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**Studies in  
Eighteenth-Century  
Culture**

VOLUME 18

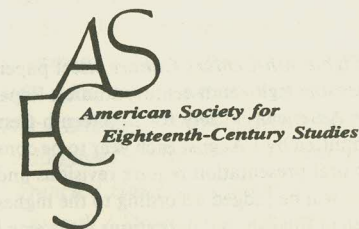
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CB 411 . 568 vol. 18



PUBLISHED for the  
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES  
by COLLEAGUES PRESS

## *Reconstructing the Gaze: Voyeurism in Richardson's Pamela*

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Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) has been accused of appealing to its audience's voyeurism at least since Henry Fielding's *Shamela* was published in 1741. And readers ever since Fielding's "Parson Tickletext" have with some embarrassment caught themselves in mid-peep as they gazed, entranced, at the spectacle of Pamela, "with all the pride of ornament cast off," as Tickletext says. Fielding's unselfconscious parson exposes a voyeuristic economy working in Richardson's novel, an economy that makes a textual/sexual spectacle of the heroine and peeping Toms of both the hero and the reader. What Fielding's parody reveals about Richardson's text is that the story of an attempted seduction that evolves into a bourgeois ideal of marital love is, in material terms, a power struggle between gendered opponents in which the stakes are wealth and the sexual possession of the Other, the desired object. Squire Booby wants Shamela; Shamela wants Booby's money and Parson Williams who, in turn, wants Shamela, but not at the cost of Booby's patronage: a crude, material version of the games of desire, resistance, and possession played out in *Pamela*. What Fielding also suggests, through his gullible parson, is the reader's unconscious involvement in this struggle, his (or her) participation in the novel's trajectory of desire: to possess the Other, sexually, materially—and literarily. Fielding's "reading" of *Pamela* exposes a social/sexual dynamic in which see-



ing and being seen are components in the characters' struggle for power, and the means by which readers are seduced into accepting that struggle as "innocent," exempt from material concerns of who possesses what or whom.

Fielding lays bare a spectatorial complacency that the text of *Pamela* encourages; what Fielding's satire does not fully acknowledge, however, is the complex narrative strategy that makes complacent peepers of readers more self-aware than the good Parson: this strategy, I shall argue, attempts to place the reader "above" any sleazy misperceptions of the heroine by exposing and debunking the process of voyeurism as it is depicted in the text. Richardson repeatedly calls attention to the activity of Pamela-watching through Pamela's watching of Pamela-watching, the many instances, in her letters, in which Pamela comments on how others see her according to their own misogynistic assumptions about femininity.

This "reflexivity," the text's calling attention to its own stagings of voyeuristic relations between Pamela and other characters, suggests that Richardson was not as unselfconscious about the ethics of voyeurism as Parson Tickletext. And his carefulness with managing how the reader sees Pamela would seem to have a context in contemporary thinking about the relation between subject and object, the spectator and the spectacle. The subject-object dichotomy of seventeenth-century psychology brings into discourse an uneasiness about the moral implications of watching and the power relations between the one who watches and the one who is watched. A pleasure in observing others' distresses might be explained in seventeenth-century theories of the spectator's psychology by Hobbesian self-love, a pleasure in one's own safety, or by fellow-feeling, pity for another's distress. Descartes based either explanation, pity or pleasure in one's own safety, on the difference between subject and object, self and other, a difference that necessarily involves an awareness of relative positions of power. "*Those who are the most given to pity,*" for instance, as Descartes explains, are "*Those who feel themselves very feeble and subject to the adversities of fortune . . . they represent the evil of others as possibly occurring to themselves; and then they are moved to pity more by the love that they bear to themselves than by that which they bear to others.*"<sup>1</sup> The spectator's relative position of power determines, in part, the response to spectacle. This awareness of a power relation between observer and observed implicitly informs the split between self and other; the self-love of the spectator creates pity for others' misfortunes or, in the case of viewing ridiculous or contemptible objects, a self-congratulatory sense of personal exemption from the cause of ridicule. Descartes explains that "indignant laughter" proceeds

from "observing the fact that we cannot be hurt by the evil at which we are indignant."<sup>2</sup>

