WRLC Consortium Loan Request Management System
- version 8.0 -

GT Request Display

Pending -articles- | Pending -books- | In Transit | Filled | Unfilled | Help | Borrowing | Logout

Title: Eighteenth-century fiction.
Patron: Tonya-Marie L. Howe **Item Barcode:**
ID:CLS 1662804 ◉ **Active** ○ **Archived requests** Search

CLS1662804: Eighteenth-century fiction.

GT: (ISSN 0840-6286 / Published for McMaster University by University of Toronto Press, 1988- /)
Patron: Tonya-Marie L. Howe (*phone:* 443-768-1571 *barcode:* 22883119444321 *library:* MU)
Requested: 2010-01-14 11:56 **Not needed after:**
Pickup at: MU Marymount - Main Campus
Comments: Thanks
Email: Notifications are sent to tonya-marie.howe@marymount.edu
Add Patron Note

Add Staff Note

THIS MATERIAL MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT LAW (TITLE 17 U.S. CODE)

In Transit

Select Reason for NO

WDD: Web Delivery
Citation: Issue: v.5(3) 1993; Article: Pamela: Domestic Servitude, Marriage, and the Novel / Folkenflik, Robert; Pages: 253-
Request Status: Pending =>Available item found at GT
Previous Status:
Pending =>Request record created on Thu Jan 14 11:56:08 EST 2010

Total Requests: 1

---

consistency between a pragmatic stress on manoeuvring servants into compliance with the master's will by the application of *benevolence* and *kindness*, on the one hand, and a paranoiac fear of their predilection to cheat and to subvert the master's authority, on the other. If the great law of subordination was still officially in place, servants in the family did not perform as if they subscribed to it unless their master set an example to inspire their deference. To a large extent, Richardson's sentiments on this topic echo the political discourse of his age, with all its contradictions about social subordination and equality.

But another reason for the apparent discrepancies in the *Collection*, we have seen, is that as "editor" and "compiler" Richardson intended a polyvocal text in the first place. The generic tensions between his moral dictionary and his novels also complicate the author's mimetic purposes. What occasions the sentiments within the novels often allows meanings very different from the extracts alphabetically arranged subsequently in the *Collection*, and conversely. Statements about servants in the dictionary may turn out to be derived from a character's recognition that other persons, including paid subordinates, cannot be trusted in a world where *amour-propre* is the ruling principle. Again, what is said about servants in the novel may have the primary purpose of showing that the speaker has the capacity to govern a house well. Some remarkably democratic sentiments in the *Collection* about the propensity of the under class towards honesty, we have also seen, are discovered in the novel's original context to be only a dramatic moment for invoking a primitivistic foil to the vices of the wealthy and powerful. It cannot be ruled out, however, that Richardson also wanted to challenge the reader of the *Collection* with radical, even revolutionary, thoughts on the disenfranchised as a "strategy of containment" while endorsing elsewhere the status quo.

University of Illinois, Urbana

Pamela: Domestic Servitude, Marriage, and the Novel

Robert Folkenflik

Ian Watt has analysed *Pamela* in highly persuasive terms as a "courtship" plot which has for its substructure such realities of eighteenth-century marriage as the difficulties of spinsterhood following the breakdown of the extended family, the numerical surplus of marriagable women to men, and so forth.[1] I see the book rather from the perspective of "social and relative duties," centring on the relation of self to others and the tensions between social and religious roles. For this purpose, the major point of the novel is not that Pamela is nubile and will finally marry her employer-tormenter, but that she is a servant and is effectively "incarcerated" in her employer's household. Interestingly, even those critical of Watt's position, such as Nancy K. Miller and Nancy Armstrong, tend to ignore this fact: for example, Miller says "*Pamela* ... can be divided thematically into two parts: the first dominated by a daughter's confrontation with (aggressive) male sexuality, the second by her transformation from daughter to wife and the testing of marriage as an integrator of sexuality."[2]

1 Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 188–89. This essay is meant to extend some of the lines of thought in my "A Room of Pamela's Own," *ELH* 39 (1972), 585–96. I hope to bring some of the elements of Richardson's ideology into sharper focus here. Together the essays will form a chapter in a book on the eighteenth-century novel which I am completing. References are to the Riverside Edition of *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, ed. T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971).

