



# *Bad Mothers in Eighteenth-Century Fiction*

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## SUMMARY

Focusing on texts written during the eighteenth century, and charting the connections between literary novels and contemporary discourse, this dissertation examines the role of the mother within this literature. I argue that contemporary fictional writers wrote important texts that reflect the wider historical conditions of the family, as well as the social, cultural and religious background of this period. Some of the narratives reflect public anxiety over the ever-increasing commercialization of England during the eighteenth century. Within family life, political, literary and philosophical hypotheses were compelled to adjust in a continuously changing society. Initially, the historical and ideological framework is set where the problems faced by the characters examined subsequently develop. The common theme within the novels is the female characters' shared experience as mothers and daughters. The narratives of these authors functioned as a means of critiquing the lack of maternal duty. With the exception of the Jean-Jacques Rousseau novel, the texts I discuss are written by English authors and centre on maternal affection or the lack thereof. The thesis continues by examining Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*. Both these novels reflect the conditions of poor and destitute mothers in eighteenth-century society, who are precariously positioned regarding their children. Eliza Haywood's *Anti-Pamela*, the antidote to *Pamela*, concentrates on the conduct of a mother who was a defective role model for her daughter. The thesis moves on to examine the novels of Samuel Richardson: *Pamela I* and *II*, *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, novels that concentrate on the dynamics within various families with the emphasis placed on the

role and behaviour of the mother. Richardson's women have pre-ordained roles in the society in which some of the female characters embody discourses of ideal motherhood. The following chapter analyses Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* and *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* with his didactic tone and his appeals to mothers. The thesis concentrates on the authors' perspective and contemporary opinions of motherhood. The novels used within this study all differ in characters and outcome.

# **INTRODUCTION**

In the early 1980s, New Historicism and Cultural Materialism emerged as important literary theoretical traditions and began to signify a revitalization of interest in history and historicizing history in literature. Advocates of these theories identified new methods of reading literature relating to history and politics while renouncing formalist criticism and previous procedures of reading literature within its historical framework. These theories are aimed at returning and renewing our images of the past. They refuse to detach literature from larger cultural debts and aspire to outline how previous eras had their own theoretical and ideological contexts which would be different to modern day concepts; societies of earlier periods would have had very dissimilar perceptions of gender, religion, reality and human nature than today's society. Cultural materialism intends to show that within our social and ideological organization texts can be construed from different perspectives by positioning them in their historical environment. John Brannigan describes cultural materialism thus:

New historicism and cultural materialism share a common preoccupation with the relationship between literature and history, and share an understanding of texts of all kinds as both products and functional components of social and political formations. Where many previous critical approaches to literary texts assumed that texts had some universal significance and essential ahistorical truth to impart, new historicist and cultural materialist critics tend to read literary texts as material products of specific historical conditions. Both theories approach the relationship between text and context with an urgent attention to the political ramifications of literary interpretation. In the eyes of new historicist and cultural materialist critics, texts of all kinds are the vehicles of politics insofar as texts mediate the fabric of social, political and cultural formations.<sup>1</sup>

Politically, New Historicist and Cultural Materialist critics are keen to recapture misplaced history and to investigate methods of social subjugation. New Historicists are more disposed to focus on the higher rungs of the social ladder such as the monarchy, the church and the upper classes, focusing on political science and anthropological

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<sup>1</sup> See John Brannigan, *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), p. 3.



perspectives with their concentration on authority, political and social institutions and culture. Cultural Materialists centre on the other end of the social scale with its emphasis on the lower-classes; women and others with little influence or power, depending on sociology and economics with the stress on the marginalized, finance and commerce.<sup>2</sup> The principle purpose of historicism and cultural materialism is the analysis of literature *within* history, not literature and its history. This is to perceive literature as a vital and powerful component in the creation of history and consequently inconsistencies and challenges of so called artistic influence are endemic.<sup>3</sup>

Graham Holderness has described cultural materialism as a ‘politicized form of historiography,’ with its determination on the significance of commitment with concerns about class, race, gender and sexuality. Alan Sinfield and Jonathan Dollimore in the 1990s identified cultural materialism as a select critical theory that contained four characteristics, namely: historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis.<sup>4</sup>

