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FIELDING AND THE PERCEPTION OF TRUE MERIT

by

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INTRODUCTION

I

The single-minded concern with manners and morals found throughout Fielding's non-political miscellaneous essays offers a contrast to the comedy of his early novels. The lengthier miscellaneous pieces (An Essay on Conversation, An Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men, and Of the Remedy of Affliction for the Loss of Our Friends, 1743) are extremely dogmatic and show Fielding to be a stern lay preacher. He is also a preacher in the novels, but a considerably more casual and cheerful one. The modes of essay and novel (as Fielding employed them) contrast in tone, rather than in moral content. Recent Fielding studies have stressed the ethical import of his writings, and George Sherburn has said, "... Fielding was fundamentally a moralist."²

Fielding's primary moral concern has been shown to be the inculcation of benevolence.³ In all of his writings the benevolent man is presented as a figure to be emulated. The emphasis upon benevolence indicates that Fielding's homiletic statements are built on the framework of a conventional ethic created largely by the "latitudinarian" divines.⁴ The sermons of men like Isaac Barrow, Robert South, Benjamin Hoadly, Samuel Clarke, and John Tillotson had developed the association, if not equation, of moral virtue with an active charity
which had its springs in a deeply felt sympathy towards all men. Moreover, this charity was seen as producing not only relief of the distresses felt by others, but at the same time a sense of inner satisfaction to the benevolent man himself. Tom Jones makes a particularly illustrative statement of this: "If there are men who cannot feel the delight of giving happiness to others, I sincerely pity them, as they are incapable of tasting what is in my opinion, a greater honour, a greater interest, and a sweeter pleasure, than the ambitious, the avaricious, or the voluptuous man can ever obtain." Fielding apparently shared with the latitudinarian ministers a belief in what Martin C. Battestin has described as "... a religion of practical morality by which a sincere man might earn his salvation through the exercise of benevolence."6

There is, however, as part of all of Fielding's exhortations to good-nature and benevolence, a caveat demanding judgment and prudence as absolute essentials in the character of the charitable man. In the "Champion" for 3 March 1739-40, Fielding defines good-nature as "... a delight in the happiness of mankind, and a concern at their misery, with a desire, as much as possible, to procure the former and avert the latter; and this, with a constant regard to desert."7 The essay continues, giving this amplification to the last phrase of the definition: "... it is impossible for a fool, who hath no distinguishing faculty, to be good-natured." In the Dedication to "Tom Jones" the caveat appears in these
terms: "I have endeavoured strongly to inculcate, that virtue and innocence can scarce ever be injured but by indiscretion; and that it is this alone which often betrays them into the snares that deceit and villainy spread for them."

Fielding, as will be shown, argues that both discretion and a just regard for desert depend upon the use of one's distinguishing faculty (judgment).

The necessity for judgment as part of the benevolent character is stressed in the miscellaneous essays. In them Fielding indicates what art can add to what nature has already given the individual by way of distinguishing faculties. He illustrates the results of indiscretion while preaching the absolute necessity for discretion. This is not to say that discretion is ignored in the novels, or that good-nature is not glorified in the essays. Nevertheless, as the instinctively charitable man is held up as a good example for the readers of the novels, so might those same readers, through a careful study of the miscellaneous writings, receive instruction regarding the checks necessary to protect the charitable instinct from the snares laid by deceit.

This present study will examine and show how this theme, which might be called the perception of true merit, is manifest in Fielding's non-political, non-dramatic miscellaneous writings. There are minor contradictions in his presentation, and Fielding is not always careful to define his terminology (e.g., see section II and "reputation"), but an attempt will
be made to show the concepts underlying the perception of true merit and its ultimate ties with Fielding's idea of the truly good man.

This insistence upon discretion, the careful estimate of one's fellow man, is not Fielding's unique contribution to the eighteenth century's concept of the benevolent man. In fact, this *caveat* was an important part of the latitudinarian tradition mentioned above. The seeds of most of Fielding's theme can be found in this statement by Bishop Hoadly (1715):

Christianity doth not make Men more discerning, or more learned in the Wisdom of this World, than it finds them. But yet, it neither commands, nor disposes, Men to be cheated, and imposed upon, by every Pretense. It doth not instruct them to put on a Aire of Unconcernedness, or Indifference, in what respects the Happiness of Mankind, or the Society they belong to; nor doth it educate them in Stupidity, or a Disregard of every thing but their own private Devotion and Piety. But as it is far from sending them into Deserts, and Solitudes; into Places unfrequented by humane Society; as it chiefly commends to them the Practice of those Virtues that adorn Conversation, and make the World about them happy: so it recommends to them somewhat of the Wisdom and Cunning of Serpents, as well as the Harmlessness and Innocence of Doves; lest the wicked and designing part of the World should manage their Innocence and Simplicity to the Mischief of others, and the Ruine of Peace; and render their Harmlessness as fatal in its Influence upon the World, as if they were clothed in Barbarity, and Cruelty.

The following pages will illustrate Fielding's lessons toward the "practice of those Virtues that adorn Conversation," and his method of inculcating "the Wisdom and Cunning of Serpents as well as the Harmlessness and Innocence of Doves."
There is no better source in which to discover this moral theme, free of the complexities of characterization and plot, than Fielding's essays and the leading articles of his newspapers. The brevity of the essay forced Fielding to give terse statement of the matters he believed would instruct and edify his readers. In the Dedication to Tom Jones occurs the famous statement, "I have endeavoured to laugh mankind out of their favorite follies and vices." The essay gave Fielding no room in which to develop characters whose affectations would inspire the laughter that would serve this corrective function. There is a sharp contrast between the rather gentle statement of intention in the novel and the opening statement of the Characters of Men: "I have often thought it a melancholy instance of the great depravity of human nature, that, whilst so many men have employed their utmost abilities to invent systems by which the artful and cunning part of mankind may be able to impose upon the rest of the world, few or none should have stood up the champions of the innocent and undesigning, and have endeavoured to arm them against imposition."9

The Champion for 4 March 1739-40 is an interesting early statement of several of the problems attendant upon the perception of true merit. The subject of this leader is "reputation," a matter of great concern to Fielding if one
may judge by the number of times it is discussed in the miscellaneous writings. The evils of slander and undeserved worldly fame are themes found in all of his novels. The latter is strikingly represented in Fielding's repeated discussions of the distinction between goodness and greatness, the most obvious example of which is the concentrated ironic statement of Jonathan Wild (1743).

The Champion essay poses one immediate problem. Fielding recognizes two kinds of "reputation." The essay opens: "There can be nothing so discouraging from the pursuit of reputation as a reflection which we too often see occasion to make, that it is the prize of the undeserving. Men are apt, with some seeming justice, to despise a reward they see promiscuously bestowed on vice and virtue, wisdom and folly." The implication here is that the pursuit of reputation is a worthy endeavor. The other kind of "reputation" appears near the end of the essay: "Upon the possession of [reputation] all joys, all happiness and comfort depend. Loss of reputation, says the Cit in the comedy, may tend to the loss of money. In short, we can arrive at no one valuable acquisition in life without it." The equation of money and all valuable acquisitions is ironic, and the reader would presume that Fielding is now indicating the entire essay is to be taken as a jest. Yet the concluding paragraphs are, as will be shown, serious and sincere.

Fielding is not careful here (or elsewhere) to make a clear distinction between a good reputation, i.e., being
esteemed a virtuous man by men of sound judgment, and bad reputation, i.e., notoriety or infamy. He uses the words "reputation" and "fame" interchangeably, and only with "goodness" and "greatness" does he maintain a careful dichotomy of moral values.\footnote{11}

The *Champion* essay is primarily a discussion of "good" reputation. Fielding, in *A Charge Delivered to the Grand Jury* (1749), describes the value of a "good" reputation in this way: "Our worldly interest is closely connected with our fame; by losing this we are deprived of the chief comforts of society, particularly of that which is most dear to us, the friendship and love of all good and virtuous men."\footnote{12} Reputation in the sense of being esteemed meritorious by men of sound judgment is, then, a truly valuable acquisition.\footnote{13}

The *Champion* essay continues, restating the reason men often prefer to avoid the struggle for this acquisition: "Reputation, which, were she always constant to merit, would engage all mankind to be rivals for her, becomes a common harlot; and by being often possessed by those who do not deserve her, is the contempt of those who do." The basic difficulty, Fielding states, lies in the nature of merit, or virtue, itself. "True virtue is of a retired and quiet nature, not at all busied in courting the acclamations of the crowd; she is plain and sober in her habit, sure of her innate worth, and therefore neglects to adorn herself with those gaudy colours, which catch the eye of the giddy multi-
The equation of merit and virtue is clear a few lines later: "There is a consciousness in true merit, which renders a man careless of the reception it meets with. He disdains to fly to little arts to inform the world what it wants only judgment to discover of itself." This attitude on the part of the individual of true merit is exactly opposite to that of the vicious man, who "is not desirous of virtue itself, but only the reputation of it, therefore is more solicitous to carry virtue in his countenance than in his heart; whence it often comes to pass, that the worst of men have imposed on the world, and enjoyed the highest degree of reputation, while those of the greatest worth have been slighted and despised."

The "giddy multitude" does have some reason for its want of judgment since there are "so narrow bounds between some virtues and vices, that it is very difficult to distinguish between them. Covetousness and thrift, profuseness and liberality, cowardice and caution, rashness and bravery, praise and adulation have been all very often mistaken for one another." Still, for the most part, mankind bestows its praise wrongly by mistaking the gaudy and the superficial for the substance. Fielding states this by using the common eighteenth century parallel of nature and art:

It is with virtue and vice, as with nature and art. The works of nature are in themselves infinitely superior to all the little quackery and impotent imitation of art: but as the latter ever
applies herself to the humours and tempers of men, as she is ever employed in tricks and dressing herself out, with a view to catching the eye of the beholder, we often see her meanest performances preferred by the generality of mankind, to the noblest productions of nature.

Near the end of the essay Fielding points out, as an incentive to the pursuit of a reputation for merit, that there is an essential difference between the type of fame established by defrauding the imperceptive part of mankind, and that which is based on real worth. The former is "attended with continual fears of losing it, seldom waits a man to his grave, and hardly ever outlives him, whereas the man who really deserves this reward, hugs himself securely in the possession of it. This not only sticks to him while he lives, it is scarce known to forsake his name."

Finally, Fielding offers a consolation to those who do not attain such reputation, "since failure furnishes him with a noble argument for the certainty of a future state."

As it is inconsistent with the justice of a supremely wise and good being to suffer man's honest and worthy endeavours to go unrewarded, can the heart of man be warmed with a more ecstatic imagination, than that the most excellent attribute of the great Creator of the universe is concerned in rewarding him? Such a consideration as this may well make him despise the false, short-lived honours he sees unjustly bestowed in others, and keep him constant and steady in the ways of virtue, at the same time he thoroughly despises all the rewards within the powers of man.

A question could be raised as to whether this essay is, indeed, as was suggested earlier, concerned with reputation. A more accurate statement might be that Fielding attempts to
reveal the reason reputation is so often unjustly awarded (and one suspects the essay of being in its genesis a working out of the problem in Fielding's mind). He encourages his readers to strive for such reputation despite its occasional acquisition by the undeserving, and offers consolation to those who fail in the attempt. Behind all this is the belief that the actual source of the problem lies in the faulty perception of the crowd. If the multitude judged according to merit alone, all men engaged in the pursuit of reputation would be, in effect, in pursuit of virtue, and especially that virtue which makes itself known in the world. The essay is, then, a discussion of the perception of true merit, especially as it applies to reputation.

The problems in the perception of true merit which are raised in this Champion leader are discussed in greater detail in Fielding's Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men and his Essay on Conversation. In the following chapters my basic design is to use Fielding's argument from those two essays and expand it with further discussions of the same theme found elsewhere in his corpus.
Fielding states the purpose of his *Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men* in the Preface to the *Miscellanies*:

I have endeavoured to expose a ... great evil, namely, hypocrisy; the bane of all virtue, morality and goodness; and to arm, as well as I can, the honest, undesigning, open-hearted man, who is generally the prey of this monster, against it. I believe a little reflection will convince us, that most mischiefs (especially those which fall on the worthiest part of mankind) owe their original to this detestable vice.¹

The figures of speech used here are interesting. Fielding desires "to arm" the "honest" part of mankind against the monster hypocrisy. This is the language of the epic, or the romance, but unlike the burlesque (in Fielding's sense) use of such figures in *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*, there is no hint of the mock-heroic in this passage. The conflict of the honest man and the hypocrite is one of the central antagonisms in all of Fielding's writings. The battle is apparent in such pairs as Allworthy and Blifil, Parson Adams and the "world," Captain Booth and Colonel James, and the Heartfrees and Jonathan Wild. The character which Wild, for example, "most valued himself upon, and which he principally honoured in others, was that of hypocrisy" (IV, xv).²

This conflict of open honesty and hypocrisy is, through-
out the essays, an extremely sober, even mortal, matter. The
comic element is missing from the passage above because, un-
like Molly Seagrim's battle in the churchyard, the struggle
of honesty versus pretence Fielding finds worthy of the epic
simile. The "armor" figure is contained in the essay itself:

... it is not against force, but deceit, which
I am here seeking for armour, against those who
can injure us only by obtaining our good opinion.
If, therefore, I can instruct my reader, from what
sort of persons he is to withhold his opinion, and
inform him of all, or at least the principle arts,
by which deceit proceeds to ingrati ate itself with
us, I shall have sufficiently satisfied the design
of this essay. (291)

As a first step in the discussion of the battle against
deceit it will be well to define the character-type for whom
Fielding intends this "armor." This character has already
been described as "the honest, undesigning, open-hearted man."
Such a character is also representative of "the worthiest
part of mankind." Fielding continues, "... this essay may
perhaps be of some use to the young and inexperienced, to the
more open, honest, and considering part of mankind, who,
either from ignorance or inattention, are daily exposed to
all the pernicious designs of that detestable fiend, hypocris y" (283-284).

Nor need any man be ashamed of wanting or re-
ceiving instructions on this head; since that
open disposition, which is the surest indica-
tion of an honest and upright heart, chiefly ren-
ders us liable to be imposed on by craft and de-
ceit, and principally disqualifies us for this
discovery. (283)

The words open, honest, undesigning are obviously cen-
tral to the character being instructed, but they do not indi-
cate a key assumption in the logic of these statements. Fielding, for example, nowhere suggests that his reader become less honest as a means of combatting hypocrisy. There is one facet of the character being described which is more important than his own moral strength and frankness, and that is that he assumes other men are like him. Fielding is not offering his insights to the honest man per se; he is offering instruction to the man who believes all men are honest. The distinction may be slight, but the entire essay turns upon it.

The distinction is made clearer in the novels. In the following dialogue from *Amelia*, Miss Matthews mentions a quality which might be added to the characteristics of Fielding's pupils mentioned so far. Capt. Booth is describing his use of an imaginary mistress while actually courting Amelia.

"Poor Amelia presently swallowed the bait; and, as she hath told me since, absolutely believed me to be in earnest. Poor dear love! how should the sincerest of hearts have any idea of deceit? for, with all her simplicity, I assure you she is the most sensible woman in the world."

"It is highly generous and good in you," said Miss Matthews with a sly sneer, "to impute to honesty what others would, perhaps, call credulity."

"I protest, Madam," answered he, "I do her no more than justice. A good heart will at all times betray the best head in the world." (II, ii)⁴

Booth's defense raises a further distinction, that between heart and head. Amelia's good heart is without deceit and she is therefore not likely to search out deceit in
others. Booth is careful to note that Amelia is 'sensible,' that is, she has the rational faculties required to consider logically and dispassionately a problem presented her. Still, her heart, that is, her basic emotional assumption concerning others, is free from deceit and suspicion.