2 Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722–1782*

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FICTION, Volume 5, Number 3, April 1993

Pamela's incarceration shares certain of the elements described by Erving Goffman in his essay "Characteristics of Total Institutions." In ordinary life, at least in modern society, "the individual tends to sleep, play, and work in different places, with different co-participants, under different authorities, and without an overall rational plan. The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating these three spheres of life."[3] Such institutions may be voluntarily or involuntarily entered, and would include monasteries and mental hospitals as well as prisons. The primary feature of the total institution, then, is that "all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority." Pamela does not share her experience with a large number of other people acting the same way at the same time; her solitary confinement is one of the things that make her plight more moving. From the perspective of the total institution, we should first observe that Pamela's imprisonment, while she is enduring Mr B.'s prolonged attempt to triumph over her virginity, begins when she is already, in Goffman's terms, an inmate of a total institution: that of domestic servitude in the eighteenth century. Goffman does not give such servitude as one of his examples, and the actual conditions of the domestic servant in the eighteenth century were probably not quite regimented enough to qualify in most households. And J. Jean Hecht suggests that the locale of servants' recreations was not always on the master's estate.[4] Yet certainly the theoretical existence of the servant put forward by those who spoke for the institution and its duties (such as Samuel Richardson) would qualify.

(New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 46; cf. also p. 165n2; Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). In his chapter on *Pamela*, "Richardson and the Domestication of Service," Michael McKeon puts the role of the servant into the perspective of the *longue durée* from feudalism to capitalism. See *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 357–81. Bruce Robbins comments on *Pamela* only in passing in his highly suggestive *The Servant's Hand: English Fiction from Below* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968). He makes the important general point, however, that the servant appears in the novel rather than the proletarian (p. 6). And one might add that Pamela occupies a relatively high place in the hierarchy of female servants. John Bender does not discuss *Pamela* in his *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), but he sees its relevance to his central concerns. For a more general consideration of Armstrong, McKeon, Bender, and other recent work on the eighteenth-century novel, see my "The Heirs of Ian Watt," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25 (1991–92), 203–17.

3 Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), pp. 5–6.

4 J. Jean Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), pp. 127–28. This is a very useful book, though I think it tends to take a master's view of the servant and does not take any sustained look at the cases brought by servants against masters. Although I have undertaken an independent inquiry at the Huntington and Clark libraries into the theory of domestic servitude, I have used Hecht's references where he cites earlier editions.

Pamela's shift from Mrs B.'s servant to her son's captive is meant to be perceived as thorough, and yet her captivity shares many characteristics with the life she led as a servant. And even ways in which her situation is unusual as a servant suggest that the normal situation has more in common with her imprisonment than we may realize. Total institutions break down the sense of individuality through "role dispossession": so it is significant for Pamela's development that her mistress gave Pamela her own old clothes to wear (males wore livery, a servant's uniform) and educated her in a way that was different from (and above) her station. In England, as foreigners remarked with surprise, it was not unusual for the maid to be nearly as well dressed as the mistress, nor was it unknown for masters to educate their servants (though I suspect this was more common towards the end of the century). But Pamela's treatment helps at once to make her a proper consort for her future husband and keeps her aware of her own individuality. At times, however, as when she sees herself returning to her own village overqualified for the employment which awaits her, she recognizes that her lady's "Learning and Education of me, as Matters have turn'd, will be of little Service to me now: for it had been better for me to have been brought up to hard Labour, to be sure" (p. 80). From the time of their first letter, her parents fear the possibility of Pamela's becoming "dishonest or wicked, by being set so above yourself," the result of her mistress's giving her "Learning" as well as "Cloaths and Linen, and every thing that a Gentlewoman need not be ashamed to appear in" (p. 27). This is one of the main positions of the conservative theorists of servitude. In his distinctly unsympathetic *Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business* (1725), Defoe as Andrew Moreton claims that the overpaid servant "throws her whole Income upon her back, and by this means looks more like the Mistress of the Family than the Servant-Wench." He recounts a typical little story of kissing the "chamber-jade" under the impression that she is a member of the family. Eliza Haywood also warns against "imitating your Betters in Point of Dress" and Thomas Broughton says, "Beware of dressing above your rank or station. Shun herein that foolish affectation of imitating your superiors, whom Providence hath placed in a higher state of life."[5]

5 [Daniel Defoe] *Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business* (London, 1725), p. 13; Eliza Haywood, *A Present for a Servant-Maid* (London, 1743), p. 24; Thomas Broughton, *Serious Advice and Warning to Servants*, 4th ed. (London, 1763), p. 21.

Although one of Pamela's earliest complaints is that she cannot see her family, she would not have been allowed to have visitors, nor would she normally have been able to visit them. As Hecht points out, it was customary for a master as a condition of servitude to stipulate that the servant was to have no visitors. Pamela's original attempt to go home arises from, and demonstrates, her intention of leaving service.