Stephen Greenblatt remains the most famous critic normally associated with New Historicism. Greenblatt specializes in studies of the Renaissance and discusses works by Wyatt, Spenser, Marlowe and Shakespeare. His ideas and anecdotal approach examine the distinctions between text and context, including the political, religious, intellectual, economic and social issues that have formed it. These texts are dynamic contributors to the historical methods they enlighten; other evidence included within these texts are political pamphlets, religious sermons used for social influence, reports

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<sup>2</sup> See Dino Felluga, ‘General Introduction to New Historicism’, *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory*, <http://www.purdue.edu/guidetotheory/newhistoricism/modules/introduction.html>, accessed 17/08/2012.

<sup>3</sup> Brannigan, pp. 3- 4.

<sup>4</sup> See ‘New Historicism & Cultural Materialism’: *Cultural Materialism*, <http://cultmatnewhist.blogspot.ie/2007/11/cultural-materialism.html> , accessed 17/08/2012; Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism* ([1985] Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994.)

of Court entertainment, handbooks for aspirant courtiers and travellers' reports of new world voyages.<sup>5</sup>

Greenblatt's (and other New Historicists) interest is not just in the texts themselves, but in what they can reveal about their time. Greenblatt maintains that New Historicism strives to continue to be responsive to the inconsistencies of any historical moment, particularly those periods subjugated by the economic market. No literary text can be the exclusive advantaged resource of cultural perceptions; it can only become apparent when literature's discourse of knowledge is interrelated with other 'discourses' characterized in Greenblatt's analytical writings.<sup>6</sup>

Using Greenblatt's approach to eighteenth-century novels the emphasis would be on the cultural standards of their readers. Defoe's assertion that his invented autobiographies *Moll Flanders*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana* were authentic would have to be considered within the social and cultural environment of that period and its emergent political consequence. New Historicism helps us preclude the conjecture that even the most meticulous autobiography may not be close enough to veracity.<sup>7</sup> Contemporary conduct books, with their comprehensive practical and moral guidance, along with the many other pamphlets and treatises, may possibly be taken into account within the work of Richardson. Richardson's oeuvre could be regarded as an authoritative representation of identifiable social patterns and progressions. Conversely, Fielding's novels may be interpreted as communicating more political concerns than Richardson's; he wrote numerous pamphlets on crime, the judiciary and London's

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<sup>5</sup> See Graham Martin, 'New Historicism', *A Handbook to Literary Research*, Simon Eliot and W.R. Owens, eds. (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 153.

<sup>6</sup> See Martin, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup> See Felicity A. Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.12.

underworld as part of a crusade against corruption, all of which would be taken into consideration in theoretical investigation.<sup>8</sup>

Felicity A. Nussbaum discusses New Historicism and Cultural Materialism. She maintains that ‘both terms include widely varied methodologies that may be characterized by post modern reformulations of the relationships between literary and historical texts.’<sup>9</sup> Nussbaum argues that New Historicism allows us to visualize the recognizable and gives us licence to write retrospectively about those without any influence in the period, such as women, the poor and the institutionalized which include prisoners, the insane and hospital patients. Nussbaum also argues that these genealogies allow us to question history and clarify the volatility and uncertainty of historical episodes. She quotes twentieth-century French Philosopher and influential critic Michel Foucault on genealogy:

[genealogy] disturbs what was previously considered immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself.<sup>10</sup>

This New Historicist approach offers a theoretical basis to evaluate more conventional research methods.

New Historicist critics argue that we can better know real history when a literary historian using documentary artefacts located in the present day constructs a narrative. Our insight on the historical past is very diverse as it depends on our previous knowledge and interests. New Historicism pays particular attention to the upheavals and states of disorder within history. Some critics of New Historicism vary from ‘real history’ advocates to others who promote a more scientific theoretical approach.<sup>11</sup> Foucault’s interest in issues of political authority, epistemology, subjectivity, and

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<sup>8</sup> See Martin, pp. 156-157.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Nussbaum, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘Nietzsche, Genealogy, History’, *The Foucault Reader*, Paul Rabinow, ed. (New York: Pantheon, 1984), p. 82, quoted in Nussbaum, p.11.