Throughout Fielding's works semantics play a large role in both his comic and didactic statements. The données of the quotation above should be considered. Miss Matthews is a hypocrite and suspicious of all men. According to her outlook, the individual (like Amelia) who would accept another man's word at face value is credulous. Amelia's actions are to Miss Matthews those of a completely naive and ignorant woman. On the other hand, to Booth (who believes at this point that man is governed by his passions) Amelia's actions are the natural, even praiseworthy, results of an honest and undesigning personality. The basic assumptions of the individual who estimates a situation, or another personality, effects his judgment strongly, Fielding argues. He makes this clearer later in Amelia. The narrator says, "To speak plainly and without allegory or figure, it is not want of sense, but want of suspicion, by which innocence is often betrayed. . . . In a word, many an innocent person hath owed his ruin to this circumstance alone, that the degree of villainy was such as must have exceeded the faith of every man who was not himself a villain" (VII, ix).

As with Amelia, so with Parson Adams: "simplicity was his characteristic." Adams, as indeed is true of most of
Fielding's characters, uses his own personality as the basis of most of his assumptions about the characters of men: "as he never had any intention to deceive, so he never suspected such a design in others" (I, iii). Thomas Heartfree is described in exactly the vocabulary used by Fielding in identifying those for whom the Characters of Men was designed. Heartfree, "was of an honest and open disposition. He was that sort of men whom experience only, and not their own natures, must inform that there are such things as deceit and hypocrisy in the world, and who, consequently, are not at five-and-twenty so difficult to be imposed upon as the oldest and most subtle" (II, 1).

The reasoning which supports the outlook of these open and honest characters seems to be: "I am a man. I am honest, generous, brave, benevolent, and sympathetic. Therefore all men are honest, generous, brave, benevolent, and sympathetic." Fielding recognized the flaw in this argument. Hasty induction is not valid in logic, and in one sense Fielding attempts in the Characters of Men to convey to his readers the fact that all men are not alike. He states in the second paragraph of the essay that there is such a vast difference in disposition among people from the same region and of the same religion that this variegation may spring from "some original foundation in nature itself. Nor is it a less proper predicament of the genius of a tree, that it will flourish so many years, loves such a soil, bears such a fruit, &c., than of man in general, that he is good, bad,
fierce, tame, honest, or cunning" (281).

Fielding thus directs his discussion to those individuals who, honest and open themselves, assume the same degree of honesty and frankness in others, or are at least willing to suspend their judgment concerning others. As Professor McKillop has noted in connection with *Tom Jones*, "candor" is the eighteenth century term for this view. The man of candor is also the worthy man, and for true worth to be ultimately successful, such men cannot be continually used and deceived by the unworthy and the hypocritical. Fielding therefore describes society from something like the "suspicious" point of view in order to put the honest man on guard.

Without positing humankind as a naturally selfish species, Fielding notes that deceit does exist, even in children and savages. ("Deceit" is a synonym for selfishness, as used in the *Characters of Men*.) He outlines what he calls the "Art of Thriving," an art based on the belief that every man is concerned only with his own personal well-being, and that other men can be brought to act for one's benefit through deception. The Art of Thriving has created a society in which precautions are necessary to the man of candor:

Thus while the crafty and designing part of mankind, consulting only their own separate advantage, endeavour to maintain one constant imposition on others, the whole world becomes a vast masquerade, where the greatest part appear disguised under false visors and habits; a very few only showing their own faces, who become, by so doing, the astonishment and ridicule of all the rest. (283)

Not only are all men disguised to each other, but the
entire business of society and politics is like a play, or a puppet-show. In the *Champion* for 22 April 1740, Fielding draws a parallel between life and the spectacles provided by John Rich at Covent Garden:

> In the same manner we are deceived in the grand pantomimes played on the stage of life, where there is often no less difference between the appearance and reality of men and things, and where those who are utter strangers to the springs of political motion, judging by habits, posts or titles, have actually mistaken men for heroes, patriots, and politicians, who have been in fact as mere machines as any used by the aforesaid Mr. Rich: for when a man is absolutely void of capacity it matters not whether his skin be stuffed with guts or straw, and whether his face be made of wood or brass.

The same parallel is used in *Jonathan Wild*, although here Fielding describes a situation in which no one is deceived.

> ... if thou hast any penetration, thou must have had some occasion to admire both the solemnity of countenance in the actor and the gravity of the spectator, while some of those farces are carried on which are acted almost daily in every village in the kingdom. He must have a despicable opinion of mankind indeed who can conceive them to be imposed on so often as they appear to be so. The truth is, they are in the same situation with the readers of romances; who, though they know the whole to be an entire fiction, nevertheless agree to be deceived; and, as those find amusement, so do the others find ease and convenience in this concurrence. (III, xi)

This passage assumes there are no men of candor, or at least no men who are deceived by the masquerade of daily existence. Elsewhere in his writings the assumption is always that a substantial segment of the population is daily taken in by individuals in vizors and by the puppet-show of politics. The fact that they are deceived has allowed the
maskers and the men behind the marionettes to succeed. Since hypocrisy is the "bane of all virtue, morality, and goodness," such qualities will never prevail until "the difference between the appearance and reality of men and things" is always clear.

Fielding states that several assumptions underlie most errors in judging the characters of men. The two most common of these are: one, a man's appearance (including his word) can be accepted without qualification as an accurate reflection of character and, two, a man's public character is a valid picture of his true character. The first of these assumptions leads us to take a man's "own words against [his] actions. This . . . is no less ridiculous than it would be of a learned professor in [physic], when he perceives his light-headed patient is in the utmost danger, to take his word that he is well. This is an error infinitely more common than its extreme absurdity would persuade us is possible" (200).

Examples from the novels of this fault are fairly plentiful. Heartfree of Jonathan Wild, through friendship and a large amount of gullibility, will accept Wild's word to a ludicrous extent. His candor is extreme, especially as he is a businessman. He accepts Count la Ruse's promise of payment for jewels on no more surety than the Count's general appearance and Wild's recommendation. 7

Fielding singles out particular types whose word cannot be accepted as representing the true state of affairs. He
begins with the flatterer. "The first caution I shall give [the open-hearted man] is against flattery, which I am convinced no one uses, without some design on the person flattered" (291). The reason for this is man's natural vanity. "Indeed, whoever knows anything of the nature of men, how greedy they are of praise, and how backward in bestowing it on others; that it is a debt seldom paid, even to the greatest merit, till we are compelled to it, may reasonably conclude, that this profusion, this voluntary throwing it away on those who do not deserve it, proceeds, as Martial says of a beggar's present, from some other motive than generosity or good-will" (291-292).

The phrase "on those who do not deserve it," is the sort of qualifying remark Fielding employs in almost all his strictures. It is the proffligate use of good, or at least harmless, social conventions that has turned them into devices of deceit. The hypocrite makes use of the vocabulary of the honest and friendly man, and this practice has added to the ease with which the man of candor is imposed upon. Fielding admits flattery can be without hidden motives, "but before we can cherish it, we must call it by some other name; such as, a just esteem of, and respect for our real worth; a debt due our merit, and not a present to our pride" (292). Flattery, in other words, can only be accepted as harmless by all men when it is universally applied to men of true merit alone.

A second type to beware is the "professor," "who carries
his affection to you even farther; and on a slight, or no
acquaintance, embraces, hugs, kisses, and vows the greatest
esteem for your person, parts, and virtues" (291). To judge
the sincerity of this sort of individual one must recognize
that friendship of this sort is based either on esteem or
gratitude. The former is of extremely slow growth: "it is
an involuntary affection, rather apt to give us pain than
pleasure." Gratitude must spring from some obligation al-
ready received, and even at that "there are some minds, whom
no benefits can inspire with gratitude." If, then, one judges
that neither of these sources can possibly have inspired the
profession, "you will act wisely in receiving it into your
heart as he doth who knowingly lodges a viper in his bosom,
or a thief in his house. Forgive the acts of your enemies
hath been thought the highest maxim of morality; Fear the
professions of your friends is, perhaps, the wisest" (293).

A "third character against which an open heart should
be alarmed, is a Promiser" (293). Again, it is the man pro-
fuse in his promises whom one should avoid. "Of these there
are several kinds, some who promise what they never intend
to perform; and others again, who promise so many, that,
like debtors, being not able to pay all their debts, they
afterwards pay none" (293). Fielding adds that he is not
speaking of the promises of political "great men," since
"the value of [their promises] is so well known, that few
are to be imposed on by them."

Fielding mentions the "confidant" briefly: "the man
who is inquisitive into the secrets of your affairs, with which he hath no concern, is another object of your caution. Men no more desire another's secrets to conceal them, than they would another's purse for the pleasure only of carrying it" (293-294). The man of candor is also cautioned to avoid the slanderer. The vice of slander is one of the prime factors in the confusion of the perception of true merit and it will be treated in detail later.

The longest discussion of a single character type in the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men is that of the sanctified hypocrite. Fielding calls this individual, "the most detestable character in society." He begins:

I fear the next character I shall mention may give offense to the grave part of mankind; for those whose wisdom and honesty I have an equal respect; but I must, however, venture to caution my open-hearted reader against a saint. No honest and sensible man will understand me, here, as attempting to declaim against the sanctity of morals. The sanctity I mean is that which flows from the lips, and shines in the countenance. (294)

Perhaps the greater part of Fielding's dislike for this sort of hypocrite is due to his belief that the "saint" not only imposes upon men, but misrepresents Christianity.

But to say the truth: a sour, morose, ill-natured, censorious sanctity, never is, nor can be, sincere. Is a readiness to condemn, the temper of a Christian? Can he, who passes sentence on the souls of men with more delight than the devil can execute it, have the impudence to pretend himself the disciple of One who died for the sins of mankind? Is not such a sanctity the true mark of that hypocrisy, which, in many places in Scripture, and particularly the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew, is so bitterly inveighed against? (294)

The forces of this character are directed against the sincere
and worthy man above all, and thus, "I shall take some pains in the ripping it up, and exposing the horrors of its inside, that we may all shun it; and at the same time will endeavour so plainly to describe its outside, that we shall hardly be liable, by any mistake, to fall into its snares" (294-295).

This Pharisee relies entirely upon appearance and, since the outward signs are those of the rigidly devout, the true Christian is very easily deceived. Envy and jealousy inspire the actions of the Pharisee against this fellow man, especially those truly worthy. When these latter ("persons of more goodness than knowledge of mankind") are slandered by the "saint" they are likely to imagine it is because their real qualities are not known, "... but alas! this is a total mistake; the more good the sanctified hypocrite knows of an open and honest man, the more he envies and hates him, and the more ready he is to seize or invent an opportunity of detracting from his real merit" (296). Therefore, since the hypocrite is active, vociferous, and apparently completely religious, his denunciation of other men is but another block in the perception and reward of true merit.

Fielding paraphrases Matthew 23 in offering the following rules of behavior as protection against this type of hypocrisy: be cautious with the sanctified appearance; beware those who impose burdens on others and carry none themselves; distrust all ostentation of virtue or piety, and distrust those who are eager to condemn and censure others (298-300).
It may be argued, Fielding admits, that the person of true sanctity may appear in a habit very similar to the one he has described. However, the greatest percentage of those who present themselves to the world with the above characteristics are hypocrites, and, "it is better that one real saint suffer a little unjust suspicion than ninety-nine villains should impose on the world, and be enabled to perpetrate their villainies under this mask" (294). Such hypocrisy, if it gains power, can bring about terrible havoc:

Indeed, there is no species of mischief which [specious sanctity] doth not produce. For, not to mention the private villainies it daily transacts, most of the great evils which have affected society, wars, murders and massacres, have owed their original to this abominable vice; which is the destroyer of the innocent, and protector of the guilty; which hath introduced all manner of evil into the world, and hath almost expelled every grain of good out of it. Doth it not attempt to cheat men into the pursuit of sorrow and misery, under the appearance of virtue, and to frighten them from mirth and pleasure under the colour of vice, or, if you please, sin? Doth it not attempt to guild over that poisonous potion, made up of malevolence, austerity, and such cursed ingredients, while it embitters the delightful drought of innocent pleasure with the nauseous relish of fear and shame? (297-298)

In A Journey from this World to the Next Julian the Apostate assumes the character of a monk on one of his many trips to earth, and becomes a perfect representation of the hypocrite Fielding has described. His character is established in early training: "'I lived many years, retired in a cell, a life very agreeable to the gloominess of my temper, which was much inclined to despise the world; that is, in other words, to envy all men of superior fortune and quali-
cations, and in general to hate and detest the human species." (I, xiv). Julian comes to favor with the Emperor Justinian II of Constantinople, whereupon:

"I prompted him to all kinds of cruelty. As I was of a sour, morose temper, and hated nothing more than the symptoms of happiness appearing in any countenance, I represented all kind of diversion and amusements as the most horrid sins. I inveighed against cheerfulness as levity, and encouraged nothing but gravity, or to confess the truth to you, hypocrisy. The unhappy emperor followed my advice, and incensed the people by such repeated barbarities, that he was at last deposed by them and banished." (I, xiv)

A character nearly allied with the Pharisee, and often mentioned in Fielding's miscellaneous writings, is the man who wears a continually grave expression. Austerity is often a cover for licentiousness, and "among us, this austerity, or gravity of countenance, passes for wisdom, with just the same quality of pretension" (285). In point of fact, "the affections which it indicates, and which we shall seldom err in suspecting to lie under it, are pride, ill-nature, and cunning. Three qualities, which when we know them to be inherent in any man, we have no reason to desire any further discovery to instruct us, to deal as little and as cautiously with him as we are able" (284).

The same point is made neatly in the ironic style of the Essay on Nothing (1743):

... when mistaking certain things called gravity, canting, blustering, ostentation, pomp, and such like, for wisdom, piety, magnanimity, charity, true greatness, &c., we give to the former the honour and reverence due the latter. Not that I would be understood so far to discredit my subject as to
insinuate that gravity, canting, &c., are really nothing: on the contrary, there is much reason to suspect (if we judge by the practice of the world) that wisdom, piety, and other virtues, have a good title to that name. But we do not, in fact, pay our respects to the former, but to the latter: in other words, we pay it to that which is not, and consequently pay it to nothing.

Under this irony the point remains the same as that made earlier: wisdom, a quality which merits respect, is not always the possession of those who wear a somber countenance.

In *A Journey from this World to the Next*, spirits sent back to earth to live another life, draw lots from the wheel of Fortune to determine the character they will assume. One such spirit draws a lot which exemplifies false wisdom. The narrator and his companions are walking towards the gate of Elysium:

... we met a solemn spirit walking alone with great gravity of countenance: our curiosity invited us notwithstanding his reserve, to ask what lot he had drawn. He answered with a smile, he was to have the reputation of a wise man with £100,000 in his pocket, and that he was practising the solemnity with which he was to act in the other world. (I, v)

The same sort of pretender is exposed in more detail when Julian makes a trip as a "wise man" (I, xvi).

A different sort of wise man is the subject of number sixty-nine of the *Covent-Garden Journal* (4 November 1752). Fielding is here considering the worldly-wise man, a synonym for him who places his faith in the material things of this world. The worldly-wise are the avaricious and the ambitious. Apart from these vices, bad enough in themselves,
the worldly-wise have obtained such status as to have gained the respect of society. If, indeed, one were to oppose them, "the World in general will be almost sure to be of their Side, and to maintain their cause." These men present a double problem. Their material success leads other men to think of them as admirable, and in turn the admiration brings the desire to emulate them and their particular brand of wisdom. Despite their popularity, however:

... it is absolutely necessary to encounter and absolutely abolish [them], before it will be possible to introduce any true notions of Goodness, Virtue, or indeed of common Sense, among Mankind; for to all of these the said Wise Men are sure to laugh, or rather shake out of the World, by that dangerous shaking of their Heads, with which they are usually so certain of triumphing over their Adversaries.

