, the stress is so much on the side of benevolence that the satire loses much of its force. In any case the impulse to correction by ridicule on the stage can be traced to an immediate source in Sheridan and Goldsmith, which in turn must lead ultimately to their primary source in the comic novels.

In the discussion of both Richardson and the comic novelists it has been suggested on a number of occasions that the dramatic traditions inspired by the great eighteenth century novels had, for all practical purposes, disappeared by the end of the century. The fate of these traditions, and at the same time, the course of the later popular drama, can be illustrated by a brief examination of the most popular play to appear in the year 1800, Thomas Morton's comedy, *Speed the Plough*. 6

Curiously enough the stage direction for the opening scene can be taken to define the two main lines of influence in the play. It reads, "*In the fore-ground a Farm House — A view of a Castle at a distance.*" In one sense the setting in the countryside marks the completion of the gradual movement of the locale of comedy from the drawing
rooms of Restoration comedy out of the town and into the country. This movement was undoubtedly stimulated by the novels which not only exalt the rustic virtues, but suggest in a number of ways that the free and open air provides the ideal environment for the growth and display of comic humors. The city-country contrast was a favorite satirical device, useful in exposing the follies of a society obsessed with luxury and extravagance, yet in Morton's play the contrast hardly exists. In another way the influence of the picaresque novel in particular may be seen in the disjointed, episodic nature of the plot, which features a rapid change of scene from cottage to open field to castle, giving the impression of rapid movement and something like a sense of high adventures on the road encouraged by the picaros. The farmer, his wife and daughter, in the rural group are remotely akin to the family of Goodman Andrews in Pamela; their servant who marries a knight suggests the roman de mésalliance; and the persistent emphasis on the virtues of poverty throughout the play echo the words of the humble narrator of Richardson's first novel.

The comedy of humors appears predominantly in two characters, father and son, the first involved in a taming of the shrew plot, the second encouraged by his father to believe himself a "universal genius." The humorous action climaxes in the ploughing contest in
the second act, from which the play gets its title, and the son loses the contest not only because the newly invented plow of which he boasts is actually worthless, but because he is opposed by a mysterious person of overpowering virtue, who proclaims, "It is time I exerted the faculties heaven has bestowed on me; and though my heavy fate crushes the proud hopes this heart conceives, still let me prove myself worthy of the place Providence has assigned me" (II, iii). This anguished person is the hero, and with him we encounter the principal action of the plot, which has only the remotest connection with comedy of humors.

In the stage direction cited above, the arrangement of the scene if of some importance for the structure of the play as a whole: in terms of their symbolic values, as the play unfolds the farm house gradually recedes in importance, while the castle moves into a position of prominence to serve as the scene of the most intense action. Now a similar setting in Fielding or Smollett would have featured instead of the farm, an open road, instead of the castle, a rural inn or a rambling country house. The later arrangement as it appears in Speed the Plough has a profound effect on the comedy of the play as a whole: the spacious and inviting inn, often the scene of some of the most sublimely comic events in all literature, gives way to a gloomy, forbidding castle,
where the dominant mood is one of mystery and terror. The cause of these manifestations of Gothicism is not far to seek; scholars are fairly well agreed that the ultimate source lies in the works of Horace Walpole:

The Castle of Otranto was at once the first Gothic novel and the fount of both Gothic fiction and drama. The Mysterious Mother was merely the first Gothic play.

The plot of Speed the Plough turns on devices common to the Gothic mode. Foremost is the quest to unravel the mystery parentage (I, i) conducted in an atmosphere of foreboding that suggests a panoply of monstrous vices. The devices include locked, concealed letters (II, ii), hints of a "fatal" chamber with a "dreadful vestige" (III, i), the seduction motif (III, ii), the mysterious exchange of vast sums (IV, i), and the confession of violent passions in a distant past made in appropriate surroundings: "A gloomy gallery in the Castle - in the Centre a strongly barred Door. - The Gallery hung with Portraits. -" (IV, iii)

The plot revolves around the familiar conflict of virtue and villainy, but in this respect, Walpole had more illustrious predecessors. The tendency in comic literature with a didactic function to present a conflict that polarizes about opposite extremes of virtue and vice has already been mentioned. But for
such plays as *Speed the Plough*, a more specific source is the conflict between predatory male and innocent female within the ethos of bourgeois tragedy, a situation the archetype of which is undoubtedly Richardson's *Clarissa*. But the drama requires more concentration than the novel, and this fact may account in part for the exaggeration in melodrama that produces the often noted 'cheap and easy effects;' characters come to represent not human nature but a ludicrous grotesque embodying a moral absolute. Thus the villian in *Speed the Plough* remains lurking in the wings for most of the play, an absence accounted for by one of the characters: "he, like his deeds, avoided the light - Ever dark, subtle, and mysterious" (III, ii). When he does appear, it is on the edge of a dark grove, "wrapt in a great cloak" (I, iii). Moreover, it is reasonable to see a perversion and distortion of the pathos of Richardson and Sterne in these examples of gratuitous emotionalism:

> Will you preserve my friends; - will you avert the cruel arm of power, and make the virtuous happy? my tears must thank you (IV, i)

> This hand...were never held out to clutch a hard bargain, nor will it turn a good lad out into the wide wicked world because he be poorish a bit" (III, iii).
I am thanked already - here (pointing to his heart). Curse on such wealth; compared with its possession, poverty is splendour. Fear not for me - I shall not feel one piercing cold; for in that man whose heart beats warmly for his fellow creatures, the blood circulates with freedom..." etc. (IV, ii)

I will lay before your view the agony with which this wretched bosom is loaded!!! (IV, ii).