Hobbes's theories of spectatorial pleasure gave a more explicit articulation to the split between spectator and spectacle as an unbridgeable gap between an empowered subject and a disempowered object. In Hobbes's view of the passions, pleasure derives from a sense of one's superior position of safety: "pity," grief at another's distress, may enter into the spectator's response to others' misfortunes, but "delight" in one's own security is "so far predominant, that men usually are content in such a case to be spectators of the misery of their friends." "It is sweet," Hobbes continues, following a Lucretian precedent, "when on the great sea the winds trouble its waters, to behold from the land another's deep distress . . . because it is sweet to see from what evils you are yourself exempt."<sup>3</sup> This sinister edge of "content" in the face of another's distress brings into the opposition between spectator and spectacle a distinct taint of sadistic pleasure. Hobbes's theory of laughter similarly emphasizes pleasure in one's own superior position, Descartes's argument in darker tones: "the passion of laughter is nothing else but a sudden glory arising from sudden conceptions of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmities of others, or with our own formerly."<sup>4</sup>

The morally disturbing potential for sadism implicit in Descartes's theory of spectatorial pleasure, more fully articulated by Hobbes, is a troubling incipience rather than a recognized actuality; as Robert Hume says, theories of dramatic affect in the late seventeenth century were largely informed by the Cartesian notion that the agitation of "animal spirits" at observing another's distress was simply, neutrally pleasurable: it feels good to feel, so to speak.<sup>5</sup> But as Marvin Carlson points out, Hobbes's quasi-sadistic spectatorial pleasure in another's distress became a moral issue in Addison's and Steele's theories on dramatic affect. The Whig aestheticians were quick to factor moral instruction into viewing pleasure, and Steele, especially, softens the sadistic edge of Hobbesian laughter by promoting "sober and polite mirth" and a "Joy too exquisite for laughter."<sup>6</sup> Critics such as John Dennis took a more Hobbesian approach to the matter of comedy,<sup>7</sup> but an awareness that cruelty was possible in spectatorial relations discouraged total innocence about the social relations implied by spectatorship. Theories of tragic affect retained a Hobbesian sense of pleasure in watching another's distress until mid-century; but, as Hume points out, the beginnings of the "benevolent" school of pleasure that is derived from "innate generosity" rather than from self-interest are apparent in Rowe, the theories of Shaftesbury, and, even earlier, in Dryden's dramatic theory.<sup>8</sup> What emerges from this context of considerations about the moral and social relations



between spectator and spectacle is less a consensus about the dynamics of affect than a pervasive concern for the economy of power between the subjectivity of the spectator and an objectified, and subjected spectacle.

While it may seem a leap from watching a shipwreck in Hobbes to watching a woman in Richardson, the subject-object relations in both are symptomatic of a consciousness about the moral implications of watching and the effects of watching on both the owner of the gaze and its object. Both are informed by an early eighteenth-century ideology of the subject-object relationship that implies dominance in the subject position and the subjection of the perceived object. Concern with a proper deployment of the power implicit in looking informs *The Spectator's* very premise: to observe is to become somehow more authoritative than the observed, to know more and to see more than those engaged in doing rather than observing. The Spectator introduces himself by admitting a lack of practical experience and concurrently claiming to “discern the Errors in the Oeconomy, Business, and Diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as Standers-by discover Blots, which are apt to escape those who are in the Game.” His lack of a clearly discernible identity contributes to his efficacy as a spectator: “I have been taken for a Merchant upon the *Exchange* for above these ten Years, and sometimes pass for a Jew in the Assembly of Stock-Jobbers at *Jonathan's*. In short, where-ever I see a Cluster of People I always mix with them, tho' I never open my Lips but in my own Club.”<sup>9</sup> Eliza Haywood's derivative of *The Spectator*, *The Invisible Spy*, makes this economy of power between spectator and spectacle even more explicit. The Spy's observations gain authority and power over their objects by the fact that the Spy cannot be observed in turn.<sup>10</sup> This power of looking should, *The Spectator* assumes, be wielded by the proper subjects at the proper objects, else a perversion of the social order results.