The basic evil propagated by these people is the encouragement of a false sense of values, a category of error which will be treated below.

Directly parallel to the mask of gravity is the mask of levity. This disguise can be more dangerous, for it "... throws our arms open to receive the poison, divests us of all kind of apprehension, and disarms us of all caution." The reason for this abandon of caution is that most take the "glavering, sneering smile" to be "the sign of good-nature; whereas this is generally a compound of malice and fraud, and as surely indicates a bad heart as a galloping pulse doth a fever" (285). Fielding then defines true good-nature, and contrasts it with good-humor. The definition of the latter should be noted since it offers the basis for
the distrust of levity: "Good-humor is nothing more than a triumph of the mind, when reflecting on its own happiness, and that, perhaps, from having compared it with the inferior happiness of others" (285-286).

The hostility to laughter expressed in the definition of good-humor is in contrast with the corrective function ascribed to laughter in the novels. In the Dedication to Tom Jones Fielding writes, "I have endeavoured to laugh mankind out of their favorite follies and vices." If the object of laughter merits scorn, then laughter is valuable; if not, then laughter is malicious (see the definition of malice on p. 73). In the Preface to Joseph Andrews Fielding argues laughter can be beneficial to the individual: 

"... [mirth and laughter] are probably more wholesome physic for the mind, and conduce better to purge away spleen, melancholy and all ill affections, than is generally imagined. Nay, I appeal to common observation, whether the same companies are not found more full of good-humour and benevolence, after they have been sweetened for two or three hours with entertainments of this kind, than when soured by a tragedy or a grave lecture."

The ambiguity of Fielding's attitude is evident. It should be noted that in the passage just quoted, "good-humour" is a worthwhile state of mind. It is the antithesis of "good-humour" as defined in the Characters of Men. Fielding's argument in the latter is tempered somewhat through his statement that only a certain kind of smile indicates a bad heart.
If, Fielding writes, his definition of good-humor as a "triumph of the mind" is accepted, "I believe we may admit that glowering smile, whose principle ingredient is malice, to be the symptom of good-humour" (285). 12

Good-nature, Fielding asserts, has nothing whatever to do with laughter. When the good-natured man looks about him at the preponderance of misfortune which is the share of most men, his daily countenance must be one of commiseration rather than laughter (286-287). Further, "how alien must this [laughing] countenance be to that heavenly frame of soul of which Jesus Christ Himself was the most perfect pattern; of which blessed person it is recorded, that he was never once seen to laugh, during his whole abode on earth" (286).

The second assumption (of the two mentioned earlier) which leads to error in the just estimate of men "is when we take the colour of a man's actions, not from their own visible tendency, but from his public character: when we believe what other's say of him, in opposition to what we see him do" (290). This is the error fallen into by Mrs. Fitzpatrick in Tom Jones. As she narrates her history to Sophia, on the trip to London, she attributes her unfortunate marriage to Fitzpatrick, in large part, to the public character (or, more accurately, the apparent public character) of that gentleman. "Indeed," she tells Sophia, "I believe I should not have erred so grossly in my choice if I had relied on my own judgment; but I trusted totally to the opinion of others, and very foolishly took the merit of a
man for granted, whom I saw so universally well received by the women" (XI, iv). This is not a totally accurate picture of her mistake. She had received a warning from Beau Nash concerning Fitzpatrick's character, and she says herself that Fitzpatrick was "handsome, dégagé, extremely gallant, and in his dress exceeded most others." A combination of appearance and standing with the ladies (including her aunt) attracted Sophia's cousin.

Jonathan Wild, who sees clearly through most pretences, made use of the difference between reputation and reality: "for what reason, he said, there was little greatness to be expected in a man who acknowledged his vices, but there was always much to be hoped from him who professed great virtues: wherefore, though he would always shun the person whom he discovered guilty of a good action, yet he was never deterred by a good character, which was commonly the effect of profession than of action" (IV, xv).

There is a minor evil, an offspring of too much reliance upon reputation, mentioned occasionally by Fielding, usually in connection with the growth of luxury. This is the mistaken use of only those shops, or members of the professions, that have the business of the fashionable. In the Champion for 19 February 1739-40, Fielding writes, "I recommend . . . to all persons, when they are to employ anyone in their business, not to be blindly lead by fashion, and absolutely persuaded that none can do it for them, but those who have so much business that in reality they do none at
all well. This false opinion prevails so universally in law and physic, that there is scarce a medium in either, between starving in the professions and being a slave to them." And further: "I, therefore hope, that, for the future, no one will pass by a shop because it does not stand in such a particular place, because it is not Mr. Such-a-one's, because the owner is a young beginner, or, in the polite phrase, because no body buys there. Seeing that such behavior very plainly tends to the discouragement of all industry among us."

There is one further faulty assumption which leads to errors in character analysis. It is not specifically mentioned in the Characters of Men, but occurs elsewhere in Fielding's writings. This assumption is one made by Parson Adams. That benevolent curate places great faith in the information about men gathered from his vast reading. In an argument with Joseph Andrews, Adams says, "Knowledge of men is only to be learnt from books; Plato and Seneca for that; and those are books I am afraid, child, you have never read!" (II, xvi).13 Joseph admits his lack of learning, but points out that they have been hoodwinked by the gentleman who promised Adams a rich living, and have been left to pay the entire reckoning at the inn.

In a letter from Tom Telltruth to Sir Alexander Drangcansir of the Covent-Garden Journal (26 May 1752, no. 42) the incompatibility of book learning and reality is explored. Tom notes that "Gentlemen who obtain an early Acquaintance with the Manners and Customs of the Antients, are too apt
to form their Ideas of their own Times, on the Patterns of Ages which bear not the least Resemblance to them:"

Numberless are the Instances which may be produced of those Errors of the Literati; so many indeed that I have often thought there is no less Difference between those Notions of the World which are drawn from Letters, and those which are drawn from Men, than there is between the Ideas of the Human Complexion, which are conceived of by one in perfect Health, and one in the Jaundice.

The implication here is that there is no substitute for experience. The importance of actual contact with men in order to know them is stressed in Fielding's comments on the art of the author, as well as his didactic suggestion toward the accurate evaluation of men. Both will be explored in the next chapter.

Fielding earlier stated that in order that virtue be brought to prevail in the world it is necessary that the difference between the appearance and reality of men and things always be clear. The importance of accurately judging the value of "things" will be mentioned briefly here.

This is often a playful subject in Fielding's writings, but it does on occasion appear in sober contexts. Fielding calls one form of the mistaken value of things, "Diligence in Trifles." This is that "vain Curiosity" into the nature and classification of objects that is the mark of the Fellow of the Royal Society and the collector of insects. Fielding, like Swift, lumped both together as eminently suitable
objects for satire. The phrase "Diligence in Trifles" is from number twenty-four of the **Covent-Garden Journal** (24 March 1752), which is a discussion of various forms of busy-work, from aimless reading to fox-hunting. Of the Trifler Fielding questions:

> What but the most Impatience of Idleness, could prompt Men to employ great Pains and Trouble, and Expence too, in making large Collections of Butterflies, Pebbles, and other such wonderful Productions; while others from the same Impatience have been no less busy in hunting after Monsters of every Kind, as if they were at Enmity with Nature, and desirous of exposing all her Errors.\(^{14}\)

This is the spirit which inspired both the elaborate footnotes to the *Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731) and the mock-biology of *Philosophical Transactions for the Year 1742-3* (1743).

The same subject is treated with much more gravity and considered a dangerous distortion of the proper state of affairs in the letter from Valentine to David Simple which Fielding wrote for his sister Sarah's *Familiar Letters* (1747). Valentine believes England in a "deplorable state," and tells Simple:

> The first great corrupters of our taste are the Virtuoso's, a sort of people with which we abound to so prodigious a degree that their dexterities engross almost our whole conversation. These are a kind of burlesque natural philosophers, whose endeavours are not to discover the beauties, but the oddities and frolicks of nature. They are indeed a sort of natural jugglers, whose business it is to elevate and surprise, not to satisfy, inform, or entertain.\(^{15}\)

The sentimental value people place on various trinkets would appear to be a harmless enough diversion, yet there
are areas in which Fielding can show this fallacious valuing of objects to be the cause of social wrong and personal discomfort. The excessive sentimental value placed on an object enabled a criminal organization like Jonathan Wild's to operate, for example. A highwayman would steal a watch and in a few days the watch would be described in the newspapers, with a notice that if the owner would come to such a place he could redeem the timepiece. Fielding mentions this practice in his *Inquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase in Robbers* (1751), and suggests that the repurchase of such items be made a crime: "Indeed, such advertisements are in themselves so very scandalous, and of such pernicious consequence, that if men are not ashamed to own they prefer an old watch or diamond ring to the good of society, it is a pity some effectual law was not contrived to prevent their giving this public countenance to robbery for the future."  

The problem of the perception of merit (whether in people or in things) is also a problem of relative values. The individual who places more value on the heirloom walking stick stolen by one of Wild's footpads than on doing his part in preserving the King's peace and Mrs. Fitzpatrick, when she assumes because her lover is present at the best of Bath parties he must therefore be an estimable beau, both manifest a distorted sense of values. Mrs. Fitzpatrick is unable to separate appearance from reality; the owner of the walking stick fails to make the proper choice between selfishness and the minimal social altruism required of the citi-
zen.

One critic, in a study of the digressions in *Joseph Andrews*, writes of the Leonora episode, "in this digression, Leonora is held up as an object of ridicule for her vanity in her beauty, her pleasure in being admired by other women . . . her pride in [Bellarmine's] coach and six . . . her refusal to the honest and unaffected Horatio." Using Leonora as an example for a moment, it is apparent in her history that the proper choice for her between her lovers is Horatio. More than Horatio's personal merit is involved. True, he is "worthier" than Bellarmine, but he is also shown to have been ultimately of much more satisfaction to Leonora. The relationship is between abstract values and practical ones. Horatio is a "good" man by the standard of Christian ethics. He is also the perfect mate for Leonora. Her mistaken sense of values, then, resulted not only in an instance of erroneous ethical judgment, but also in personal tragedy for her. The pragmatic strain of Fielding's writings is important to an understanding of the picture of human nature he presents, and in turn, to his conception of a cosmic order and justice.

This chapter has concerned itself with a definition of the audience for whom Fielding intended his lecture and the assumptions they commonly make which lead to errors in their perception of the true value of persons and things. Fielding attempts to make clear that all men do not abide by the "Golden Rule," and the men of candor who do must adjust their
behavior to this fact. This adjustment is ultimately necessary for two reasons: first, to insure that Christianity remains an observably valid system of ethics and morals, and secondly, to prevent "most of the great evils which have affected society, wars, murders, and massacres." Both reasons appear exaggerated, and perhaps Fielding over-stated them in order to increase their forensic value. In any case, Fielding asserts that the necessity for accurate judgment on the part of the man of candor is part of his duty as a Christian, and at the same time, upon accurate judgment depends his practical, daily survival. Fielding has, moreover, made the pragmatic aspect the clearer and more prominent of the two.

In the next chapter Fielding develops further techniques toward an accurate estimate of reality.
The Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men is vaguely divided into two sections. The first is summed up by Fielding in a tag from Juvenal, *fronti nulla fides*. The second section consists of variations on the theme of "by their fruits shall you know them" (289).

These descriptive phrases are in some part apparently contradictory. For example, there has been a lengthy discussion of why appearances and professions cannot and must not be accepted as true reflections of character, yet Fielding argues that there are outward signs to the inward nature. He writes, "the truth is, nature doth really imprint sufficient marks in the countenance, to inform an accurate and discerning eye; but, as [the discerning eye] is the property of few, the generality of mankind mistake the affectation for the reality" (288-289).

Among those countenances which Fielding warns the man of candor to distrust is that of the "glavering smile," and that of continual solemnity. Of the former, however:

... I would not be understood here to speak with the least regard to that amiable, open, composed, cheepful aspect, which is the result of a good conscience, and the emanation of a good heart; of both which, it is an infallable symptom; and may the more be depended upon, as it cannot, I believe, be counterfeited, with any reasonable resemblance, by the nicest power of art. (287)
It is difficult to establish, unfortunately, at what exact point a sneer becomes an amiable smile, or vice versa. So, too, it is too easy to mistake "avarice for parsimony, profuseness for liberality, pride for honour."¹ The discovery of such subtle distinctions requires a refined judgment², and such is the property of few.

By far the largest pitfall in the path to a useful system of physiognomy is the method and appearance of affectation:

... for, as Affectation always over-acts her part, it fares with her as with the farcical actor on the stage, whose monstrous overdone grimaces are sure to catch the applause of an insensible audience; while the truest and finest strokes of nature, represented by a judicious and fine actor, pass unobserved and disregarded. In the same manner, the true symptoms being finer, and less glaring, make no impression on our physiognomist; while the grosser appearances of affectation are sure to attract his eye, and deceive his judgment. (289)³

Fielding uses one of his favorite personifications, naked Virtue, to reenforce this point:

Nothing can, in fact, be more foreign to the nature of virtue than ostentation. It is truly said of virtue, that, could men behold her naked, they would all be in love with her. Here it is implied, that this is a sight very rare or difficult to come at, and, indeed, there is always a modest backwardness in true virtue to expose her naked beauty. She is conscious of her innate worth, and little desirous of exposing it to the public view. It is the harlot Vice who constantly endeavours to set off the charms she counterfeits, in order to attract men's applause, and to work her sinister ends by gaining their admiration and their confidence. (300)⁴

These characteristics of Virtue and Vice are impediments to the discovery of merit, and have brought us to the point at
which "we almost universally mistake the symptoms nature kindly holds forth to us" (284)\(^5\).

Fielding has discussed some hypocritical "types," or characters whose facades are the direct antithesis of their personalities. This one-to-one relationship, if it held true for all vice in disguise, might easily be described in such a way as to make available a sort of shorthand account of appearance and reality. These "types" are the least subtle, and therefore least dangerous, of hypocrites. No shorthand system would function, however, so as to indicate the villain who is capable of variegated roles, and who changes as the situation demands.

When Amelia reveals her suspicions concerning Col. James to Dr. Harrison he is shocked at the revelation. She asks if villainy is so rare as to surprise him when he finds it: "No child," cries he; "but I am shocked at seeing it so artfully disguised under the appearance of so much virtue; and, to confess the truth, I believe my own vanity is a little hurt in having been so grossly imposed upon. Indeed, I had a very high regard for this man; for, besides the great character given him by your husband, and the many facts I have heard so much redounding to his honour, he hath the fairest and most promising appearance I ever yet beheld. A good face, they say, is a letter of recommendation. O Nature, Nature! why art thou so dishonest as ever to send men with these false recommendations into the world?" (IX, v)

This speech was quoted in full since Dr. Harrison has fallen into a combination of errors. He accepted Booth's word and James's public character as well as the Colonel's fair and promising appearance.
James is an accomplished hypocrite, and presumably even the most skilled observer might misjudge him. His ability to present a good face is "to be attributed to that noble art which is taught in those excellent schools called the several courts of Europe. By this, men are enabled to dress out their countenances as much at their own pleasure as they do their bodies, and put on friendship with as much ease as they do a laced coat" (IX, ii).

Like the beau (of which James is a type), the coquette must be a skillfull impostor. Mr. Wilson, defining coquette for Parson Adams, says, "the only rule by which you can form any judgment of them is, they are never what they seem" (III, iii). Anne Boleyn, recounting her history in A Journey from this World to the Next, states that early in her life, in order to pique a young nobleman who had jilted her, she taught herself the tricks of a coquette.