<sup>11</sup> See Nussbaum, p. 11.

ideology have influenced critics in disciplines such as literary studies, social and political science, history, and anthropology, physical and psychiatric medicine, criminology, philosophy, the history of sexuality, government and literature.<sup>12</sup>

Foucault repudiates the term ‘science’ or ‘theory’ from his writing, cultivating instead an awareness of power relations. In Foucault’s work, the topic of power and knowledge endeavours to restore a constant history. He writes:

Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject: the guarantee that everything that has eluded him may be restored to him; the certainty that time will disperse nothing without restoring it in a reconstituted unity; the promise that one day the subject — in the form of historical consciousness — will once again be able to appropriate, to bring back under his sway, all those things that are kept as a distance by difference, and find in them what might be called his abode.<sup>13</sup>

Nancy Armstrong in *Desire and Domestic Fiction* maintains that Foucault ‘makes it possible to consider sexual relations as the site for changing power relations between classes and cultures as well as between genders and generations.’<sup>14</sup> She asserts that while gender differentiation approaches do not have much of a role in Foucault’s work, they must be regarded as vital in a study that ‘considers the history of the British novel as the history of sexuality.’<sup>15</sup> During the eighteenth century, the domestic woman determined her authority over British culture. This new domestic literature seemed to disregard the male oriented political world; in its place, a new vocabulary for societal interactions developed because of the writing for and about women.

Cultural Materialism focused on the way people lived within the text. Contemporary novels like those of Richardson and conduct books for women formed a dedicated style of partiality which they specified female; while masculine traits were

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<sup>12</sup> See Nussbaum, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Nussbaum, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> See Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.10.

<sup>15</sup> See Armstrong, p. 14.

implicit by their economic and political merits, females were distinguished by their emotional qualities.<sup>16</sup> Writing about the domestic woman presented a means of challenging the prevailing concept that recognised the appeal of women's entitlements to prosperity and marriage.<sup>17</sup> Fiction began to deny a political basis for its meaning and focused instead on the private spaces of the self. These domestic novels made the novels reputable, and it is also noteworthy that many had female names like *Pamela*, *Clarissa* or *Evelina*. Fiction is both a document as well as the agency of cultural history.<sup>18</sup> Because of the increasing cultural fascination with maternal obligation and authority, this veneration instigated what is now understood as modern motherhood. There are many debates about when the so-called nuclear family first became apparent but it is agreed by most historians that it began in the eighteenth century. The nuclear family which relied on this innovation of maternal duties has also been the focus of much discussion; without doubt motherhood was treated with almost ubiquitous veneration by the end of the century.<sup>19</sup> As Foucault writes, motherhood became 'a biologico-moral responsibility lasting through the entire period of the children's education.'<sup>20</sup>

The novel creates a language as a type of power for modern culture to constitute subjectivity; within middle class culture, women's functions are repeatedly confined to those of mother, nurse, and teacher as was evidenced with eighteenth-century fiction.<sup>21</sup> The institution of the novel aligned with the changing social outlooks becomes apparent with the comparison of the chief female writers with their more renowned male counterparts. Referring to Pamela's struggles with Mr. B and also the

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<sup>16</sup> See Armstrong, pp. 14-15.

<sup>17</sup> See Armstrong, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> See Armstrong, p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters, Novels and the Politics of Family Romance: Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003), pp. 13-14.

<sup>20</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*. Robert Hurley, trans. (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 104. See Greenfield, p.15.

<sup>21</sup> See Armstrong, p. 26.

social discords within the novel, Ian Watt has noted that ‘these struggles ... mirror larger contemporary conflicts between the two classes and their way of life.’<sup>22</sup> Likewise, Defoe uses *Moll Flanders* to call attention to opposing class interests which are symbolized as a battle between the sexes. When Moll is seduced, which is quite often, she offers a site for Defoe to represent political arguments.<sup>23</sup> Richardson represented the household as an area sustained by a female overseer. He also, through Pamela’s letters, provided female writing with a power beyond the domestic sphere to educate others in her technique of identifying themselves.<sup>24</sup> Domestic fiction with its focus on family and their relationships is central to the theory of Cultural Materialism.