As a number of critics have noticed, Pamela's name would not likely have been given someone of her class (that is, until Richardson's novel made it popular). Although Watt claims that "the romance-connotations of Pamela are controlled by the commonplace family name of Andrews,"[6] the emphasis is on her first name, her individuality, and not the representativeness of her family name. Only her first name appears on the title page, and the description of her there seems to underscore the allusion to Sidney's *Arcadia* by referring to her as a "Beautiful Young Damsel." In his *Dictionary* (1755) Johnson defined "damsel" as "a young gentlewoman; a young woman of distinction: now used only in verse." Yet this first name is one which the real employer of a servant would have been very unlikely to tolerate. Pamela might have been called Betty or Abigail, or given the name of the girl who had had the job before her. The practice of renaming servants was common in eighteenth-century England, and in the American south until the 1930s. Although Goffman does not mention this occupational example, it is consonant with the total institution's

> dispossession of property, important because persons invest self feelings in their possessions. Perhaps the most significant of these possessions is not physical at all, one's full name: whatever one is thereafter called, loss of one's name can be a great curtailment of the self.[7]

Pamela's ability to keep her name, though lightly problematized, is certainly a strong part of her identity. She is disturbed by the string of epithets Mr B. contrives for her—"Boldface," "Equivocator," "Saucebox," and, with heavy irony, "pretty *Innocent* and *Artless*," and his characterization of her within her hearing as "this saucy Slut" or "the little Hypocrite." Pamela responds to his attempt to do away with her identity in forcing upon her different visions of herself by rejecting his terms: "Come in, said he, you little Villain! for so he call'd me; good Sirs! what

6 Watt, p. 19.

7 Goffman, p. 18.

a Name was there!" (p. 62). And when she wants to ask him a question, she pleads "pray don't let me be call'd Names for it" (p. 63). Later, upon intercepting a letter for Mrs Jewkes strewn with such epithets, she almost accepts his vision: "The bad Names, *Fool's Plaything*, *artful Creature*, *painted Bauble*, *Gewgaw*, *speaking Picture*, are hard things for your poor *Pamela*; and I began to think, whether I was not indeed a very naughty Body, and had not done vile Things" (p. 145). We should also notice how frequently she refers to herself as "Pamela," a trait that Fielding leaps on both in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*. Sometimes this is a matter of encouraging herself by talking to herself: "O *Pamela*, said I to my self, why art thou so foolish and fearful! ... Have courage, *Pamela*, thou knowest the worst!" (p. 43). And when she considers suicide, her internal discourse develops into a psychomachia in which she gains victory over a "worse Enemy" than her master—"myself!" At other times the use of her name is an appeal to her identity as a way of fortifying her resolve.

Pamela's status as a servant may also help to explain some seeming problems of character. Mr B.'s competence as a rake has been challenged by some recent critics, who want to see the novel as more humorous, Pamela's behaviour more as the overreactions of a young girl, and Mr B. as less threatening. Mark Kinkead-Weekes is more persuasive than most on the subject. He says that "the suspiciousness of Pamela's father seems ludicrously exaggerated" and "B.'s first fumbling attempts, moreover, seem to show why Fielding called him 'Booby.'" Mr B. thinks that his gifts alone will win her and offers to make her a "gentlewoman" without "a word of compliment or desire, let alone love." He is "oddly taken aback by her rejection" and threatens "straightforward rape in the manner of Tarquin. Yet he is incapable (it seems) of doing anything much, this clumsy schoolboy impossibly miscast as a rake."[8] This is a good modern attempt to make sense of features of the novel that read today the way Kinkead-Weekes takes them, and generically the novel is certainly a comedy. But they need a closer examination.

Pamela and her family may appear to us inordinately suspicious of Mr B.'s initial friendliness, but in the context of the expected behaviour of masters, such friendliness would certainly be out of the ordinary: "Why

8 Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 19–20. A more thoroughgoing (and to my mind ultimately unacceptable) defence of the Richardsonian rake is mounted by William Beatty Warner in *Reading "Clarissa": The Struggles of Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979). The book as a whole, however, is original and valuable.