I consulted my glass every morning, and got such command of my countenance, that I could suit it to the different tastes of a variety of lovers; and though I was young, for I was not yet above seventeen, yet my public way of life gave me such continual opportunities of conversing with men, and the strong desire I now had of pleasing them, led me to make such constant observations on everything they said or did, that I soon found out the different methods of dealing with them. (XIX, vii)

The man of experience in the world (like Wilson, or the Man of the Hill, or the narrator of Fielding's novels) has sufficient acquaintance with the dichotomy of being and seeming to distrust the face as a guide to the character. Parson Adams (a comic antithesis of worldly sophistication)
finds sweetness of disposition in the countenance of one he
knows to be a villain, providing a contrast to the worldly-
wise innkeeper with whom he is speaking. "'Ah! Master, Mas-
ter,' (says the host) 'if you had travelled as far as I have,
and conversed with the many nations where I have traded, you
would not give any credit to a man's countenance. Symptoms
in the countenance, quotha! I would look there perhaps to
see whether a man had the small pox, but for nothing else!'
(II, xvii).

Physiognomy, like reputation, is used by Fielding in
two senses. The meaning of the word differs according to the
narrative situation in which it is found, and the individual
who uses it. The sentiment expressed above, by the inn-
keeper, would fit exactly with the cautionary attitude rec-
ommended thus far. Yet, in the Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon
(1755), Fielding writes, "we may remark, in favor of the
physiognomist, though the law has made him a rogue and a
vagabond, that Nature is seldom curious in her works within,
without employing some little pains on the outside. . . .
A tyrant, a trickster, a bully, generally wear the marks of
their several dispositions in the countenances; so do the
vixen, the shrew, the scold, and all other females of the
like kind."^6

Here, physiognomy has a definition equivalent to the
first entry under that word in the New Collegiate Dictionary:
"Art of discovering temperament and character from outward
appearance, esp., from facial features." Fielding's position
on this science is ambivalent. The innkeeper's statement, while accurate in its context, is invalid when applied to Mrs. Francis of the *Voyage to Lisbon*. The symptoms of her character are clearly reflected in her countenance.

The description of Mrs. Francis (mistress of the inn on the Isle of Wight) is, perhaps, the best known feature of Fielding's last writing; it is a masterpiece of grotesquerie, and the sort of near-caricature which leads to the common comparison of Fielding and the artist Hogarth. Moreover, in two other illustrations of the accuracy of physiognomy, it is the mistress of an inn who is thus assessed. Both illustrations are comic, and both appear in *Joseph Andrews*. The first occurs as Mrs. Tow-wouse has just shrewishly complained of the post boy who brought the wounded Joseph to her inn.

And indeed, if Mrs. Tow-wouse had given no utter¬ance to the sweetness of her temper, Nature had taken such pains in her countenance, that Hogarth himself never gave more expression to a picture. Her person was short, thin and crooked. Her fore¬head projected in the middle, and thence descended in a declivity to the top of her nose, which was sharp and red, and would have hung over her lips, had not Nature turned up the end of it. Her lips were two bits of skin, which, whenever she spoke, she drew together in a purse. Her chin was peaked; and at the upper end of that skin, which comprised her cheeks, stood two bones, that almost hid a pair of small red eyes. . . . (I, xiv)

In the second instance, Fanny believes a hostess "one of the sourest-fac'd women she ever beheld," and she despairs of receiving charity (credit) from such a creature. The travelers do get off on credit, but only because the hostess believes Adams related to the tyrannical Parson Trulliber.
Physiognomy is in bad company here, for it is possible to read the hostess passages as caricature of physiognomy as well as caricature of the hostesses. On the other hand, one finds such remarks as the one quoted earlier on the amiable countenance which cannot be counterfeited. Further, in the sober context of the *Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*, Fielding maintains a position like that which introduced the sketch of Mrs. Francis:

. . . however cunning the disguise which the masquerader wears; however foreign to his age, degree, or circumstance, yet if closely attended to, he very rarely escapes the discovery of an accurate observer; for Nature, which unwillingly submits to the imposture, is ever endeavouring to peep forth and show herself; nor can the cardinal, the friar, or the judge, long conceal the sot, the gamester, or the rake. (283)

Fielding never states flatly the impossibility of estimating character through study of the countenance, and occasionally argues that such a science is possible to the "accurate observer."

Another definition of physiognomy emerges from this episode in *Amelia*:

I [the narrator] happened in my youth to sit behind two ladies in a side-box at a play, where, in the balcony on the opposite side, was placed the inimitable B—y C——s, in company with a young fellow of no very formal, or even sober, appearance. One of the ladies, I remember, said to the other -- "Did you ever see anything look so modest and so innocent as that girl over the way? what a pity it is such a creature should be in the way of ruin, as I am afraid she is, by her being alone with that young fellow." Now this lady was no bad physiognomist, for it was impossible to conceive a greater appearance of modesty, innocence, and simplicity, than what nature dis-
played in the countenance of that girl; and yet, all appearances notwithstanding, I myself (remember, critic, it was my youth) had a few mornings before seen that very identical picture of all those engaging qualities in bed with a rake at a bagnio, smoking tobacco, drinking punch, talking obscenity, and swearing and cursing with all the impudence and impiety of the lowest and most abandoned trull of a soldier. (I, vi).

The lady is a good "physiognomist" for she has judged, not by the young girl's beauty, but by her situation.

In the Characters of Men Fielding offers a method of accurate character analysis. This method, he writes, "... if duly attended to, would, in great measure, extirpate all fallacy out of the world; or must at least so effectually disappoint its purposes, that it would be worth no man's while to assume it, and the character of knave and fool would be more apparently (what at present they are in reality) allied or united" (301).

This method is, carefully to observe the actions of men with others, and especially with those to whom they are allied in blood, marriage, friendship, profession, neighborhood, or any other connection; nor can you want an opportunity to do this; for none but the weakest of men would rashly and madly place a confidence, which may very materially affect him, in any one, on a slight or no acquaintance. (301)

Fielding argues further that man's closest ties (like those of the brute creation) are those of blood, and, therefore, if a man should fail to perform the minimal duties required by such a relationship, he cannot then act faithfully as a friend, business associate, or public servant. This is especially true of the latter category, since "there is
no such passion in human nature as patriotism, considered abstractly, and by itself" (304). Love of country must either stem from intense training in early youth (as with Sparta and Rome), or from "universal benevolence." England has no such state-oriented training for its youth, and that motivation if therefore unavailable for someone seeking public office. If philanthropy (universal benevolence) motivates the political candidate it will show most clearly in his actions towards those with whom he is most closely connected.

The argument on patriotism presents an idea of man as possessed of a limited amount of love. The greatest part of this is expended on himself and those closest to him. The remainder is meted out to others in direct proportion to their degree of affiliation with him.

If a man hath more love than what centres in himself, it will certainly light on his children, his relations, friends, and nearest acquaintance. If he extends it farther, what is it less than general philanthropy, or love to mankind? Now, as a man loves his friend better than common acquaintance, so philanthropy will operate stronger towards his own country than any other; but no man can have this general philanthropy who hath not private affection, any more than he, who hath not strength sufficient to lift ten pounds, can at the same time be able to throw a hundred weight over his head. (303)

This is a decidedly uncomplicated, even unsophisticated, idea of the human psychology. Men are limited in the transmission of love to a definite chain, with no possible by-pass of any given link. Only a conception such as this could make valid Fielding's argument that behavior is the test of
personality. One might, for example, learn to distrust Jonathan Wild by noting that he has no love for any man or woman. Yet how could this system account for, say, the religious mystic, or the neurotic, or even a character like Mrs. Jellyby of Dicken's Bleak House, consumed as the last is with her philanthropic project in Africa and indifferent to her husband and children? Such individuals nowhere appear in Fielding's writings.

Fielding asserts his method repeatedly. He writes: "I have often thought mankind would be little liable to deceit (at least much less than they are) if they would believe their own eyes, and judge of men by what they see them perform towards those with whom they are most closely connected . . ." (301). Behavior as the accurate token of character was used as the point of contrast to those common assumptions leading to errors in perception which were mentioned in the last chapter: "... when we take their own words against their actions," and, "when we take the colour of a man's actions, not from their own visible tendency, but from his public character."

As was mentioned earlier, the most complete statement of Fielding's method appears in his comments on the art of the novelist. The first chapter of Book IX of Tom Jones is entitled, "Of Those Who Lawfully May, and of Those Who May Not, Write such Histories as These." The first qualification of the historian is genius, i.e., "that power or rather powers of the mind, which are capable of penetrating into
all things within our reach or knowledge, and of distinguishing their essential differences." A thorough classical knowledge is necessary, and:

... there is another sort of knowledge, beyond the power of learning to bestow, and this is to be had by conversation. So necessary is this to the understanding of the characters of men, that none are more ignorant of them than those learned pedants whose lives have been entirely consumed in colleges, and among books: for however exquisitely human nature may have been described by writers, the true practical system can only be learnt in the world.

Conversation is thus a synonym for experience.

The Invocation of Book VIII, Chapter I, repeats the skills requisite to the historian, and Fielding here asks for those skills for himself. Of Genius he asks, "Teach me, which to thee is no difficult task, to know mankind better than they know themselves. Remove that mist which dims the intellect of mortals, and causes them to adore men for their art, or to detest them for their cunning, in deceiving others, when they are, in reality, the objects only of ridicule, for deceiving themselves." Learning is then called on, and:

Lastly, come Experience, long conversant with the wise, the good, the learned, and the polite. Nor with them only, but with every kind of character, from the minister at his levee, to the bailiff in his spunging house; from the duchess at her drum, to the landlady behind the bar. From thee only can the manners of mankind be known; to which the recluse pedant, however great his parts or extensive his learning may be, hath ever been a stranger.

Lack of experience can have serious consequences. In A Proposal for Making Effectual Provision for the Poor (1753), Fielding explains the vindictiveness of the rich toward the
poor, even though the impoverished already suffer untold misery and discomfort. He writes, "that such wretchedness as this is so little lamented, arises therefore from its being so little known; but, if this be the case with the sufferings of the poor, it is not so with their misdeeds. They starve, and freeze, and rot among themselves; but they beg, and steal, and rob among their betters."\(^{10}\)

There is a succinct statement of the proper method of estimating one's fellow man in the *Champion* for 11 December 1739:

The only ways by which we can come at any knowledge of what passes in the minds of others are their words and actions; the latter which, hath by the wiser part of mankind been chiefly depended on, as the surer and more infallable guide. . . . It was doubtless the wish of every honest man, that he had a window in his breast, through which all his thoughts might plainly be discerned; but, however, it is certain (whatever are her reasons to the contrary) nature hath given us no such light.

A distinction is made between natural and artificial insight into character. "Genius," mentioned earlier, is no more than invention and judgment, which are given that collective title "as they are of those gifts of nature which we bring with us into the world." Conversation, or experience, on the other hand, is acquired only through time and trial and error. Tom Jones (at the time when he and Partridge first take the road together) has "a blamable want of caution and diffidence in the veracity of others, in which he was highly worthy of censure."

To say the truth, there are but two ways by which
men come to be possessed of that excellent quality. The one is from long experience, and the other is from nature; which last, I presume, is often meant by genius, or great natural parts; and it is infinitely the better of the two, not only as we are masters of it much earlier in life, but as it is much more infallable and conclusive; for a man who hath been imposed on by ever so many, may still hope to find others more honest, whereas he who receives certain necessary admonitions from within, that this is impossible, must have very little understanding indeed, if he ever renders himself liable to be once deceived. As Jones had not got this gift from nature, he was too young to have gained it by experience; for at the difflent wisdom which is to be acquired this way, we seldom arrive till very late in life. . . . (VIII, vii)

Some of the features of Fielding's earlier remarks on those for whom his instruction is intended are now clear. Genius is innate and those born with this talent need no instruction on the subject under consideration. Artificial genius is experience, or more accurately, the experience of him who is reflective enough to study and learn from his milieu. Fielding must therefore instruct the youthful and the inattentive with those rules "the efficacy (I almost said infallability) of which, I have myself experienced" (283).

The scope of the novel makes it possible for Fielding to present Tom Jones over a period of time, discovering, through his own doings and the guidance of able counsellors, the necessity for prudence and circumspection. In the essay and periodical such object lessons are not feasible, and he relies on overt instruction.

The conflict of the passions within men affects both actions and perceptions. Using the metaphor of life as the theatre of Nature (in an introductory chapter of Tom Jones),
Fielding notes that once one is admitted backstage one sees not only the vast number of disguises worn, but also, "... the fantastic and capricious behavior of the Passions, who are the managers and directors of this theatre (for as to Reason, the patentee, he is known to be an idle fellow and seldom to exert himself)" (VII, i). Since the passions have such capricious power, "a single bad act no more constitutes a villain in life, than a single bad part on the stage."

Emotions also darken one's vision. In *A Journey from this World to the Next* the narrator and his companions stop to watch the wheel of Fortune. Then, "we were obliged, before we quitted this place, to take each of us an emetic from the apothecary, which immediately purged us of all our earthly passions, and presently the cloud forsook our eyes as it does those of Aeneas in Virgil when removed by Venus; and we discovered things in a much clearer light than before" (I, vi).

By way of summary, then, Fielding intimates that a man's true character is always given some reflection in his countenance, but these reflections are often so subtle that none but the extremely acute can interpret them. On the other hand, anyone with a certain amount of judgment can learn to judge a man by his actions, and, in this way, make an accurate estimate of moral character. The man of candor must be aware of certain common mistakes which he, by reason of his candor, is likely to make. These can be schema-
tized thus:

1. accepting another individual's word, in whatever form — flattery, promises, condemnation, sanctified pronouncements, reputation, or repentance, and,

2. accepting appearance in the general areas of facial expression and material possessions.

There is no substitute for actual contact with men in order to gain the skills necessary to the perception of merit, and, since a momentary passion may lead even the best man astray, the contact must occur over a period of time.

If Fielding's attitude toward the accurate estimation of men is considered in terms of function (why is this necessary, what role does it ultimately play), the system he has devised is obviously confined to practical, temporal matters alone. No matter whether the tone in which he speaks of character judgment is comic (as the invocation in Book VIII of *Tom Jones*) or sober (as in the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men), the discussion never becomes philosophically abstract or theological. There are two reasons for this: first, as far as this world is concerned, the hypocrite (in whatever guise) is never at peace within himself, and, secondly, in terms of eternal rewards and punishments, the ultimate Judge has perfect insight, and cannot be deceived. This last point has been mentioned in connection with the *Champion* for 4 March 1739-40, \(^{12}\) and will be illustrated further in the discussion of the ephemerality of worldly honor (Ch. IV).
The temporal argument has a double edge. If man seeks the maximum satisfaction in this life (not limiting satisfaction to the gratification of the senses), and the hypocrite is never inwardly at ease, then virtue is a more satisfactory way of life. Looked at from a slightly different angle; if the virtuous man is concerned at the obvious material abundance which surrounds a man he knows to be vicious, he can have the satisfaction of knowing the riches or prestige are no final balm to a tortured mind. Simply stated, this is a belief that all men are possessed of a conscience.

The point is made in the Preface to the Miscellanea:

However the glare of riches, and awe of title, may dazzle and terrify the vulgar; nay, however hypocrisy may deceive the more discerning, there is still a judge in every man's breast, which none can cheat or corrupt, though perhaps it is the only incorrupt thing about him. And yet, inflexible and honest as this judge is (however polluted be the bench on which he sits) no man can, in my opinion, enjoy any applause which is not thus adjudged to be his due."

The discomfort of the impostor is described in the passages delineating the "saint."