*Spectator* no. 250, for instance, establishes a “natural” cosmic economy of watching under the ultimately empowered and all-seeing “invisible Author of all.” The sun is the “First Eye of Consequence,” and watching is properly regulated from that point in a sort of great chain of looking. A letter to the *Spectator* complains that the playhouse disrupts a rightful order of watching with its “Heteropticks,” an anarchistic deployment of the eyes that calls for the Spectator's corrective attentions: “All the pernicious Applications of Sight are more immediately under the Direction of a SPECTATOR; and I hope you will arm young Readers against the Mischiefs which are daily done by killing Eyes.”<sup>11</sup> The feminine “killing Eyes” are a cliché, of course, but they suggest possibilities for an abusive, improper spectatorship. *Spectator* no. 252 explains the eye's power over its objects: Steele writes that “the Story of *Argus* implies

no more than that the Eye is in every Part, that is to say, every other Part would be mutilated, were not its Force represented more by the Eye than even by it self.”<sup>12</sup> To be seen is to be granted full presence, to be given dispensation from a castration always/already present within the body's own being. To see is to grant this dispensation, a powerful, enabling gesture that is also potentially subversive of the social order, especially when deployed by women against men. Hence the complaint in *Tatler* no. 103 of the young man who relinquishes this power to women by using his perspective glass in the theater, not to see, but to call attention to himself and be seen by the ladies.<sup>13</sup>

The economy of looking and being looked at is played out, then, within a gendered social hierarchy. Addison's and, especially, Steele's nervousness about the moral implications of such an economy suggests, however, not an unexamined and complacent (male) prerogative in spectatorship, but considerable concern for the moral and social terms with which such a prerogative is exercised. *Pamela* evinces a similar consciousness that the way men, especially, look at women, particularly, may partake of a disturbing pleasure in another's subjected distress. The text “teaches” its readers to see Pamela “correctly” and sympathetically, in Richardson's view, by negative examples of male looks that misjudge and oppress the heroine. But while the reader's perspective is defined against such false perceptions of the heroine through the workings of her point of view, it does not come to rest in Pamela's perceptions of herself. Richardson calls into question even the fictional construct of authority in the “I in drag,” as Nancy K. Miller calls the feminine personae of eighteenth-century, literary female impersonators such as Defoe and Cleland.<sup>14</sup> Pamela is often, as Terry Castle points out, subject to a “visual disorder” that undercuts the reliability of her gaze and privileges the reader's view of Pamela as more reliable than her own.<sup>15</sup> This very privileging is not, however, a challenge to men's—or anyone's—right to assume the power of looking. Rather, it allows readers to relax, all too complacently, as Fielding shows us, into a voyeurism which remains unexposed and unexamined *because* it is itself the means of exposing and examining cultural constructions of woman as observed object, the supposedly “right” way to look at a woman.

Reading *Pamela*—watching through the lens of theory on the workings of the cinematic apparatus reveals a voyeurism that the text both encourages and criticizes. This body of theory, growing out of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, specifically addresses the problems of spectatorship in a post-Freudian sexual/social economy of sado-masochism, but it may also provide useful ways of thinking about the power differential expressed by seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century formulations



of the relation between spectator and spectacle. If the work of Michel Foucault can be given credence, the ideological formations of human sexuality that Freud and Lacan both sought to explain are incipient in Richardson's culture,<sup>16</sup> and modern psychoanalytic theory may not be a totally anachronistic tool in understanding *Pamela's* spectatorial relationships. The theory of spectatorship in psychoanalytic film theory does not, however, "explain" *Pamela*, give us a sort of master key to both the text and the culture in which the text was produced; the social and psychological structures in the eighteenth-century text may just as readily serve as checks on the authority of psychoanalysis by their differences from twentieth-century paradigms. Psychoanalytic theory rather gives me a way to account for my own post-Freudian reading of the relations of power and sexuality in the text, not some eternally "true" interpretation.