should he smile so kindly upon you? Why should he take such a poor Girl as you by the Hand, as your letter says he has done twice? Why should he stoop to read your letter to us?" (p. 27). The theorists of domestic servitude were kept busy telling servants not to be put off by masters' behaviour if "they are a little harsh in their Expressions, use you with Haughtiness, and keep you at the greatest Distance."[9] This comment is worth remembering when Pamela asks Mr B. to keep his distance, but it also reminds us that a master's *Vade Mecum* would advise against too great a familiarity with servants. The gift of stockings is certainly telling in a novel which has so great a metonymic charge—stockings are a traditional gift when sex is in the offing. In this connection too, Mr B.'s initial command, retailed by Pamela in her first letter, that she shall take care of his "linen," while not unusual, suggests intimacy at a slight remove. And her unwillingness to leave the house before finishing flowering his waistcoat goes beyond the bounds of duty to express unconsciously something of her growing attachment to him. Richardson is acute on the semiology of clothing, especially as it suggests an almost fetishistic sensuality.[10] The fact that Mr B. is nonplussed by Pamela's response to his offer suggests something other than ineptitude: it suggests that all someone in his position need do is make the bare request. What Richardson dramatizes in this exchange is the habitual power of the master. The plight of Sally Godfrey serves to show that he has hardly been ineffectual in the past; the threats to Pamela's virginity and selfhood are substantial, and the book is trivialized if we wish them away.

When Mr B. angrily responds to Pamela's admission that she has written to her parents ("And so I am to be exposed, am I ... *in* my house, and *out* of my House, to the whole World, by such a Saucebox as you?" [p. 41]), his righteous indignation probably strikes the modern reader as the worst sort of bluster and hypocrisy, but for the eighteenth-century reader there was more at stake. The requirement that a servant keep family secrets was an important part of the contract that a servant or apprentice agreed to upon entering service. In fact, in *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum* (1734), Richardson quotes the appropriate clause in the indentures and glosses it:

> During which Term the said Apprentice his said Master faithfully shall serve, his Secrets keep] i.e. All those Secrets which relate to his Family-Affairs or Business, or any Part of his Concerns, which being revealed, might be detrimental to his Master's Reputation or Interest. There is a good English Proverb, That a Man's House should be his Castle; intimating the inviolable Regard which Servants taken into a Man's Family, and who are to become a Part of it, ought to have to whatever may tend to the Reputation or Profit thereof. There cannot be a more infamous Breach of the Rules of sound Morality, than for a Person to betray his Master's Secrets ... which ... is so vile a Breach of Trust, so high a Degree of Treachery, that it ought to make him odious to all Men.[11]

Those who wrote instructions for servants warned, as did Anthony Heasel, that "when a servant keeps tattling up and down every occurence in the family, it often brings dishonour on his master. ... It is also a very great sin, and one of the breaches of the fifth commandment; for as we are commended to honour our parents, so it is necessarily implied that we also honour and respect all those who have authority over us."[12] Taken together these admonitions verge on ruling-class hysteria. Defoe cautioned "the Prudence of *Keeping Family-Secrets*" in *The Maid-Servant's Modest Defense* (1725).[13] And Goffman comments on the "right of staff to limit, inspect and censor outgoing mail, and the frequent rule against writing anything negative about the institution."[14] The importance of this point goes beyond Mr B.'s concern for his reputation (although one can see his kinship with such a later aristocratic lover of reputation as Godwin's Falkland). After all, his neighbour Simon Darnford feels that Pamela's plight is insignificant when he hears of it. But Mr B. harps on the issue: he tells Mrs Jervis to advise Pamela "that she will not write the Affairs of my Family purely for an Exercise to her Pen and her Invention"—the pun on "invention" is a good touch (p. 39); he responds to Pamela's trepidation by saying "you may well be asham'd to see me, after your Noise and Nonsense, and exposing me as you have done" (p. 44); and he protests "her Letter-writing of all the Secrets of my Family" (p. 74). There are a number of things at stake here—his reputation, the proper behaviour of a servant, the knotty dialectic of private and public, and the requirements of the total institution.

The defining elements of Pamela's character are also related to the theory of the servant. Pamela's timidity and extreme deference to her

9 Haywood, p. 32.

10 For a different wide-ranging look at the issue see Carey McIntosh's "Pamela's Clothes," *ELH* 35 (1968), 75–83.

11 Samuel Richardson, *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1975), Augustan Reprint Society, pp. 2–3.

12 Anthony Heasel, *The Servant's Book of Knowledge* (1773), p. 75; quoted by Hecht, p. 75.

13 Quoted by Hecht, p. 81. The attribution is questionable.

14 Goffman, p. 103.

master are sometimes explained in terms of her youth (she is fifteen at the outset of the novel) and sometimes in terms of her unconscious sexual attraction to him. Modern readers often chafe at her behaviour. Yet she displays the exemplary character required by those who wrote on the proper behaviour of servants. "Timidity," according to Haywood, is required as "an Indication of your Respect for those you serve." Thomas Seaton's enumeration of the qualities of the servant (1720) includes humility, lowliness, meekness, gentleness, fearfulness, and submissiveness, all of which could be aptly illustrated by reference to Pamela, who knows her place.[15]