... envy is not their only motive of hatred to good men; they are eternally jealous of being seen through, and, consequently, exposed by them. A hypocrite, in society, lives in the same apprehension with a thief who lies concealed in the midst of a family he is to rob; for this fancies himself perceived, when he is least so; every motion alarms him; he fears he is discovered, and suspicious that every one, who enters the room, knows where he is hid, and is coming to seize him. And thus, as nothing hates more violently than fear, many an innocent person, who suspects no evil intended him, is detested by him who intends it. (296)

Continually fearful or no, the hypocrite causes enough
evils in society that he must be discovered and combatted.

We can now turn to the *Essay on Conversation*. 
Within the *Essay on Conversation* the key word *conversation* so builds up a complex of connotations that Fielding must use phrases descriptive of aspects of "conversation," rather than the word itself. The use of this term as a synonym for the social experience (as was the case in the last chapter) need not be discarded, since such usage is justified by the definitions developed here.

In the broadest sense conversation is society, or, perhaps, the interrelationships of men (excluding institutions). It includes at one extreme the rules of etiquette, and at another a picture of mankind as a tireless purser of the truth. The following discussion will touch on both extremes, but for the most part will be limited to an expansion of the concepts contained in Fielding's own statement of the purpose of his essay, which is

... to ridicule out of society one of the most pernicious evils which attend it, viz., pampering the gross appetites of selfishness and ill-nature with the shame and disquietude of others; whereas I have endeavoured in it to show, that true good-breeding consists in contributing, with our utmost power, to the satisfactions and happiness about us.

The essay opens with the affirmation that it is "undoubtedly and obviously certain" that man is "... an animal formed for, and delighted in, society" (245). At the same
time, obviously man is not the only species which bands together in flocks, herds, or communities. Therefore society must be redefined in some way to include men, but exclude the lower animals; "... in a word, do those, who utterly deny it to the brutal nature mean any other by society than conversation?" (246). To distinguish man further from the beasts, conversation must be understood to denote more than the transmission of simple emotions through sound, since this, too, is possible in lesser animals. Fielding turns to etymology:

The primitive and literal sense of the word is, I apprehend, to turn round together; and in its more copious usage we intend by it that reciprocal interchange of ideas, by which truth is examined; things are, in a manner, turned round, and shifted, and all our knowledge communicated to each other. (246)

This skill has given man his sovereign position in the world.

Conversation is an art, in the eighteenth century use of that word, i.e., not innate. It is a "privilege," and "productive of all rational happiness" (247). Since it is not innate, the individual who would develop the skills must understand the qualities it requires of its practitioners, and its true meaning and function: "... this power is by no means self-instructed, and, in the possession of the artless and ignorant, is of so mean use, that it raises them very little above those animals who are void of it" (247). If conversation meant simply rational speech, as it seems to so far, these remarks might preclude a discourse on elocution or rhetoric, but Fielding develops a larger meaning.
The pretender to the art of conversation must first be gregarious to some degree ("in his nature social"). There are human "rogues" as well as animal ones. Such men, totally anti-social in nature, are, "... no less monsters than the most wanton abortions, or extravagant births" (247). Even allowing this to be exceptionally harsh language for Fielding, it does serve to reflect on some of his characters (the Man of the Hill especially). The statement is also yet another stressing of the variations among men.

These rogues usually live solitary, since "society is agreeable to no creatures who are not inoffensive to each other." Fielding posits further that man is a "sensible being," and simple inoffensiveness, being neither to one's advantage or disadvantage, contains no imperative to band such sensible beings together. Therefore, society must offer some positive good, "... some pleasure or advantage from each other in it, something which we could not find in an unsocial and solitary state" (248). This "art of pleasing or doing good to one another is therefore the art of conversation" (248).

Fielding's argument should be followed one more step before attempting to organize these definitions so as to be manageable for the use at hand. If this art of pleasing, he continues, is a natural inclination in man, then failure to "please" must stem from a lack of knowledge as to the means to this end. This ignorance is, in fact, so widespread that there is no suitable term descriptive of these means.
Fielding states that although the phrase is misused so as to imply fashionable dress or manners, he will use the term "good-breeding" as "the art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom you converse" (249).

Good-breeding consists of those skills which, when employed, make conversation pleasing. In other words, then, society is the grouping together of men in order to exchange ideas and be of mutual benefit. Good-breeding on the part of the individuals thus grouped is the most efficient method of obtaining this mutual betterment. And, while the simple act of banding together is part of normal human nature, good-breeding is an artificially acquired system of behavior.

In the following remarks on the essence of the behavior proper to the well-bred there appears, perhaps, the essence also of Fielding's view of the human situation.

Good-breeding then, or the Art of pleasing in conversation, is expressed in two different ways, viz., in our actions and our words, and our conduct in both may be reduced to that concise, comprehensive rule in Scripture: Do unto all men as you would they should do unto you. Indeed, concise as this rule is, what are all the treatises on ethics, but comments upon it; and whoever is well read in the book of nature, and hath made much observation on the actions of men, will perceive so few capable of judging, or rightly pursuing their own happiness, that he will be apt to conclude, that some attention is necessary (and more than is commonly used) to enable men to know truly, what they would have done unto them, or, at least, what it would be their interest to have done. (249)

As we have seen, one of the central motives underlying Fielding's moral pronouncements is the assumption of an
audience consisting of those who must be made to realize that all men are not alike. In numbers 55 and 56 of the Covent-Garden Journal Fielding argues that humours (eccentricities) and good-breeding are entirely repellant to each other.

The latter being the Art of conducting yourself by common and general Rules, by which Means, if they were universally observed, the whole world would appear (as all Courtiers actually do) to be, in their external Behavior at least, but one and the same Person. (No. 55)

The business of the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men was to prove this "one and the same Person" did not exist. The Essay on Conversation is ostensibly for the purpose of directing behavior as to bring this conformity of conduct into existence. Fielding does discuss the behavior proper to a visit in the country, and some of the do's and don'ts of behavior at an assembly, but such artificial distinctions are repellant to him and the argument invariably shades off into the more basic distinctions between true and false merit. A certain amount of drawing room etiquette must be observed in order that society function smoothly, but Fielding as a reformer of manners is careful to point out that whether a host should offer wine more than once around the table or whether a gentleman should make up a table at cards though it be against his inclinations, while meaningful problems in one's daily existence, such problems are not society's basic difficulty.

He declares it would not be feasible to lay out the
minute particulars of behavior, though he will mention some: "... after premising that the business of the whole is no more than to convey to others an idea of your esteem of them, which is, indeed, the substance of all the compliments, ceremonies, presents, and whatever passes between well-bred people. And here I shall lay down these positions:

First, that all mere ceremonies exist in form only, and have in them no substance at all; but, being imposed by the laws of custom, become essential to good-breeding...

Secondly, that these ceremonies, poor as they are, are of more consequence than they first appear, and, in reality, constitute the only external difference between man and man...

Thirdly, they raise an expectation in the person by law and custom entitled to them, and who will consequently be displeased with the disappointment. (252-253)

This is, for Fielding, an extremely dispassionate analysis of fashionable society. People of fashion are associated with the "Town," and the town (as contrasted with the country) in his works is largely vicious and corrupt. The point of departure for his criticism of the fashionable seems to be the first of the three points listed above. It is the emptiness, the lack of meaning behind fashion, which draws his contempt. He speaks of fashion as though it were diligence in trifles taken to its farthest extreme. The Covent-Garden Journal for 14 April 1752 (No. 30) is a "Dialogue at Tunbridge-Wells, between a Philosopher and a Fine Lady."

The dialogue is "after the manner of Plato," and Fielding's philosopher questions the flighty young thing in order to draw her to the logical summations he makes. The philoso-
pher defines fashion in this way: "'Tis the Creed of Fools, and the Convenience of wise Men." He draws a parallel between the unvarying principles which underly the skills necessary to playing the piano and the "Arts and Sciences of human Life."

Mr.

What then, Miss, becomes of Fashion? How comes this the chief Motive of Action? For you have acknowledged that what was proper and right should direct Fashion; and if the contrary were allowed, the Nature of Things must be subverted.

Miss.

Then you would not have me be in the Fashion? And one had as good be out of the World, as out of the Fashion.

Mr.

I never said so.

Miss.

What did you say then?

Mr.

Why, I never could make Fashion a Rule for acting; but I would have higher and steadier Principles. Surely, Miss, it requires no great Depth of Logic, to make some Distinction between what may be convenient, and what is necessary.

Here, as everywhere in his moral writings, Fielding is insisting upon the continual making of value judgments on the basis of unvarying standards.

In No. 37 of the same paper, Fielding seeks the etymology of the phrase, "People of Fashion." He rejects a possible derivation from Latin facio, since 'people who do nothing' would include beggars. The French word façon, is also not possible, since if one interprets that word to mean affectation, the phrase would then include "Clerks, Apprentices, Milliners, Mantuamakers, and an infinite number of lower People."
A third will bring Fashion from φάσις. This in the genitive plural makes φασίων, which in English is the very Word. According to him, by People of Fashion are meant People whose Essence consisteth in Appearances, and who, while they seem to be something, are really nothing.

Although this etymology is extremely possible, the writer prefers to derive the phrase as a corruption of 'People of Fascination,' fascination implying magic. This is further substantiated by their continual use of the symbolic circle -- "a polite Circle, the Circle of one's Acquaintance, People that live within a certain Circle, and many others." Fashion is therefore a cypher, a nothing.

In broader terms, but along these same lines, Fielding is critical of custom or tradition, in any form, when the effects it brings about are senseless, or even harmful. Custom alone is an unworthy arbiter of men's actions. He complains, in these terms, of the growth in the power held by critics. Those gentlemen, he says, were at first mere transcribers of laws laid down by men of genius, but they mistakenly began to judge for themselves, and to mistake forms for substances.

To these encroachments, time and ignorance, the two great supporters of imposture, gave authority; and thus many rules for good writing have been established, which have not the least foundation in truth or nature; and which commonly serve for no other purpose than to curb and restrain genius in the same manner as it would have restrained the dancing-master, had the many excellent treatises on that art laid it down as an essential rule that ever man must dance in chains.

The Covent-Garden Journal No. 25 (28 March 1752) is a type of parable. The correspondent tells the story of a
country gentleman whose luxurious and splendid garden is being destroyed by birds. His gardener refuses to kill them for fear of destroying the breed, and the gentleman acquiesces. The unreasonableness of this procedure is pointed out, and the gentleman replies by referring to the like rationale in society.

"How common it is in Life to suffer great Inconveniences, as well in public as in private Affairs, by adhering with the Obstinacy of those Gardeners to Habits which have no other Sanction but that of Custom? How often do we continue to do certain Things for no other Reason but that ourselves and our Ancestors have been used so to do, when by pursuing the contrary Method, it is very visible we should avoid some experienced Evil or attain some very apparent Good. But, indeed, ... they know but little of the World who conclude that Men will or can always embrace what they perceive to be good, tho' it should be ever so much within their Reach, and should cost them nothing to come at it."

Fielding does not espouse this blind obedience to the dictates of custom, but rather, like the philosopher, sees fashion as a "convenience."

Since the business of all the forms and ceremonies of society is no more than to convey esteem from one man to another, one must be able to recognize those to whom he owes such respect. "Men are superior to each other in this country by title, by birth, by rank in profession, and by age; very little, if any, being allowed to fortune, though so much is generally exacted by it, and commonly paid to it" (257-258). A list such as this might be considered as consisting of the signs and tokens of artificial merit, especially that of fortune. As one might expect, the subject
Incites Fielding's anger.

Mankind never appear to me in a more despicable light than when I see them, by simple as well as mean servility, voluntarily concurring in the adoration of riches, without the least benefit of prospect from them. Respect and deference are perhaps justly demandable of the obliged, and may be, with some reason at least, from expectation, paid to the rich and liberal from the necessitous; but that men should be allured by the glittering of wealth only to feed the insolent pride of those who will not in return feed their hunger; that the sordid niggard should find any sacrifices on the altar of his vanity seems to rise from a blinder idolatry, and a more bigoted and senseless superstition, than any which the sharp eyes of priests have discovered in the human mind.

(258)

Riches, then, have not even a claim to the prestige which accompanies the tokens of artificial merit.

The proper social behavior between equals, Fielding maintains, is, in essence, a willingness to participate in whatever the company finds pleasurable. As to our inferiors, "condescension can never be too strongly recommended" (264). The great evil to avoid in one's dealings with those lower in social rank is disdain.

Surely it is too high an elevation, when, instead of treating the lowest human creature, in a Christian sense, as our brethren, we look down on such as are but one rank, in the civil order, removed from us, and unworthy to breathe the same air, and regard the most distant communication with them as an indignity and disgrace offered to ourselves. This is considering the difference not in the individual, but in the very species; a height of insolence impious in a Christian society, and most absurd and ridiculous in a trading nation. (266)

Insolence, disdain, impudence, arrogance, and contempt are the attitudes that destroy social harmony. They are the
antithesis of good-breeding, and they all stem from ill-
nature and excessive pride. "If there is any temper in man, 
which more than all others disqualifies him for society it 
is ... insolence or haughtiness" (250).

Fielding illustrates this, and other modes of behavior at an assembly, in a series of brief character sketches. Agriocus, in order to satisfy his own vanity "... affronts half his acquaintance, by overlooking or disregarding them" (259). Fielding calls this sort of action, "criminal, both in its cause and effect," and in order to expose it he lists those ingredients of character which serve as its motivation.

The first ingredient in this composition is pride, which, according to the doctrine of some, is the universal passion. There are others who consider it the foible of great minds; and others again, who will have it to be the very foundation of greatness; and, perhaps, it may be of that greatness which we have endeavoured to expose in many parts of these works; but to real greatness, which is the union of a good heart with a good head, it is almost diametrically opposite, as it generally proceeds from the depravity of both, and almost certainly from the badness of the latter. Indeed, a little observation will show us, that fools are the most addicted to this vice; and a little reflection will teach us that it is incompatible with true understanding. Accordingly we see, that while the wisest of men have constantly lamented the imbecility and imperfection of their own nature, the meanest and weakest have been trumpeting forth their own excellences, and triumphing in their own sufficiency. (259-260)

This is reminiscent of the picture of modest Virtue and flaunting Vice. The man of "true understanding" is aware of his limitations and makes no pretence to superiority. The fool, on the other hand, with no merit and therefore no claim to true esteem, must resort to impudence
to gain the respect his vanity requires. This is made clear in the following passage, quoted at length since it relates closely to the remarks made earlier on the methods of the hypocrite. Pride, Fielding says, if manifest only as vanity, is harmless, and simply appears ridiculous to other men.

... but it will not stop here; though a fool be perhaps no desirable term, the proud man will deserve worse; he is not contented with the admiration he pays himself; he now becomes arrogant, and requires the same respect and preference from the world; for pride, though the greatest of flatterers, is by no means a profitable servant to itself; it resembles the parson of the parish more than the squire, and lives rather off the tithes, oblations, and contributions it collects from others, than on its own demense. As pride therefore is seldom without arrogance, so is this never to be found without insolence. The arrogant man must be insolent, in order to attain his own ends; and to convince and remind men of the superiority he affects, will naturally, by ill words, actions and gestures, endeavour to throw the despised person at as much distance as possible from him.

What is this but the Art of Thriving in terms of manners? As the sanctified hypocrite must deprecate the good man in order to make himself appear virtuous, so the vain must take care never to seem familiar with any individual below the social level to which he presumes. In the second of two anonymous "letters" to Capt. Vinegar of the Champion (29 January 1739-40), the correspondent suggests three rules; "... instructions whereby a man may arrive at that pitch of grandeur and honour in the world, which you so falsely suggested to be obtainable in the roads to virtue." They are: that a man must be a liar, he must be impudent, and he must be ungrateful. Although it is best, the letter
continues, that a man be born impudent, this art can be obtained through the proper education, viz., an Irish nurse, a French schoolmaster, a town education, familiarity with actresses, two years with an attorney, and then a period as either a page at court or as an ensign. "Particular care should be taken to keep him out of the way of all manner of learning, which hath been found too apt to render men modest."