Modern theories of spectatorship are currently grappling with the same problem that seems to bother Steele and Richardson: how do we engage in spectatorship, an activity that is both enjoyable and practically unavoidable, without implicating ourselves in the sado-masochistic paradigm that structures the relation between spectator and image? Mary Anne Doane and Laura Mulvey, to name two examples, argue that the relation between spectator and film image is implicitly sado-masochistic, with the spectator taking a "masculine" position of dominance over the "feminine," passive image.<sup>17</sup> The problem, for film-makers and theorists seeking a way to subvert this disturbingly gendered paradigm of artistic reception, is how to recast the relation between spectator and spectacle to avoid fixing men and women in the roles of oppressor and oppressed. Doane states the difficulty of escaping the dominant "masculine" role of spectator; even women become "transvestites" who identify with the implied male gaze of the cinematic apparatus, or masochistically submit to identification with the "feminine" image.<sup>18</sup> Tania Modleski recently offered a plausible way out of sado-masochistic viewer identification by positing that a woman's angry, feminist response may "get" the joke of male supremacy at women's expense (the "transvestite" reading) while not being seduced by it; feminist anger produces a feminist political critique not accounted for within the psychoanalytic paradigm of spectatorship.<sup>19</sup> Modleski's article exemplifies, in my view, what is best about feminist approaches to the problem posed by the psychoanalytic, sado-masochistic model of spectatorship by opening up psychoanalysis to the political ramifications it tends to repress.

Richardson's attempt to avoid the ideological complacency of the voyeurist "gaze," the un-self-questioning objectification of the "other," seems, however, closest to the work of theorists, such as Jean-Louis

Baudry, who valorize art's ability to expose the workings of its own processes as a means of ideological production. By calling attention to acts of *Pamela*-watching within the text, Richardson "deconstructs" the gaze of readers who would take a too-easy or stereotypical view of *Pamela*. The problem with this "reflexivity" in Richardson's text is that it does not (and this is a problem with Baudry's theory as well) make readers critically self-conscious of *all* objectifications of women, but rather reconstructs his own formulation of how *Pamela* should be seen, a formulation in which the reader is invited to participate. If many of the views of *Pamela* in the novel are ultimately inaccurate or incomplete, it is not because *all* aesthetic objectifications of woman (or, by extension, of the "other") must be questioned, criticized, seen as the production of ideology rather than self-evident truth; but rather because the reader/viewer is licensed by the novelist to view *Pamela* in a certain way.<sup>20</sup> Richardson, in other words, deconstructs the objectifying gaze leveled at *Pamela* in the novel in order to reconstruct his own portrait of the female character, his own ideology of feminine identity. Richardson's "failure" to acknowledge and interrogate his own complicity in the power relations implicit in spectatorship points in turn to the failure of modern, politically unselfconscious reifications of self-deconstructing textual strategies. Post-modernist theorists such as Baudry may be just as culpable as Richardson in making textual evidence of self-consciousness *in and of itself* an uncriticized authority in the text, a decoy that distracts the reader's attention from the moral and ideological basis of the writer's own strategies for objectifying the Other.

Richardson exposes the distortion of femininity that the male gaze can effect in the act of seeing the female object. The looks that men, including Mr. B, give *Pamela* transform her into a sexual cliché, a transformative process that Richardson subverts through the texts of *Pamela's* letters. When *Pamela* is kidnapped, she is taken to the house of a tenant of Mr. B, where she seeks to gain the sympathy of her temporary landlord, his wife and his daughter. Her attempts are unsuccessful because her host literally looks at women as dangerously sexual and congenitally disposed toward the defiance of masculine authority, a defiance that can only lead, in his view, to social disorder:

' . . . it never was a good world since young women would follow their own headstrong wills, and resolve to dispose of themselves without the knowledge and consent of those who were born before them.' And here he slapt his clenched fist upon the table, and looked with a peevish expression upon his daughter, and then upon his wife.<sup>21</sup>