Although the servant conduct books enjoin chastity, probably a minority of them are very specific on this issue, and usually warn against the dangers of liaisons with fellow servants. The warning they sound echoes that litany of praise and admonition which Pamela hears early in the novel, and one even uses very similar language. Haywood tells the maidservants that the menservants "are apt to take liberties on the least encouragement; you ought, therefore, to carry yourself at a distance towards them." Broughton gives warnings against other servants and men in general.[16] Surprisingly few of the authors specifically warn of the dangers of the master, but the discussion of the very thorough Seaton in *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* is of interest for the reader of both *Pamela* and *Joseph Andrews*. He begins by reference to Potiphar's wife, but then goes on to say that advances from the mistress to a servant are as uncommon as in this case, yet "it will sometimes happen that a Master of a Great House is Young and Wanton and Bold and Rakish." The advice given in this case is progressive and relatively blunt: stay out of his way, hide, cry out if he physically attacks, quit his service. Seaton had discussed earlier the limits of obedience in terms of the competing claims of the master and of God (chap. 4). But even in dealing with the "vicious master" he enjoins that there is "still a decency of carriage to be observed."[17] The importance of considering servant conduct books as well as conduct books for women should be apparent now. It is precisely at the moment when the relative duties between master and servant have been abrogated by the master, that a real servant in

15 Haywood, p. 8; and Thomas Seaton, *The Conduct of Servants in Great Families* (London, 1720), pp. 183–96.

16 Haywood, p. 14; and Broughton, pp. 24–25.

17 Seaton, pp. 144–45, 43. See also Haywood, pp. 45–49.

Pamela's position would no longer be able to rely on precept; Pamela at this point comes into being as a convincing novelistic character.

Here the two methods of analysis I have been employing, the theoretical construct of the servant (and, usually by implication, the master) and Goffman's ahistorical notion of the total institution, may be usefully distinguished. Much has been made (by me among others) of the first embarassing encounter of Pamela and her new master. When he comes in and sees her with the letter, she is by her own account "scared out of my Senses" and tries to hide the letter in her bosom (p. 26). I have attempted to account for her extreme fright in terms of a violation of place, but it should also be noted that as a faithful servant Pamela must be aware that in theory *all* of a servant's time belonged to the master. As Broughton puts it "When you hired yourselves, you sold all your time to your masters; except what GOD and Nature more immediately require to be reserved."[18]

If we look at the scene through the sharper focus of the total institution, however, we find that the master's fairly innocent question, "Who have you been writing to, Pamela?" is the first of a series of actions, ever more intense, devoted to depriving Pamela of her privacy and denying her right to selfhood. An example of one kind of response by Mr B. typical of such actions may usefully be introduced by Goffman's discussion of the allowable "face-saving" that goes on outside the total institution:

> In civil society, when an individual must accept circumstances and commands that affront his conception of self, he is allowed a margin of face-saving reactive expression—sullenness, failure to offer usual signs of deference, *sotto voce* profaning asides, or fugitive expressions of contempt, irony, and derision.[19]

In the total institution, however, such "self-protective expressive response to humiliating demands" leads to what Goffman calls "looping." It is not permitted to pass and becomes "grounds for further punishment."

The example of looping from *Pamela* comes relatively early in the novel (letter 24). Pamela appeals to Mr B.'s own social sense of self by

18 Broughton, quoted by Hecht, pp. 24–25.

19 Goffman, p. 36.

Illustration from Samuel Richardson, *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*, 6th ed., 4 vols (London, 1742), 1:4. Engraved by Hubert François Gravelot (1699–1773) after a drawing by Francis Hayman (1708–76). Reproduced by permission of McMaster University Library.

asking why he should "demean" himself to deal with her misbehaviour when he would not "stoop to take Notice of" the other maids. She prefaces her question by saying it is not meant "disrespectfully," and laces it with deferential gestures, but it serves to set him off with a typical appeal to another member of the institution for corroboration before he directly responds:

> Do you hear, Mrs *Jervis*, cry'd he again, how pertly I am interrogated by this sawcy Slut? Why, Sauce-box, says he, did not my good Mother desire me to take care of you? and have you not been always distinguish'd by me above a common Servant? and does your Ingratitude upbraid me for this?
>
> I said something mutteringly, and he vow'd he would hear it. I begg'd Excuse; but he insisted upon it. Why then, said I, if your Honour must know, I said, That my good Lady did not desire your Care to extend to the Summer-house and her Dressing-room. (p. 63)

That earlier epithet he had used for her, "Boldface," expresses perfectly the dissatisfaction of authority with a failure of sufficient deference. Here Pamela's wit causes him to fly "into such a Passion, that I was forc'd to run for it" (p. 63). She gets off comparatively easily, but the process involved helps to show both the nature of his treatment of her and her characteristic ability to save herself. Pamela's letters are just such a gesture writ large.