But, when the skills of impudence are fully mastered the next step is the affectation of modesty itself: "... for he is most truly and happily impudent, who is so without appearing so." Impudence is a form of hypocrisy, and as such it is at several removes from virtue. This is obvious as the letter writer describes those instances in which presumption may safely reveal itself.

If he carries it no farther than putting a modest young lady out of countenance in a public assembly, provided she has no one by to defend her, or to the roasting of a man of real merit without assurance; to mix, without any invitation in the company of men infinitely his superiors, or bear off, or, as others call it, put on a good face on his own notorious rogueries, I think it may be allowed him. . . .

The same subject is treated twelve years later in No. 48 of the Covent-Garden Journal. Here impudence is clearly the offspring of a total lack of virtue:

To say Truth, I am almost inclined to an Opinion, that it never arrives at any great Degree of Perfection unless in a mind totally un incumbred with any Virtue, or with any good Quality whatever. It would seem that Nature had agreed with Fortune, in setting a high Value of Impudence, and had accordingly decreed that those of her children who had received this rich Gift at her Hands were amply provided for without any further Portion.
Again, impudence may be acquired through special training.

This is with the utmost Care to supress and eradicate every Seedor Principle of what is in any wise praise-worthy out of the mind; and secondly to preserve this in the purest State of Ignorance, than which nothing more contributes to the highest Perfection and Consummation of Impudence; the more a Man knows, the more inclined he is to be modest, it is indeed within the Province only of the highest human Knowledge to survey its own narrow Compass.

We can relate this emphasis on the lack of knowledge inherent in the impudent to the earlier remarks on the unreasonableness of fashion and tradition. Since the customary ceremonies of society, per se, are void of meaning, the individual who pretends to more than his share of such forms is really groping after nothing. Were he able to reflect, this situation would be obvious. Further, if he had any real insight into himself he would be aware of his own limitations, and the result would be a lesser claim to the esteem of his fellow men, not a greater. Impudence and modesty are mutually exclusive, moreover, in the light of the conclusions already reached about the nature of hypocrisy. The vain, and therefore impudent character, like all imposters, is in constant fear of being found out. His only recourse is to arrogance and contempt, just as the "saint's" only hope is in a vociferous condemnation of the truly virtuous.

Fielding mentioned earlier (p. 62) that to look with contempt upon those inferior in social station is to show the belief that the difference lies not in the individual, but in the species. He writes in 1752, "... we may ob-
serve, that the meanest and basest of all human Beings are the most forward to despise others. So that the most contemptible are generally the most contemptuous. A bad view of mankind seems therefore to stem from a bad mind. Fielding develops this point at some length in his works, showing what is, in effect, the reverse of the man of candor. The honest man of candor pictures all men as virtuous reflections of himself. The vicious, wicked, and depraved all see mankind as evil as themselves. (The candid and hypocritical ideas of men are simply assumptions about human nature, and Fielding does not imply that the hypocrite or the man of candor is unable to recognize the exceptional instance in the individual. Jonathan Wild, for example, will recognize that some men, like Heartfree, are virtuous. Wild, however, believes the virtuous individual is a fool.)

A letter from an anonymous hypocrite makes up part of the Champion for 11 December 1739. This gentleman takes advantage of his anonymity to expose himself and his motives. Fielding then comments:

... the certain existence of such persons, as my correspondent, may justify us in some degree of suspicion and caution in our dealings with mankind; yet it should by no means incline us to their opinions, who have represented human nature as utterly bad or depraved: such thoughts as these arise... from no spring than our finding the springs of depravity in our own natures.

This view of others from a study of oneself can have serious consequences. Fielding mentions one of them in his remarks on Jonathan Wild in the Preface to the Miscellany.
He insists, "... I do by no means intend the character of my hero to represent human nature in general."

Such insinuations must be attended with very dreadful conclusions; nor do I see any other tendency they can naturally have, but to encourage and soothe men in the practice of their villainies, and to make every well-disposed man disclaim his own species, and curse the hour of his birth into such a society. For my part, I understand those writers who describe human nature in this depraved character, as speaking only of such persons as Wild and his gang; and I think it may be inferred, that they do not find in their bosoms any deviation from the general rule. Indeed, it would be an insufferable vanity in them to conceive themselves as the only exception to it.

The psychological simplicity of Fielding's statements concerning the difference between the "bad" and "good" man, or true and false merit, is manifest in the thoroughness with which the good and bad outlooks, though the reverse of each other, are paralleled. The following passage calls to mind his argument of the hypocrite who is ill at ease through a knowledge of his own lack of worth.

Few men, I believe, think better of others than of themselves; nor do they easily allow the existence of any virtue of which they perceive no traces in their own minds; for which reason, I have observed that it is extremely difficult to convince a rogue that you are an honest man; nor would you ever succeed in the attempt by the strongest evidence, was it not for the comfortable conclusion which the rogue draws, that he who proves himself to be honest proves himself to be a fool at the same time.

Much depends on point of view. The rogue seems to have his own sense of satisfaction about his way of life. The Christian doctrine of final judgment with subsequent rewards and punishments is the standard whereby the good man judges, and
this gives his belief (that he who proves himself a hypocrite proves himself a fool at the same time) a value beyond that of mere "comfort."

The following remark, made by Tom Jones to the Man of the Hill, makes clear the necessity of prudence or circumspection to those inclined toward a view of human nature as base and vile. Experience, the Man of the Hill says, has brought him to the belief that "human nature is everywhere the same, everywhere the object of detestation and scorn."

As a youth, on the other hand, he believed as Tom does, that there were individuals of the highest merit.

"You might have remained so still," replies Jones, "if you had not been unfortunate, I will venture to say incautious, in the placing your affections. If there was, indeed, much more wickedness in the world than there is, it would not prove such general assertions against nature, since much of this arrives by mere accident, and many a man who commits evil is not totally bad and corrupt in his heart. In truth, none seem to have any title to assert human nature to be necessarily and universally evil, but those whose own minds afford them one instance of this natural depravity; which is not, I am convinced, your case." (VIII, xv)

The two sides of the coin of outlook are thus complete. Fielding has stated that to conceive of mankind as totally depraved is as fallacious as it is to believe men totally good. He is more forgiving with candor because it stems ultimately from an excess of a good thing (love of one's fellow men). It is unfortunate that society is so far removed from universal charity that the man of candor must be cautioned. To see human kind as a sink of iniquity, though,
is a sign of the complete lack of charity, and thus is worthy of the highest censure. Fielding warns his reader away from either extreme. To recall Matthew 10:16 again, the man of candor must learn the wisdom of serpents, while an individual inclining to the attitude of the Man of the Hill must learn to be as harmless as doves.

To discuss good-breeding at all is to discuss a phase of human behavior which in and of itself has no merit, since it is confined to the "external" difference between man and man. Tradition has established the forms of conversation, however, and because man's rational happiness lies in conversation, the forms take on importance by association. Fielding stresses the difference between means and meaning, or custom and creed, as key concepts in the complex pursuit of the truly valuable.

He begins the Essay on Conversation by establishing the Golden Rule as the basic formula of all ethical behavior, and notes at the same time that men seem unable to interpret even the simple terms of that one phrase. Some men must be taught the means ("do unto all men") that bring about the end which they seek ("as you would they should do unto you").

There are infinite particulars in the means of good-breeding, as varied as there are combinations possible between the various social ranks and the situations in which they might be so combined, but the entire process would be effortless and smooth if the single vice of impudence (which
springs from vanity) was removed. Fielding goes about illustrating the fallacy of impudence from two directions. First, he shows that to a knowledgeable, reflective individual vanity is impossible. As knowledge increases so does the awareness of one's own limitations. Secondly, if a man shows himself to be impudent, he also shows the total lack of true merit in his character. A man cannot be arrogant unless he supposes other men to be in some real sense less valuable than himself, and such a conception is completely alien to the Christian.

Fielding has thereby given another clue to true merit through a lengthy treatment of a broad area of hypocrisy. There is yet to be considered the effects of this impudence, the areas in which the perception of true merit helps society to benefit itself, and the grounds on which true merit is based.
ESSAY ON CONVERSATION (II)

IV

As this good-breeding is the art of pleasing, it will be first necessary, with the utmost caution, to avoid hurting or giving offense to those with whom we converse. And here we are surely to shun any kind of actual disrespect, or affront to their persons, by insolence, which is the severest attack that can be made on the pride of man...

Contempt is manifold in its implications. It can reveal the true personality of the contemptuous man to those who know its motivations; it can cause a number of ill effects in those against whom it is directed; and its existence is another stumbling block to the proper ordering and function of society. The revelatory aspect of contempt has been discussed. There remains to be considered the results of its use.

Vanity yields contempt, and contempt yields malice. Fielding explains the formula this way: "... to say a plain Truth, I firmly believe there is no Bosom where Vanity is to be found in any great Degree, which is not at the same Time pretty considerably tainted with Malice. Praise is a Mistress, in the pursuit of which every vain Man must have many Rivals, and what Temper of Mind Men preserve to a Rival, need not here be repeated." Vanity brings men into selfish competition with each other for the ceremonies of society by which esteem is conveyed. The contrast is ever-present
Fielding turns from the cause to the effect. The very philosophical individual (a phrase which, in Fielding's works, usually implies Stoicism) may be able to ignore malice, but philosophy, like refined judgment, is the property of few.

Though to a truly great and philosophical mind it is not easy to conceive a more ridiculous exhibition than [the vain]; yet to others he is little less than a nuisance, for contempt is a murderous weapon, and there is this difference only between the greatest and the weakest man, when attacked by it; whereas, without the shields of wisdom and philosophy, which God knows are in the possession of very few, it wants no justice to point it; but is certain to penetrate, from whatever corner it comes. (251)

Most men are seriously affected when they are the recipients of abuse of a social nature:

What is the consequence of this contempt? or, indeed, what is the design of it, but to expose the object of it to shame? a sensation as uneasy, and almost as intolerable, as those which arise from the severest pains inflicted on the body; a convulsion of the mind (if I may so call it) which immediately produces the symptoms of universal disorder in the whole man; which hath sometimes been attended with death itself, and to which death hath, by great multitudes, been with much alacrity preferred. (262)

In the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men, Fielding distinguishes between malice and envy, since the two, he thinks, are often confused. As envy "... is a repining at the good of others, compared with our own, so malice is a rejoicing at their evil, on the same comparison" (286). The malicious, moreover, are not satisfied with reflecting upon whatever flaws they might find in the indivi-
duals about them. If, presumably, these flaws were obvious to others as well, and the malicious character were without the same irregularities, he would receive the esteem proportionate to his superiority. This cannot be satisfactory, for vanity is the motivation for malice, and vanity is greed for more flattery than is justly due. The malicious, therefore, turn to slander, and the indictment of evils where there are none.

To slander is to ruin a man's reputation, and, as was mentioned in the Introduction, this is the source of incalculable confusion in the perception of true merit. The honest individual has one advantage when dealing with slander that is not immediately available in the battle against hypocrisy. Slander, in the form of libel, is a crime. Fielding, as Chairman of the Sessions of the Peace, encouraged the Grand Jury of Westminster to prosecute libel with all the legal force at its command (June, 1749). He states of libel, "... it tends immediately to quarrels and breaches of the peace, and very often bloodshed and murder itself." Libel can be the cause of civil rebellions, and is therefore more dangerous to society as it is directed toward the higher ministers of the state. For the individual (to repeat a remark quoted earlier): "Our worldly interest is closely connected with our fame; by losing this, we are deprived of the chief comforts of society, particularly of that which is most dear to us, the friendship and love of all good and
Fielding speaks of slander as a crime even in those writings which are not directly connected with his position as Justice of the Peace, as is that above. In the Covent-Garden Journal of 18 February 1752 (No. 14), for example, he complains of the lack of legal severity with which to combat slander.

"... a man may reasonably express some Wonder that in a Country whose Laws pretend to be founded on [Scripture], none, or at least very small Punishments are allotted to this heinous Crime of Slander. That so far from considering the taking away of another's Reputation as a Crime equal to that of taking away his Life, the Laws of this Christian Country do in Reality consider the taking away a Shilling as a much more grievous Offense.

Reputation is important, he writes in that paper, for this reason:

So high indeed is the value which Mankind set on a good Name, that we have frequent Instances (in the Case of Duels particularly) where Men do at least run the Risque of both Life and Soul for its Preservation. This is surely going too far; but if we agree with Aristotle in his Ethics, that not to live but to live happily is the great Business of Man, Reputation will appear of equal Value with Life itself, since our living happily so absolutely depends on our possessing this inestimable Jewel.

Since society functions best (to everyone's benefit) when the traditional ceremonies take place smoothly, each man's relative status should be readily apparent. Slander, like fashion, destroys any sort of lasting distinctions.

Although it might be more common today to attribute the evils of ambition to the existence of competition as a motive
force in society, Fielding, when discussing ambition, or avarice, or greed, defines their collective source as selfishness in one form or another. Malice is also the result of selfishness, and he finds the former very common in men. The good man can partially prevent slander from being directed against him by being careful that his actions and his appearance are at all times above reproach. He thus makes use of the difference between appearance and reality, and also exhibits prudence. Dr. Harrison makes the connection between prudence and appearance for Capt. Booth:

As the malicious disposition of mankind is too well known, and the cruel pleasure which they take in destroying the reputations of others, the use which we are to make of this knowledge is to afford no handle to reproach; for, as bad as the world is, it seldom falls on any man who hath not given some slight cause for censure, though this, perhaps, is often aggravated ten-thousandfold; and, when we blame the malice of aggravation we ought not to forget our own impudence in giving the occasion.

Malice is thus, in its effects, responsible for several general areas of misfortune. It causes personal anguish (the "convulsion of the mind"), it can result in civil disorders when directed against the state, and it obscures the accurate estimation of individual worth. There is only a hint of the importance of this third result in the Essay on Conversation, but it can be used to lead into a discussion of the most obvious practical use of the perception of merit. Fielding writes, describing contempt, "it is this disposition which inspires the empty Cacus to deny his acquaintance,
and overlook men of merit in distress . . . "(251). To aid worthy men in distress is, certainly, charity. In most of the specific instances which Fielding presents, and in some of his miscellaneous writing on this subject, charity takes the definite form of preferment.

Preferment is the process whereby men of merit can receive the emoluments which they deserve, and at the same time, as they advance to positions of authority, their merit insures that the matters over which they have power (political, ecclesiastical, legal, military) will be conducted in the best possible manner. This double benefit, to the individual and to society, cannot take place unless preferment is on the basis of true merit alone. Dr. Harrison describes the ideal state of affairs, with all its ramifications, in the following speech:

Now to deny a man the preferment he merits, and to give it to another man who doth not merit it, is a manifest act of injustice, and is consequently inconsistent with both honour and honesty. Nor is it only an act of injustice to the man himself, but to the public, for whose good principally all public offices are, or ought to be, instituted. Now this good can never be completed nor obtained but by employing all persons according to their capacities. Wherever true merit is liable to be superseded by favor and partiality, and men are intrusted with offices without any regard to capacity or integrity, the affairs of the state will always be in a deplorable situation. . . . there is another mischief which attends this kind of injustice, and that is, it hath a manifest tendency to destroy all virtue and ability among the people, by taking away all that encouragement and incentive which should promote emulation and raise men to aim at excelling in any art, science, or profession. Nor can anything . . . contribute more to render a nation contemptible among its neigh-
bors. . . . I will add only one argument more, and that is founded on the most narrow and selfish system of politics; and this is, that such conduct is sure to create universal discontent and grumbling at home; for nothing can bring men to rest satisfied, when they see others preferred to them, but an opinion that they deserved that elevation. (XI, ii)

Dr. Harrison is here seeking to persuade a nobleman to place Booth on active duty in the army and relieve him of the penury of half-pay. When Harrison first suggested that merit should be the sole standard for advancement, his lordship cried, "This is all mere Utopia." As far as Booth's actual success is concerned, and, in fact, the way Fielding saw things done around him, the exclamation is very accurate. Within the next three chapters, Booth attempts to gain the interest of a "great man" through an underling. The attempt is unsuccessful despite bribery, but the reader has expected the failure. Fielding notes, "these [underlings], indeed, themselves have a jealous eye towards all great abilities, and are sure, to the utmost of their power, to keep all who are so endowed from the presence of their masters" (XI, iv). In this way they insure their own favor, and, at the same time, perpetuate the sort of situation which has Booth on half-pay.