The tenant ("looking upon the letter with his spectacles on, and now and



then upon . . . [his wife] and now and then upon me, and sometimes upon his daughter"[140]) immediately includes Pamela in his suspicion-informed perspective on women when he reads the letters that Mr. B has written to set her up as a wayward, lovelorn young fool. Richardson repeatedly calls attention to the emotionally charged and potent act of the tenant looking at women, as the man intersperses interpretation of and commentary on Mr. B's text with pointed stares at his female audience:

'And does he [Mr. B] not tell us what is the nature of *headstrong girls*? Too well we know what that is, Dorothy,' And then he frowningly looked upon his daughter, who cast her eyes down, and blushed. (141)

And again:

'(True, says his honour. His honour is a wise man, look ye, do you see?') . . . And then he looked fiercely at his poor meek daughter. (141)

The male tenant/reader's gaze places and fixes the female characters in the context of the male text written by Mr. B, a distorting mode of interpreting femininity by forcing the female object into a masculine moral framework, created and condoned by male complicity, that has little to do with the feminine identity supposedly being defined. Pamela's view of the tenant's view reveals its megalomania, its reductive will to power: "I thought I never saw a man put on so ugly a look in my life. His daughter does not seem to be a forward girl" (142). The farmer's "look," in the sense of seeing, is transformed by Pamela's commentary into a "look," his appearance from the perspective of the woman. This scene emphasizes the enormous discrepancy between the perspectives of masculine and feminine and authorizes the latter view while giving us a rather neat dramatization of what it must feel like to be formulated, pinned and wriggling, by the brutal stare of arbitrary male control. The relative social powerlessness of the female "look" in the context of Pamela's narrative becomes, paradoxically, an authorial means of de-authorizing the misogynistic male gaze.

But while Richardson shows his readers how men mis-see and, as a result, misinterpret women, he does not go so far as to subvert the social paradigm in which men see and women be (the male, subject and the female, object) despite the authority he invests in his heroine's first-person narration. Pamela sees the distortion implicit in how other characters view women, but her visualizations of her own femininity are positioned in the narrative *not* as valid alternatives to the falsifications of male projection, but rather as symptomatic of equally distorting subjective fears and desires, a way of seeing that does not include a social

definition of self in relation to other, a way of seeing that Richardson clearly devalues. The novel's gendered economy of spectatorship undercuts the authority of female spectatorship even as the female protagonist's point of view serves to qualify and revise the male gaze. The male spectator is, ultimately, for all the "reflexivity" of its representation, the authority that defines feminine identity in the text.

In addition to the vision problems that, as Castle shows, set in whenever Pamela is forced to "see" gender distinctions,<sup>22</sup> Pamela watching Pamela is an act of vanity, not self-formulation, not a way of seeing and defining herself with moral clarity. Early in the novel Pamela puts aside the "lady's clothes" given her by Mr. B and dresses in "rustic" clothes: what Pamela means as a gesture of independence from her employer actually gives more energy to his pursuit of the servant girl in her working-class guise. Mr. B, as usual, sees the socially sanctioned sexual prey he wants to see, but Pamela's vision is not a great deal clearer since she assumes that in appearing as working rather than servant class she is somehow transcending the authority that class structure and gender give to Mr. B, a dangerous assumption, and an hubristic one. Pamela looking in the mirror (the woman looking at herself) is both an act of defiance and one of false pride: "when I was quite equipped, I took my straw hat in my hand, with its two green strings, and looked about me in the glass, as proud as anything. To say truth, I never liked myself so well in my life" (88). The woman who looks at herself, and likes what she sees, is not formulating a "truer" picture of herself, but rather giving in to a vanity that further endangers her since it blinds her to the social controls that create and define her. It is vain, in both senses, for Pamela to see herself as escaping from the structures that define power relations along class and gender lines, as Richardson, through Pamela's raptures, slyly tells us: "O the pleasure of descending with ease, innocence, and resignation! Indeed there is nothing like it!" (88)