Goffman points out that one of the characteristics of a total institution is "contaminative exposure." Mortification of this kind begins upon admission:

> On the outside, the individual can hold objects of self-feeling—such as his body, his immediate actions, his thoughts, and some of his possessions—clear of contact with alien and contaminating things. But in total institutions these territories of the self are violated; the boundary that the individual places between his being and the environment is invaded and the embodiments of self profaned.[20]

The whole range of experience affected by contaminative exposure in *Pamela* is very broad and powerfully involved in the nature of the book. I have elsewhere investigated parts of this process in different terms in looking at what happens to Pamela's letters.[21] Now we need to consider a different aspect of the problem.

20 Goffman, p. 23.

21 In "A Room of Pamela's Own," especially p. 586 *et passim*.

One of the most serious sorts of contaminative exposure is that Pamela has no control over those with whom she associates, principally her warder, Mrs Jewkes, and the vile Colbrand, whose foreign origin gives him one more unsavoury characteristic. When she is taken to the inn run by Mrs Jewkes's sister-in-law, Mrs Jewkes quickly gives a "welcome," which, while ostensibly a good deal more friendly than what generally occurs in total institutions, is nonetheless typical: "the naughty Woman came up to me with an Air of Confidence, and kissed me, See, Sister, said she, here's a charming Creature! would not she tempt the best Lord in the Land to run away with her!" (p. 101).[22] The confidence, the unwelcome physical intimacy, and the personal comment to another in her presence conspire with the implications of the remark itself to let Pamela know how completely she is subject to her captors. On the way to Lincolnshire, "Every now-and-then she would be staring in my Face, in the Chariot, and squeezing my Hand, and saying, Why you are very pretty, my silent Dear! and once she offer'd to kiss me." And when Pamela, who feels her attentions as perverse ("it is not like two persons of one sex"), objects, Mrs Jewkes teasingly suggests "then thou hadst rather been kiss'd by the other Sex?" (p. 102). The point is that Pamela is continually put in such exitless positions, both mutually exclusive and repugnant. And the suggestions of perversity and contamination intensify, for Mrs Jewkes has orders to sleep with her, to become, as Pamela puts it, "my wicked Bed-fellow" (p. 104). Pamela's picture of her may be overcharged—certainly it is mediated to some degree by Pamela's youth and her fright—but whatever else it is, it is not the description of a woman whom Pamela wishes to have kissing her and sleeping with her. She is the replacement for Pamela's virtuous housekeeper-bedfellow, Mrs Jervis.

It was, of course, according to the theorists, the master's right to chastise his servants physically, and "servants of both sexes were liberally caned, cuffed, and slapped."[23] One of Pamela's fears is corporal punishment. Mr B. does not hit Pamela, though he certainly bruises her—the novel as much emphasizes her soft skin as his rough treatment. Mrs Jewkes as his stand-in and ultimate scapegoat gives her rough physical treatment, and Pamela greatly fears her hand as well as her foot. D.C. Muecke is surely right in arguing that Colbrand, "the most hideous Monster I ever saw in my life" (p. 147), derives from Colbrond in *Guy of Warwick*, a "Monster of a Man ... Treading at every step two yards of ground."[24] Richardson's nightmarish grotesque, all male protrusions, almost an ambulatory phallus, is a fitting fellow-warder to Mrs Jewkes. His fearsome height consorts with her girth to compose a picture of the sort relished by such eighteenth-century satiric artists as Gilray and Rowlandson. Pamela characterizes their deviations from ordinary humanity by opposing their physical traits to hers: Mrs Jewkes's arm is as thick as Pamela's waist (a slender one, to be sure); Colbrand's foot is almost as long as her arm. These characters will eventually serve as scapegoats for Mr B.'s behaviour, but their threatening sexuality helps to keep the temperature of the novel high.