Fielding is caustic in his satire of favoritism. A nepotistic "patriot" is refused Elysium in the Journey From this World to the Next (I, vii), and in that work, also, Julian describes the chain of advancement he observed while a general. This can stand as Fielding's last word on any
system of preferment other than that espoused by Dr. Harrison.

For instance [Julian says], a very low fellow hath a desire for place. To whom is he to apply? Not the great man; for to him he hath no access. He therefore applies to A, who is the creature of B, who is the tool of C, who is the flatterer of D, who is the catamite of E, who is the buffoon of I, who is the husband of K, who is the whore of L, who is the bastard of M, who is the instrument of the great man. (I, xii)

Preferment is the most obvious practical use of the perception of true merit insofar as "practical" is understood to refer specifically to man's mundane concerns. In a larger sense, the accurate estimation of men's characters must play a role in "the most Christian virtue" of charity. Charity is the essence of virtue and morality in Fielding's writings, "... without which, prophesy, knowledge, and faith are represented as nothing." Fielding is referring to Scripture in the phrase just quoted, but the remark holds true for his own works. As important as charity is, and as often as he argues that good works alone are the only sure manifestation of a truly Christian character, Fielding is careful to stress the importance of a close estimation of the recipients of one's benevolence. In the Covent-Garden Journal for 2 June 1752, Fielding notes that there has been an admirable increase in the amount of charity shown in the kingdom.

... but is our Wisdom altogether as apparent in the Manner of exerting it? I am afraid the true Answer here would not be so much to our Advantage. Are our private Donations generally directed by our Judgment, to those who are properest Objects? Do not Vanity, Whim, and Weakness, too often draw
our Purse-Strings? Do we not sometimes give because it is in the Fashion, and sometimes because we cannot long resist Importunity? May not our Charity be often termed Extravagance or Folly; nay is it not often vicious, and apparently tending to the Encrease [sic] and Encouragement of idle and dissolute Persons.

On this last point, for example, Fielding cites one particular instance, i.e., the giving of money to beggars. "This Kind of Bounty is a Crime against the Public. It is assisting in the Continuance and Promotion of a Nusance [sic]." The reason for this apparently uncharitable remark lies in Fielding's concept of society as being composed of members all of whom labor for the good of the whole. Each man should contribute as his station demands. The rich, Fielding writes, may do no actual labor whatsoever, yet, in order to support their luxury they must spend of their wealth, and are thus useful to a "trading commonwealth."

But the poor (and such there must be in any nation where property is --- that is to say, where there are any rich) this is not the case. For having nothing but their labor to bestow on the society, if they withhold this from it they become useless members; and having nothing but their labor to procure a support for themselves they must of necessity become burdensome. The poor should work. To give money to beggars is to encourage their indolence, and thus draw them further from their proper and useful role in society.

This aspect of Fielding's inculcation of the necessity for judgment has been treated, briefly, elsewhere, but a reexamination of his criteria for charity will show their relationship to that line of Fielding's thought which is
being discussed here. Following, for a moment, the discussion of society as functioning when its members "are obliged to contribute a share to the strength and wealth of the public," Fielding writes:

Nature hath denied us this by laying certain individuals in every society under a natural incapacity not only of administering to the good of others, but even of providing for and protecting themselves. Such are the incapacities of infancy and of old age, and of impotency either of mind or body, natural or accidental. Those naturally enfeebled are thus proper objects of charity. They, unlike the able-bodied beggar, are under no circumstances able to contribute their share.

There are, nevertheless, certain individuals deserving of charity who are sound of mind and body. These are listed by Fielding in the Champion for 16 February 1739-40. The first of these are those who, "partly through want of resolution to quit the characters in which they were bred, and partly for want of duly considering the consequences of their expenses," are now in distressed circumstances. The second group are those younger sons and brothers who have been outspoken opponents of the current ministry and are therefore refused preferment in the professions which tradition has delegated to them. Third are those of any profession, who, "by misfortunes and unavoidable accidents," have fallen from affluence to want. The fourth consists of those who, "for want of reputation, friends, or money," are unable to succeed in their chosen art or science. "Lastly, and perhaps chiefly," are those who have been taken to prison for debt.
These five groups are illustrations of most of the effects of those evils which Fielding has described as resulting from excess of candor, or from those general areas of social evil which he links with hypocrisy in one of its forms. The younger relatives, for example, suffer from the system of preferment which grants advancement on grounds other than merit. The misfortunes of the fourth group Fielding says arise "through the envy, pride, ill-nature, and ill-judgment of mankind, which four qualities we generally call ill-fortune." He writes, in summary, of all these deserving persons:

These I think are the chief objects of our compassion, on account of their circumstances, amongst whom great regard is to be had to the several merits of the sufferer, and the occasion of his sufferings. I own I am one of those who think there is some merit in misfortunes, especially when they are not balanced with guilt, I look on indiscretion with pity, not abhorrence, and on no indiscretion with so much pity as that of extravagance, which as it may bring men into the greatest calamities of this life; so may it arise from the goodness, the openness, and the generosity of the heart; qualities which naturally enlarge in every man's eye the idea of his possessions, as avarice lessens it.

The man of candor, Fielding wrote in the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men, must learn caution, judgment, prudence. The failure to do so is almost certain to bring about personal discomfort, and always contributes to the continuance of those evils which hypocrisy has created in society. With these remarks on the only physically and mentally able objects of one's charity, Fielding is advocat-
ing the use of judgment in the exercising of benevolence. The men who require such instruction are those marked by generosity and openness of heart. The objects of their charity are those who suffer through their generosity and openness of heart. Fielding has used a mirror as the exemplum of his sermon.

There is one consideration which should be uppermost in the minds of all men, whether they be successful in society, or miserable in it, and this is the necessity for a right judgment as to ultimate worth. In other words, this is the perception of the relative merit of things of this world and things of the next. Fielding, utilizing one of the unique features of Jonathan Wild, i.e., long soliloquies, has Heartfree argue out this ultimate choice (III, ii).

Heartfree is in prison, bankrupt, and separated from his family. He asks himself if reason is sufficient to control his passions, and finds the answer is no; at least, "it hath not such despotic empire in our minds, that it can, with imperial voice, hush all our sorrows in a moment." What then is reason's use?

Why, what can its office be other than justly to weigh the worth of all things, and to direct us to that perfection of human wisdom which proportions out esteem of every object by its real merit, and prevents us from over or undervaluing whatever we hope for, we enjoy, or we lose.

Reason, then, keeps man from the extremes of exultation and despair, and, in fact, shows any extreme to be ludicrous. Most men are so superficial in their perception of merit that
"a feather or a fiddle are their pursuits and their pleasures through life." Yet, at the other extreme are the super-philosophical men who reject as unworthy all contact with others.

How soon do they retreat to solitude and contemplation, to gardening, and planting, and such rural amusements, where their trees and they enjoy the air and the sun in common, and both vegetate with very little difference between them. But suppose (which neither truth nor wisdom will allow) we could admit something more valuable and substantial in these blessings, would not the uncertainty of their possession be alone sufficient to lower their price? How mean a tenure is that at the will of fortune, which chance, fraud, and rapine are every day so likely to deprive us of, and often the more likely by how much the greater worth our possessions are of! Is it not to place our affections on a bubble in the water, or a picture in the clouds?

But, Heartfree continues, if he can have no hope in this world, there is no argument yet conceived which can prevent his hope in the next.

If the proofs of Christianity be as strong as I imagine them, surely enough may be deduced from that ground only, to comfort and support the most miserable man in his afflictions. And this I think my reason tells me, that, if the professors and propagators of infidelity are in the right, the losses which death brings to the virtuous are not worth their lamenting; but if these are, as certainly they seem, in the wrong, the blessings it procures them are not sufficiently to be coveted and rejoiced at.

Christian hope is sufficient, then, to remove all sorrow from himself, but, Heartfree asks, what of his children? "Why, the same Being to whose goodness and power I entrust my own happiness is likewise as able and as willing to procure theirs." Heartfree is aware that his children must live
in society, and he must prepare them for this.

I will do the utmost to lay the foundations of my children's happiness, I will carefully avoid educating them in a station superior to their fortune, and for the event trust to that Being in whom whoever rightly confides, must be superior to all worldly sorrows.

The choice Heartfree makes is the choice Fielding continually illustrates must be made. The ultimately valuable is other-worldly. Interestingly enough, though he never draws explicit attention to it, Fielding often dramatically represents the good man, one who has made the proper choice and lives by it, invariably succumbing to the worldly when it affects those he loves. Heartfree, "superior to all worldly sorrows," throws an arresting officer against a wall when that gentleman attempts to mistreat the Heartfree children (III, xii). So, too, with Parson Adams, who, after delivering a lecture on resignation to Divine will, falls into agonies of grief at the report of his son's supposed drowning (IV, viii). In his essay, Of the Remedy of Affliction for the Loss of Our Friends, Fielding recommends that in order to temper the grief which attends the death of one we love, it is best to have prepared oneself by continually thinking on the eventual dissolution of any relationship.

And here I address myself to common men, and who partake of the more amiable weaknesses of human nature; not to those elevated souls whom the consummation of virtue and philosophy hath raised to a divine pitch of excellence, and placed beyond the reach of human calamity. 12

There is irony in "divine pitch of excellence," and he later
calls the tears of the first moments of anguish, a "laudable tenderness."

If love is stronger than reason in this special instance, there is no valid emotion involved in one's other earthly pursuits.

Divines . . . have taken great Pains to prove that the Man who sacrifices his Hopes in another World to any Acquisitions in this, however wise he may call himself or may be called by others, is in Reality a very silly Fellow. These have endeavoured to shew us, that a Rascal gibbeted up as it were on the Mount of Ambition, or a Wretch wallowing in the Mire of Avarice, is in Truth a Fool, and will be convinced of his Folly when it is too late.

Fashion, even in the form of a gentleman's code of honor, is as worldly as the lust for gold. Dr. Harrison loses his temper when Amelia suggests that Capt. Booth's honor might require that he fight a duel.

"Honour! Nonsense! Can honour dictate to him to disobey the express commands of his Maker, in compliance with a custom established by blockheads, founded on false principles of virtue, in direct opposition to the plain and positive precepts of religion, and tending manifestly to give a sanction to ruffians, and to protect them in all the ways of impudence and villainy?"

(XII, iii)

Dr. Harrison's rhetorical question serves to connect this ultimate concern and matters of fashion, custom, and society. To fight a duel is to give tradition superiority to religion. This is to make fashion one's creed, and in the distinction made by the philosopher of Tunbridge-Wells, no one does this but fools.
This thesis has been, throughout, in some sense nega-
tivistic. It has been concerned with the perception of true
merit, rather than with merit itself, and Fielding's method
of indoctrinating the skills to that perception is primarily
one of caveat. This is due to the nature of his audience,
as has been mentioned. To some extent, a vague realization
of true merit builds up as Fielding continues to add to the
list of things which it is not. Fortune alone is not, and
clothing is not ("If dress be their only title, sure even
clothing is not ("If dress be their only title, sure even
the monkey, if as well dressed, is on as high a footing as
the beau"). In the Essay on Conversation Fielding remarks
(almost as an aside), "the qualities of the mind do, in rea-
ality, establish the truest superiority over one another
... " (265), but he does not develop this into an outline
of the qualities to which he refers. He does offer the an-
swer, negatively, in the conclusion of the essay:

... every person who indulges his ill-nature
or vanity, at the expense of others; and in in-
troducing uneasiness, vexation, and confusion
into society, however exalted or high-titled he
may be, is thoroughly ill-bred.

If ill-breeding comes from ill-nature, then good-breeding
comes from good-nature. Fielding has affirmed earlier that
good-breeding is "artificial good-nature" (250), but this is
not to state positively the qualities of good-nature. He
does this in the Champion for 27 March 1740. This statement
of true merit (good-nature) bears quoting in full, since it
is, so to speak, the pot of gold Fielding has urged his read-
ers to search after.
...as good-nature is a delight in the happiness of mankind, every good-natured man will do his utmost to contribute to the happiness of each individual; and consequently...every man who is not a villain, if he loves not the good-natured man is guilty of ingratitude.

This is that amiable quality, which, like the sun, gilds over all our other virtues; that it is, which enables us to pass through all the offices and stations of life with real merit. This only makes the dutiful son, the affectionate brother, the tender husband, the indulgent father, the kind master, the faithful friend, the firm patriot. This makes us gentle without fear, humble without hopes, and charitable without ostentation, and extends the power, knowledge, strength, and riches of individuals to the good of the whole. It is (as Shakespeare calls it) the milk, or rather the cream of human nature, and whoever is possessed of this perfection should be pitied, not hated for the want of any other. Whereas all other virtues without some tincture of this, may be well called splendidia pecoeta; for the richer, stronger, more powerful, or more knowing an ill-natured man is, the greater mischiefs he will perpetrate; it is ill-nature, with these qualities, which hath fettered and harassed mankind; hath erected the tyrant's throne, hath let loose the conqueror's two-edged sword, and the priest's two-edged tongue; hath imposed severe laws, invented cruel punishments, hath sent abroad fire and sword and faggot, to ravage, burn, depopulate and enslave nations. Lastly, hath injuriously bowed the conquered father down to, and bred up the slavish son in an estimation and honour of those men and those actions, which are the just objects of contempt, abhorrence, and detestation.

I know not so great, so glorious, so lovely an idea of the benevolent Creator of the universe, as that which is affixed to Him by the noble author whom we have so often quoted and shall quote. He is (say he) the best natured being in the universe; the more therefore we cultivate the sweet dispositions in our minds, the nearer we draw to divine perfection; to which we should be the more strongly incited, as it is that which we may approach the nearest to. All his other attributes throw us immediately out of sight, but this virtue lies in will, and not at all in power.
Capt. Hercules Vinegar, "editor" of The Champion, proposed on 22 December 1739 the establishment of a court in which he, as sole judge, would try anyone in the kingdom. It is true, he says, that murderers and robbers receive the death penalty if found guilty, but there are those "invaders and destroyers of our lives and fortunes" who are outside the pale of civil law.

Nor would it be enough that those greater crimes should be punished, the covetous, the prodigal, the ambitious, the voluptuous, the bully, the vain, the hypocrite, the flatterer, the slanderer, call aloud for the champion's vengeance. In short, whatever is wicked, hateful, absurd or ridiculous, must be exposed and punished before this nation is brought to that height of purity and good manners to which I wish to see it exalted.

Fielding elsewhere extends this court, hoping to make all men able and astute judges. He seeks to make all men "champions," and in this connection one is reminded of the "arming" metaphor he used while defining the purpose of the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men. The champion must be able to expose the hateful, wicked, absurd, and ridiculous, and to do so he must be able to recognize them. Once these evils are revealed it is possible for purity to prevail, and, since man is by nature social, good manners will be the partner of purity in this renaissance.