Lest this analysis become agonizing, it can be concluded that the fundamental elements in the structure of Speed the Plough can all be traced back sooner or later to the great eighteenth century novels. However, tenuous the connections may appear and however profitless the study of such a play as Speed the Plough may be, this comedy and others like it illustrate the abiding power of the themes and situations created by the early masters of the novel. At the same time, the very diffusion of elements from the novels in this play confirms a point that has already been made: by the end of the eighteenth century, the dramatic traditions stemming from both Richardson and the comic novelists were for all practical purposes extinct. And it is fitting that Speed the Plough should contain a symbolic representation of a major cause of the disappearance. Never appearing in the cast, but looming in the background, is the symbol of public morality, whom Morton named Mrs. Grundy.
During the later years of the preceding century, her influence had forced more than one potential artist to retrench his ambitions in order to satisfy her demands, and until playwrights like G. B. Shaw arose, who would defy or subtly evade her demands, her stern glare would keep the drama in a state of stale, unimaginative quiescence, while the more private form of the novel, less susceptible to her inspection, continued to flourish. Actually obeisance to Mrs. Grundy is only one manifestation of the drama's subservience to the novel during the later eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries. From the apex of its achievement during the golden age of the Renaissance, the drama as an art form descended to become a parasite, sustaining itself by drawing off some of the creative energy of a newer, more vital, expression of literary art - the novels of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne - and until the generic distinctiveness of the drama was realized and asserted anew, the form remained a parasite - lifeless, inert, taking its sustenance from without.
NOTES TO CONCLUSIONS

1 "Social Comedy," 338.
2 Ibid.
3 (London, 1750), I, 221. I am indebted for this reference to Professor Alan D. McKillop.
4 "Social Comedy," 337.
5 Ibid., 338.
6 (London, 1800). The play required nine editions in the year it was first performed.
7 Evans, *Gothic Drama*, 31.
Appendix I. NINETEENTH CENTURY ADAPTATIONS

Note: Plays are included in this list only when evidence other than the title alone is available to substantiate their relation to the novels of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. Whenever possible, the date of publication or location of the manuscript is included in the citation. The date in parentheses is the time of first performance according to Nicoll's History of the English Drama.

A. Richardson


Buchanan, Robert. Clarissa. Lord Chamberlain's MS. No. 240. (February 8, 1890).

B. The Comic Novelists


Sir Launcelot Greaves. (March 23, 1818).


The Adventures of Roderick Random. (June 20, 1818).

Ferdinand, Count Fathom. (July 31, 1818).

Peregrine Pickle; Or, Hawser Trunnion on Horseback. (April 27, 1818)


Buchanan, Robert. *Sophia* (based on *Tom Jones*). (April 12, 1886).


Joseph's Sweetheart (based on *Joseph Andrews*). (March 8, 1888).
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Bickerstaffe, Isaac. *Thomas and Sally; Or, The Sailor's Return.* London, 1761
_________________ *Daphne and Amintor.* London, 1765.
_________________ *Love in the City.* London, 1767.
_________________ *Doctor Last in His Chariot.* London, 1769.
_________________ *Tis Well It's No Worse.* London, 1770.


Buchanan, Robert. *Clarissa.* Lord Chamberlain's Ms. 245.


*The Heiress*. Dublin, 1786.

Byron, Henry J. *The Rosebud of Stinghamnettle Farm; Or, the Villanous Squire and the Virtuous Villager*. London, n.d.


*The Deuce is in Him*. London, 1763.


*The Oxonian in Town?*. Dublin, 1769.


*The Soleen; Or, Islington Spa*. London, 1776.


*The Country Coquet; Or, Miss in her Breeches*. London, 1755.


__________ • *Which is the Man?* London, 1783.


Dublin, 1792. • *A Day in Turkey; Or, The Russian Slaves*.


__________ • *Amelia*. London, 1768.

__________ • *The Brothers*. London, 1770.

__________ • *The West Indian*. London, 1771.


__________ • *The Natural Son*. London, 1785.

__________ • *The Impostors*. London, 1789.

1794. • *The Box-Lobby Challenge*. London,


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<td>The Wheel of Fortune</td>
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<td>False Impressions</td>
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<td>Fielding, Henry</td>
<td>An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews</td>
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Edge, Mr. Pamela; Or, Virtue Rewarded. Newcastle, 1742.


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Bon Ton; Or, High Life Above Stairs. London, 1775.


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