22 Goffman's comment is pertinent: "Admission procedures and obedience tests may be elaborated into a form of initiation, that has been called 'the welcome,' where staff or inmates, or both, go out of their way to give the recruit a clear notion of his plight" (p. 18).

23 Hecht, p. 79.

As Goffman sees it, "There are grounds ... for claiming that one of the main accomplishments of total institutions is staging a difference between two constructed categories of persons—a difference in social quality and moral character, a difference in perceptions of self and other." In *Pamela* Mr B.'s imprisonment of his servant is intended to break her will, but in some curious ways it is also intended to drive home one point that she never contests: he is master and she servant.

Total institutions seldom effectively convert their inmates to belief in their value systems; Pamela, however, is from the beginning willing to admire the discipline of domestic servitude, and, surprisingly, contrives to convert her master to her point of view. The institution director here converts to the ways of the inmate. Why does Mr B. make his ignominy public, especially after insisting on the importance of "family secrets" throughout Pamela's ordeal? The answer seems to go beyond the fact that he is won over to a religious life. He is a secular convert to the religion of Pamelaism and, like those Christians willing to be fools for Christ, he must bear witness to his own transgressions and the glories of Pamela.

To understand the structure and meaning of the latter half of the second volume, we might do well to examine the reading of Nancy Armstrong. Like my earlier reading, hers empowers the Pamela of volume 1, and by extension her gender and class, for she finds that "the female was the figure above all else, on whom depended the outcome of the struggle among competing ideologies."[25] This is a struggle of language within

24 "Beauty and Mr. B.," *Studies in English Literature* 7 (1967), 469.

25 Armstrong, p. 5.

the text. In attempting to demonstrate "how *Pamela* turns the minority representation of sexual relations into an instrument of hegemony," Armstrong quotes a passage from the contract Mr B. offers Pamela to become his mistress. Pamela has been in many ways a tough bargainer for that highly desirable commodity, her "virtue." And, as Pamela does herself, Armstrong quotes the answers in double columns with the proposals.

II. I will directly make you a Present of 500 *Guineas*, for your own Use, which you may dispose of to any Purpose you please: And will give it absolutely into the Hands of any Person you shall appoint to receive it; and expect no Favour in Return till you are satisfy'd in the Possession of it.	II. As to your second Proposal, let the Consequence be what it will, I reject it with all my Soul. Money, Sir, is not my chief Good: May God Almighty desert me, whenever it is; and whenever, for the sake of that, I can give up my Title to that blessed Hope which will stand me in stead, at a Time when Millions of Gold will not purchase one happy Moment of Reflection on a past mis-spent Life!

Armstrong also quotes stipulation IV, noting that "simply by inserting Pamela's voice into the field dominated by Mr B.'s contract, Richardson empowers the subject of aristocratic power with speech." Because Pamela is permitted this "negotiation," Richardson has changed the grounds of contracts, "namely that the male defined and valorized the female as a form of currency in an exchange among men." This *a fortiori* "also revises the way in which political relationships are imagined."[26] There are problems with this reading. For one thing the classical assumption about the nature of a contract, that it is entered into freely, is abrogated by Mr B., who forces Pamela to take part in it and threatens her if she does not answer as he wishes. Since this coercion takes place after she has been kidnapped, she has little reason to doubt his menaces. While it is certainly true that she not only bravely answers him in the negative but writes at greater length than his stipulations, she is responding entirely to his discourse, to terms which he sets forth without negotiation. At best what she accomplishes in terms of this "contract" is to reject a suit, analogous to the rejection of a parent's preferred suitor, a latitude which Richardson and a number of conservative conduct book writers would grant and which is at the centre of *Clarissa*.

After giving an interesting account of the changed relations of the pair, Armstrong, like most readers, deplores the amount of attention that Richardson devotes to the married life of Pamela—"All narrative conflict dissolves into catalogues of household duties and lists of dos and don'ts for prospective housewives."[27] She notices that Mr B.'s proposals to Pamela as his bride constitute "his own revision of the contract originally offered to and rejected by Pamela,"[28] but the key "contract," as I see it, comes nearly one hundred pages later, when Mr B. speaks to Pamela about what he requires of her in married life. She herself encodes his "kind rules" into a forty-eight-point miniature conduct book, one which parallels his rejected contract, since it includes her commentary on each stipulation.