In fact, the only viable way for Pamela to cope with the male gaze is to give in to it, assuming, as Richardson does in *Pamela*, that the male spectator can be educated into the "right" view of her. As Mr. B grows into the role of husband instead of employer/exploiter, Pamela looks at herself more and more through his eyes as he tells her how she is seen. Towards the end of the novel, Richardson moves readers from their station at the keyhole of Pamela's closet to a vantage point that allows them to see the heroine as she is seen by others in a widening social context; in this context, Mr. B's perspective becomes the frame that defines Pamela in the eyes of her "audience." Pamela's account of meeting Mr. B's friends and neighbors while dressed in her "rustic" attire is



first-person and subjective, but her vision of herself is often bracketed by the fact of Mr. B watching her:

This alcove fronts the longest gravel-walk in the garden, so that they saw me all the way I came, for a good way: there was no by-path, as I wished there were, and would have chosen it if there had, could I have done it without appearing affected. My master, with pleasure, told me, afterwards, all they said of me.

Will you forgive your vain daughter, if she tells you all he was pleased to tell me? *Vain* you will think me, and I cannot but say I am proud to be so distinguished by him. (320)

“[D]istinguished by him” instead of herself, Pamela can see herself safely and favorably through the eyes of others. She proceeds to tell her parents (and the readers) how each of the company sees her and comments on her appearance: being seen itself is uncomfortable, frightening—“for indeed I wanted to be out of their gazing” (321), Pamela says—but Mr. B’s “partial favour” (321) renders her object status nonthreatening and at least somewhat pleasant to her. Looking at herself in her country clothes was vain, dangerous: “watching” Mr. B watching her renders *her* vanity safe and excusable by putting it into *his* keeping.

After Mr. B’s reform, the novel juxtaposes the pleasures of voyeurism, in a moral cause, to the danger of Pamela’s gaze. Pamela-watching seems to be a favorite activity of Mr. B and his aristocratic friends, one that is sanctioned by the lessons in morality and humanity to be learned through such observation. When Pamela’s aged father arrives at Mr. B’s estate in search of his daughter, the imminent reunion of father and daughter proves to be too tempting a sentimental display to keep private, despite Mr. B’s fears “that the dear girl may be too much affected” (328). The company gathers to watch as the old man is ushered into the room where Pamela is; only she refuses to look up to see who has entered because she fears that the newcomer is Mr. Williams, the clergyman who has previously offered to marry her and is, as a result, the object of some sexual jealousy on the part of Mr. B. When she does look up, at the sound of her father’s voice, the private and subjective violently collide with the public and social: “lifting my eyes, and seeing my father, [I] gave a spring, overturned the table, without regard to the company, and threw myself at his feet” (329). Mr. B is “concerned” at Pamela’s rush of emotion, as, indeed, it nearly overcomes her, but remarks that she has given “painful delight to all the company” (330). As spectacle, Pamela teaches and delights, but her own gaze is vaguely dangerous to herself and incidentally anti-social, creative of at least minor disruption and disregard for “the company.” Being seen is safer for Richardson’s heroine than seeing herself or seeing for herself. The heroine’s disruptive look is not, how-

ever, some gesture towards the possibility of female power, or even male authorial power in drag, but rather the result and evidence of conflicts in the novel’s male authority, in this case, between the husband/lover and the father. The danger of the heroine’s gaze, to herself and to others, is submerged in the social matrix of patriarchal control: Pamela first *does not look* because she fears Mr. B’s displeasure, and when she does, her look is authorized by her father, the original masculine authority in the Oedipal paradigm. One man calls on her not to look while another authorizes, indeed, demands that she *does* look: Pamela’s little act of disruption is more indicative of conflicts within the system of male control than of an incipient female power, or a desire, on Richardson’s part, to create such a power.

*Pamela* is an excellent example of how eighteenth-century literary practice can combine radical, revisionist techniques with a fundamentally conservative impulse to close off the possibilities for critique; this implicit contradiction or tension manifests itself in what may “look” to us like some of the rhetorical excesses of Richardson’s first novel: those points in the text when Pamela-watching shifts from a means of questioning objectification to a means of rather stridently confirming it, often in ways that readers two hundred and fifty years remote from the novel find oddly insistent. The drawing-room groupings of approving observers in Richardson’s novels seem more indicative of the anxiety to “fix” the heroine in the author’s male gaze than of spontaneous social consensus as to how women should be seen, let alone expressions of how women see themselves. To the post-modernist reader the objectification that the text questions, the gaze that reveals its distorting falsity, paradoxically allows an equally false complacency with the objectifying vision of the author. The deconstructed gaze acts as a sort of decoy that tries, ineffectually, to distract us from asking questions about that man behind the curtain: the ideologically defined authority of the text.