I proposed in the Introduction to examine the theme of
the perception of true merit in Fielding's writings. In so
doing it appears that Fielding urged, on several levels,
the necessity for this ability to weigh things according to
their real value. Such perception serves to protect a man
in his business dealings, to guide one who is in love, and
to give support to those grieving at the time of death.
When it is applied to the human situation as a whole, it
can lead man to his everlasting reward. The words serve,
guide, and help indicate the true nature of perception: a
tool, an instrument to be used by men, and not an end in
itself.

Perception is a tool, moreover, which is of no value
to one who vegetates in isolation. Man, Fielding argues,
receives more positive benefits from communion with other
men than he can obtain in any other way. Yet society is,
unfortunately, a mixed blessing. Men are neither univer-
sally good nor evil, and one must come in contact with both.
There is no alternative, then, but to strive to acquire the
habits of perception, and the caution, which enable judg-
ment to operate.

The methods of hypocrisy (usually exaggerations of vir-
tuous mannerisms) are never, Fielding states, so clever as
to be imperceptible. There are sufficient indications of
character in a man's actions, both private and public, to
reveal him. Fielding's system of perceiving true merit is
based on a cause and effect relationship. In the physics
of personality and behavior, an individual's outlook determines his actions. For example, if a man believes mankind naturally depraved, he acts (in some way or another) as though they are so. This makes possible a rational deduction of cause from effect, of reality from appearance. Fielding illustrates this from both directions, showing what character must lie behind a given action or set of actions, and also how one point of view necessitates one type of behavior.

Most contemporary scholarship has stressed Fielding's inculcation of benevolence and his portrayal of good-nature. This aspect of his moral concern is directed towards those readers who are wavering and as yet uncommitted to either virtue or vice, or to those who have fallen into error. His remarks on the perception of true merit, on the other hand, addressed as they are to those who are essentially good, are not intended to convert, but to caution, not to glorify the charitable outlook, but to check it. This is a delicate matter, since he could be too easily misunderstood to encourage selfish egocentricity or the sort of headlong altruism one associates with sentimentalism. In fact, throughout the remarks considered here, he continually stresses the middle ground, that outlook which is loosely termed common sense. The vapid grin and stolid solemnity are both as much masks as those of comedy and tragedy one finds over the proscenium of a theatre. But, he writes,
"I would not be understood here to speak with the least regard to that amiable, open, composed, cheerful aspect, which is the result of a good conscience, and the emanation of a good heart."

Common sense, whatever its practical value when applied, is a vague concept, and difficult to delimit. It makes use of apparent paradoxes, defining the extremes involved so as to make them complimentary, rather than mutually exclusive. This is true, for example, of the phrase from the gospel of Matthew (10:16), "be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Harmless cannot imply innocence, or naivete, when applying this phrase to Fielding's pronouncements, since he insists that one cannot presume to accurate perception without experience. Harmless as a synonym for virtuous, however, is perfectly acceptable. Fielding's avowed purpose is to make men wise.

To stress the perception of merit, as this study does, rather than merit itself, serves to emphasize the existence of complimentary forces in Fielding's moral outlook. He encourages charity and he encourages caution in its use. As Heartfree's soliloquy illustrates, judging is a vital process, one which, while establishing an ultimate criterion of value, at the same time indicates the necessity of its use in any and every action. Fielding's writings are thus concerned with the pragmatic, and the day to day problems; for, once he has established the certainty of an unvarying ultimate
judgment, further discussion of the abstract is unnecessary. If Fielding's works have a claim to universality, that claim rests in part in the vitality and adaptability of his concept of individual moral responsibility.
1. The date is that of publication for all three items. For a complete list of Fielding's miscellaneous works see the bibliography in W. L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding* (New Haven, 1918), vol. III, pp. 289-335, and the *Miscellanies* (1743). Cross does not list individually the essays which appeared for the first time in the latter work.


4. I have drawn the information on the latitudinarian position from R. S. Crane, "Suggestions toward a Genealogy of 'The Man of Feeling,'" *ELH*, I (1934), 205-230, and Battestin.

5. All quotations from *Tom Jones* are from the Everyman's Library edition (1957).


10. For example: *Of True Greatness* (1741); *The Vernon-iad* (1741); *An Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men* (1743); *A Dialogue between Alexander the Great and Diogenes the Cynic* (1743); *A Charge to the Grand Jury* (1749); in the *Champion*, Nov. 27, Dec. 11, 1739, Jan. 3, Jan. 5, Feb. 2, March 1, March 6, March 13, 1739-40, May 3, 1740; in *The*
11. Fielding complicates the matter further with a concept of true and false greatness. It will be noted, for example, that in the Preface to the Miscellanies the "true sublime in human nature" is the man who is both great and good. Works, V, pp. 245ff.


13. Squire Allworthy describes the effects of loss of reputation and the very different effects of actual villainy to Tom Jones:

... there is this great difference between those faults which candor may construe into imprudence, and those which can be deduced from villainy only. The former, perhaps, are even more apt to subject a man to ruin; but if he reform, his character will, at length, be totally retrieved; the world, though not immediately, will in time be reconciled to him; and he may reflect, not without some mixture of pleasure, on the dangers he hath escaped; but villainy, my boy, when discovered, is irretrievable; the stains which this leaves behind no time will wash away. The censures of mankind will pursue the wretch, their scorn will abash him in public; and if shame drives him into retirement, he will go to it with all those terrors with which a weary child, who is afraid of hobgoblins, retreats from company to go to bed alone. Here his mured conscience will haunt him. — Repose, like a false friend, will fly from him. Wherever he turns his eyes, horror presents itself; he looks backward, unavailable repentance treads on his heels; if forward, incurable despair stares him in the face, till, like a condemned prisoner confined in a dungeon, he detests his present condition, and yet dreads the consequence of that hour which is to relieve him from it. (XVIII, 10)
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Works, XV, 238.

2. All quotations from Jonathan Wild are from the Everyman's Library edition (1958). The reference is to book and chapter.

3. Works, XIV, 291. All quotations from the Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men are from this edition. The citation is to page.

4. All quotations from Amelia are from the Everyman's Library edition (1950). The reference is to book and chapter.

5. See, for example, Eleanor N. Hutchens, "'Prudence' in Tom Jones: A Study of Connotative Irony," PCl, XXXIX (1960), 496-507. Miss Hutchens notes the changing value of the word prudence depending on context and speaker.

6. Early Masters of English Fiction, p. 122. Cf. the fourth definition of candour in the NED, which is, in part: "Freedom from malice; favorable disposition; kindness. . . ." Mary C. Randolph, in her essay, "'Candour' in XVIIIth-Century Satire" (RES, XX (1944), 45-62) documents that century's definitions of the term. She points out that in the latter half of the century some writers began to rebel against the misuse of "candour" in contemporary satires. The term fell into disfavor near the end of the century, e.g., Mrs. Candour of R. B. Sheridan's School for Scandal (1777), a malicious gos¬sip. Fielding does not rely heavily upon the term (witness the series of adjectives open, honest, undesigning used repeatedly) and Miss Randolph does not cite Fielding in her heavy documentation.

7. Capt. Booth has more justification for his trust in Trent and Col. James. Booth has known them both, and nothing in their actions hitherto has lead him to suspect them (with the important exception of James's avowed motivation of acting from the passion of the moment alone). Booth takes the word of both men with discomforting results, but Fielding is careful to partially excuse his trust in Trent: "... indeed, had he known quite as much of Trent as the reader doth, no motive whatsoever would have prevailed on him to have taken the old gentleman's advice" (XI, iv). Allworthy mistakenly accepts the account given by Blifil and Thwackum of Tom's behavior on the night of his patron's recovery, though not without questioning the confused Tom (VI, x-xi).
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8. Works, II, 268. All quotations from A Journey from this World to the Next are from this edition. The reference is to book and chapter.


10. The Covent-Garden Journal, ed. G. E. Jensen (New Haven, 1915), II, 125. All quotations from this journal are from this edition.

11. "Good-nature is that benevolent and amiable temper of mind, which disposes us to feel the misfortunes, and enjoy the happiness of others; and consequently, pushes us on to promote the latter, and prevent the former; and that without any abstract contemplation of the beauty of virtue, and without the allurements and terrors of religion" (285).

12. This definition of good-humor bears a close resemblance to the Hobbesian theory of laughter based on pride, which Fielding indeed mentions. As S. M. Tave notes (The Amiable Humorist (Chicago, 1960), p. 72), Fielding is on both sides of the laughter controversy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the Characters of Men Fielding states that "laughter is one of the first efforts of the mind, which few attend to, or, indeed are capable of discovering . . . so it doth not properly constitute the character" (286-287). Spontaneous laughter, then, is an involuntary reaction. If it continues past the point at which reflection and reason should reveal the situation to merit sympathy rather than scorn, then the laughter becomes malevolent entirely. Fielding exempts the harmless laughter of adlermen and squires which stems from dullness, and all the forms of laughter shown by women, since the knowledge of the characters of women, " . . . is in fact a science to which I make not the least pretension" (288).

13. All quotations from Joseph Andrews are taken from the Oxford World's Classics edition (1957). The citation is to book and chapter.

14. In the Essay on Nothing Fielding says: ". . . the study of this important subject [nothing] fills up the whole life of the antiquary, it being always at the bottom of his inquiry, and is commonly at least discovered by him with infinite labour and pains." Works, XIV, 311.

15. Works, XVI, 29. Valentine defines taste as, "the knowledge of what is right and fit in everything."


17. Works, XIII, 77.
NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. See the Champion for 2 February 1739-40.

2. Judgment is defined in the Champion for 27 March 1740 as the "distinguishing faculty." It is "... perhaps the sole boundary between wisdom and folly." The first chapter of Book IX of Tom Jones defines judgment as the discovery of the difference between two things. Invention is judgment's counterpart since it is a "quick and sagacious penetration into the true essence of all the objects of our contemplation."

3. The most obvious example of this point is the comic scene of Partridge at the play (Tom Jones, XVI, v). Partridge is not impressed with Garrick's portrayal of Hamlet: "I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did." He believes that the King was by far the better actor: "he speaks all his words distinctly, half again as loud as the other."

4. Cf. Introduction and the nearly identical statement in the Champion. As Allan Wendt has argued ("The naked Virtue of Amelia," ELH, XXVII (1960), 131-149), Fielding ultimately suggests that an object of virtue (e.g., Amelia or Allworthy) does not supply the complete moral imperative. Battestin argues Christianity alone supplies this motivation in Fielding's outlook (op. cit., pp. 60-64).

5. Fielding suggests in Tom Jones that in order to "do one's business in the world" the inherent modesty of virtue must be overcome.

Prudence and circumspection are necessary even to the best of men. They are indeed, as it were, a guard to Virtue, without which she can never be safe. It is not enough that your design, nay, that your actions, are intrinsically good; you must take care that they shall appear so. If your inside be never so beautiful, you must preserve a fair outside also. This must be constantly looked to, or malice and envy will take care to blacken it so, that the sagacity and goodness of an Allworthy will not be able to see through
it, and to discern the beauties within. Let this, my young readers, be your constant maxim, that no man can be good enough to enable him to neglect the rules of prudence; nor will Virtue herself look beautiful, unless she be bedecked with the outward ornaments of decency and decorum. (III, vii).


7. The component parts of genius are judgment and invention, see note 2 above.

8. This is apparently contradicted in Fielding's Preface to his sister's Familiar Letters. There he says, "in reality, the knowledge of human nature is not to be learnt by living in the hurry of the world." But, he continues, "true genius, with the help of a little conversation, will be capable of making a vast progress in this learning." The original statement is simply a stronger version of the sentiment which ends this paragraph, "... daily experience may convince us, that it is possible for a blockhead to see much of the world, and know little of it." (Works, XVI, pp. 20-21).

9. Cf. Book VII, Ch. 1, "... we, who are admitted behind the scenes of this great theatre of Nature (and no author ought to write anything besides dictionaries and spelling books who hath not this privilege) ..."

10. Works, XIII, 141.

11. This passage is ironic, and an illustration of the narrow lines between the distinctions Fielding has made. Genius, here, is twisted to become "suspicion," i.e., the conviction that there are no honest men. Invention and judgment (see note 2 above) are faculties of the mind, and, as the components of genius, are, not, ideally, productive of any particular outlook toward men. At the same time, to be continually on guard, ever consciously employing judgment, is to be suspicious.

This is an irony which is a natural, if not necessary, development of Fielding's attitude toward candor. It is the condition of the world which makes Tom's openness "highly worthy of censure," Candor, if the world were as Fielding would have it, would be the outlook of all men. Irony allows Fielding to make both points; one must learn caution, and, it is a shame that it must be so. (The necessity for experience is treated in the next two chapters).

12. See Introduction, section II.

13. Works, XII, 243-244.
NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. George Sherburn's essay, "Fielding's Social Outlook," contains a discussion of the concept of society as consisting of, and functioning efficiently by, each individual in his proper station, doing those things which his station requires.

2. Preface to the Miscellanies. Works, XII, 238.

3. All quotations from the Essay on Conversation are from Works, XIV. The citation is to page.

4. This conformity does not imply an attempt to remove individuality from men. Fielding is here satirizing the fashionable courtier as well as making a point about good-breeding. He states below that etiquette (fashion) is a convenience and not a creed, and surely Parson Adams, though unique, abides by the Golden Rule. Fielding would have men accept certain rational modes of behavior (each according to his station) without giving up their individuality in a slavish conformity to fashion.

5. Fielding was criticized in his own day for portraying "low" life in preference, if not to the exclusion of, "high" (see Cross, Vol. II, ch. xviii). Hazlitt, in his Lectures on the English Comic Writers (1819) says of Fielding, "he does not draw lofty characters or strong passions; all his persons are of ordinary stature as to intellect; and possess little elevation of fancy, or energy of purpose" (Dolphin Books edition, Garden City, n.d., pp. 164-165). For a recent discussion of Fielding's use of "high" and "low" see William B. Coley's "The Background of Fielding's Laughter," ELH, XXVI (1959), 229-252.

6. No. 4 of the Covent-Garden Journal contains a "Modern Glossary." In order to bring precision to the fashionable vocabulary, Fielding defines a series of words as they are presently used in Society. A small sampling will convey the tone of this dictionary of fashionable talk:

BEAR: A Country Gentleman; or, indeed, any animal upon two legs that doth not make a handsome Bow.

BRUTE: A Word implying Plain-Dealing and Sincerity, but more especially applied to a Philosopher.

DRESS: The principle Accomplishment of Men and Women.

GALLANTRY: Fornication and Adultery.
NO BODY: All the People in Great Britain, except about 1200.


WISDOM: The Art of Acquiring all Three.

7. Tom Jones, V, i.


NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Covent-Garden Journal No. 60 (22 August 1752).

2. After describing the behavior of the vain, Fielding writes, "But behold a more pleasing picture of the reverse. See the Earl of C[hesterfield], noble in his birth, splendid in his fortune, and embellished with every endowment of mind; how affable! how condescending! himself the only one who seems insensible that he is every way the greatest person in the room" (251).

3. See as the clearest example, Of the Remedy of Affliction for the Loss of Our Friends (1743). (Works, XVI, 97-109).


5. Sherburn notes this briefly, op. cit., p. 5.

6. Amelia, III, i.

7. For a more complete discussion of charity as the corner stone of Fielding's moral pronouncements see in Battestin, op. cit., the chapter, "Fielding's Ethics."


12. Works, XVI, 102.


14. This subject is given its best and most thorough exposition in Martin C. Battestin's The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art.

15. I have been unable to determine the author referred to.
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