26 Armstrong, pp. 111–12.

The obedience to these "rules" involves many gestures both verbal and physical which parallel those in the early part of the book, and which operate antithetically. Just before the wedding, in response to Mr B.'s generosity, Pamela is "at a Loss for Words" (p. 287). But following the marriage her silence becomes part of a pattern as he gives her instructions on her proper behaviour as his wife: "He saw I was at a Loss for Words. ... And Kissing me, as I was going to speak, I will stop your dear Mouth, said he" (p. 297). If her being at a loss for words is at complete variance with her ability to speak in the early part of the book, his gesture of love, now authorized, is all too familiar. In fact kisses at times replace words, at Mr B.'s request, as signs of agreement and compliance (p. 306). She then requests his "kind Instructions." While she continually refers to him as the "charming Man" and the "kind Man" for his series of "kind Injunctions" which "oblige and improve me at the same time," many of these concern behaviour which he had tried to impose upon her as part of his seduction. For example, discussing facial deportment, he insists "that you accustom yourself to one even, uniform Complaisance: That no Frown take place on your Brow" (p. 310). His notion of intimacy consists in assuring her "that nothing should ever lie upon his Mind which he would not reveal, and give me an Opportunity either of convincing him, or being convinced myself" (p. 298). That is, he will not harbour suspicions without putting her to a fair trial.

The list itself projects a genealogical narrative that concerns itself with the education of children as well as with the proper behaviour of a wife. Mr B. begins with a rule which, as Pamela notes, is not one of general significance but applies to him personally. While the list is meant to be exemplary, the wife should also obey, it seems, the husband's individual demands, even his whims:

27 Armstrong, p. 124.

28 Armstrong, p. 128.

1. That I must not, when he is in great Wrath with any body, break in upon him, without his Leave.——*Well, I'll remember it, I warrant, but yet I fansy this Rule is almost peculiar to himself.*
2. That I must think his Displeasure the heaviest thing that can befal me. *To be sure I shall.*
3. And so that I must not wish to incur it, to save any body else. *I'll be further if I do.*
4. That I must never make a Compliment to any body at his Expence. (p. 369)

It should be noticed that, as opposed to his earlier "contract" to make her his mistress, this little self-inscribed conduct book contains Mr B.'s rules with a minimum amount of backchat and demurral. The Code is presented as proper wifely behaviour, and it depends upon her sense of herself as elevated to an unaccustomed station. The aristocratic ethos which has been attacked throughout the book (and continues to be in the characters of Lady Davers, Jackey, and others) is recuperated through Pamela's deference to her husband in what the title page of *Pamela II* calls her "Exalted Condition."

Rather than representing the rise of female authority, *Pamela* begins with the loss of female authority in the person of Mr B.'s mother, Pamela's employer and teacher, and it ends with Pamela empowered as a mouthpiece for a reinscribed male authority, precisely the relation she bears to her author as well. Mr B. remains her "Master." If Richardson portrays the growth to selfhood sympathetically and celebrates the individuality of Pamela, he nevertheless suggests powerfully that the good wife is in many ways the good servant.

University of California, Irvine

Merteuil and Mirrors: Stephen Frears's Freudian Reading of *Les Liaisons dangereuses*

Alan J. Singerman

Choderlos de Laclos's notorious epistolary novel, *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782), portrays the agonistic relationship between two master libertines, the Vicomte de Valmont and the Marquise de Merteuil, and the catastrophic consequences of their efforts to dominate each other while pursuing their sadistic games of seduction and humiliation against lesser opponents. The libertine character, as mythically incarnated by Don Juan, has been subjected to extensive psychoanalytical study, including well-known analyses by Jean-Pierre Jouve and Otto Rank, as well as the more recent "Oedipal reading" by Peter Gay.[1] Don Juan's comportement has been cited, for instance, as a striking example of the unconscious workings of a repressed, unresolved "Oedipal

1 Otto Rank summarizes the standard Freudian interpretation of the Don Juan character as follows: "D'après la psychanalyse les nombreuses femmes que Don Juan doit conquérir constamment représenteraient l'unique mère irremplaçable. Les concurrents et adversaires trompés, bafoués, combattus et finalement tués, représenteraient l'unique ennemi mortel invincible, le père" (*Don Juan et le double* [Paris: Payot, 1973], p. 124). Rank himself takes a somewhat different psychoanalytical view (see pp. 133–39), concentrating on the double symbolism of the secondary characters in relation to the libertine hero, that is, guilty conscience (Leporello) and the fear of death (the Commander); Jean-Pierre Jouve, *Le Don Juan de Mozart* (Fribourg: Librairie de l'Université, 1942), pp. 61, 105–6; Peter Gay, "The Father's Revenge," in *Don Giovanni: Myths of Seduction and Betrayal*, ed. Jonathan Miller (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), pp. 70–80.