So we pin Richardson’s “incorrigibly patriarchal” text, as Terry Castle calls it,<sup>23</sup> within the frame of our post-modern, critical gaze, questioning what it finally does not question itself: the authority of the author to tell the “truth,” in this case the right of the masculinizing to formulate the feminine. What, then, of our own complicity in the political act of interpretation? I started reading from Baudry’s critical premise that self-questioning art reveals the means of its own production, reveals itself as ideological “work”: by reading from such a premise do I implicitly privilege art that was created in the historical circumstances that shape my theory? Do I look at the text as Pamela looks into her mirror, in a sort of rapture of self-congratulation on having escaped the system of class and gender relations that privileges male over female, one social strata over



another? How far has my reading really departed from Richardson's politically unselfconscious projection onto the image he creates? Tania Modleski points out that post-modernist critical approaches to art often end up "repeating gestures of texts they repudiate,"<sup>24</sup> and this unconscious repetition of asserting ideological innocence as a decoy to draw attention away from one's actual claims to moral superiority is precisely the danger that I see in the critical methods I have employed in this paper. Therefore I shall brazenly declare that I have deployed the authority of a feminist stance to read Richardson *through* the decoy of Baudry's theory. Without an explicitly political intercession, in this case that of feminism, post-modernist criticism can only re-position *as its own* the ideological complacency of the texts it reads. Post-modernist criticism can function as a guise for the critic's unacknowledged self-righteousness or it can enable the critic to see Richardson's attempts to revise the ideology of femininity, not as failure, but as a part of a historical struggle to revise the terms of power within a social system which, as Julia Kristeva says, refuses "to constitute itself through the recognition of the differential but non-hierarchizing status of opposed groups."<sup>25</sup> In other words, a social system in which some form of oppression is always implied.

#### NOTES

- 1 *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), 1: 415.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 1: 387.
- 3 See Marvin Carlson's *Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey, from the Greeks to the Present* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984), 129-30.
- 4 Hobbes, *The Elements of Law: Natural and Politic*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies (London, 1889; reprinted London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1939), 42.
- 5 *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 175.
- 6 The famous preface to Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* provides a good example of Steele's theory of comedy. See *The Plays of Richard Steele*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 299-300.
- 7 See *Critical Works*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), 2: 160.
- 8 Hume, 174.
- 9 *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 1: 4-5.
- 10 See *The Invisible Spy* (Dublin: Sam. Price, 1756), 1: 1-14.

- 11 *The Spectator*, 2: 470.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 2: 479.
- 13 Sir Richard Steele, *The Tatler*, ed. Lewis Gibbs (London: J. M. Dent, 1953), 136-37.
- 14 "'Ts' in Drag: The Sex of Recollection," *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 22 (1981): 49.
- 15 "P/B: Pamela as Sexual Fiction," *Studies in English Literature* 22 (1982): 469.
- 16 See Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
- 17 See Mary Anne Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," *Screen* 23 (1982): 74-88, and Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16 (1975): 12-13.
- 18 Doane, 80-81.
- 19 "Rape versus Mans/laughter: Hitchcock's *Blackmail* and Feminist Interpretation," *PMLA* 102 (1987): 304-15.
- 20 See Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," in *Apparatus*, ed. Therasa Hak Kyung Cha (New York: Tanam Press, 1981), 26-34.
- 21 *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Peter Sabor (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 138. Subsequent references to *Pamela* are to this edition and will be noted parenthetically in the text.
- 22 Castle, 484-85.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 488.
- 24 "The Terror of Pleasure: The Contemporary Horror Film and Post-modern Theory," in *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture*, ed. Tania Modleski (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986), 164.
- 25 *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez; trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 50.