As the title indicates, by focusing on maternal breastfeeding and the care of children, this thesis offers an analysis of mothers in eighteenth-century fiction. The thesis will demonstrate how images of motherhood, both bad and good, help to structure some of the most influential fictions of the period. The texts I examine represent only a small section of novels that focus on the behaviour of the mother. Many other novels written during this century involve absent mothers. As the various chapters in my study demonstrate, the texts in question are written in realist mode, concentrating on the individual’s experience — the narratives of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson and Jean Jacques Rousseau are largely concerned with the history of each of the protagonists. In this thesis, I analyse the historical and literary importance of narratives that concentrate on an increasing social fascination with maternal duty and authority. Descriptions of good motherhood and mother-child relationship varied a great deal as the criteria for motherhood were in a state of ideological flux. The novels here indicate the uncertainty and subjection to broader cultural influences of the tradition itself. Progressively, more women were being characterized by their maternity and full-time motherhood was

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<sup>22</sup> Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* ([1957] London: Pimlico, 2000), p. 172.

<sup>23</sup> Armstrong, p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> Armstrong, p. 163.

deemed to be the order of the day. In addition, I examine how maternal identities are at odds with the ideal wife. Can the ideal wife also be the ideal mother or does it fracture the domestic ideal?

In Chapter One, I explore the social history of the eighteenth century. I look into the contemporary veneration of mothers as substantiated by the wealth of literature, both fact and fiction, and the multiplicity of medical articles and advice books regarding pregnancy and maternity. I discuss pregnancy, contraception, abortion and the advice given to women regarding their lifestyle. I investigate marriage and how it differed from previous centuries with companionate marriage becoming more popular, I also examine the Hardwicke Marriage Act (1753), in which only the church wedding was legally binding and eliminated many sham or bigamous marriages. I examine the ideals of heredity with the eldest son's right of inheritance maintained as birth and ancestry were crucially important in this century.

With societal changes enforced by more complex capitalist relations, an obsession with the difficulty and yet necessity of establishing 'status' engendered a market for conduct books and the novel of manners. I analyse the advice within these conduct books, particularly that relating to marriage and children. I review the child mortality rate and the crime of infanticide which was for the most part committed by the mother and consider instances of mothers taking their children's lives. I look at the improvements in obstetrics and review some contemporary texts containing myths about pregnancy and childbirth. Because of increasing urbanization, I examine contemporary approaches to the changes and duties within society as evidenced in the novels. The change in the eighteenth-century social and cultural history is by and large defined by the changes in eighteenth-century novels. The plots within these novels are used by authors and readers in an attempt to deal with the demands of their lives.

Representations of mothers within novels portray the contemporary diverse attitudes towards motherhood.

In Chapter Two, I examine Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724) who are negligent mothers who prioritize their financial welfare above their children. Defoe locates his novels about fifty years earlier and uses a historical source of reliable information to include contemporary conduct and subject matter promoting contemporary ideals. When Moll's husband dies, leaving her to fend for her children, she resorts to prostitution and crime to safeguard her financial future. Similarly, Roxana is left destitute when she is abandoned by her husband and like Moll, she too turns to prostitution. Moll and Roxana are on different social levels but both are judged guilty of transgressions of vice and avarice; both share an unremitting pursuit of wealth and also the abandonment of many children. Both mothers are left destitute by the loss of a husband; both originally resort to what society calls depravity because of the desire to have more material wealth. This encourages them to continue their quest as both are constantly counting and auditing their financial gains. The plots within these novels are used by Defoe as allegories of the consequences of making ill-advised decisions while dealing with the demands of everyday life. Defoe uses both characters as illustrations of how the poor and impoverished were treated at that time. In contrast to Defoe's flawed mothers, I examine the loving and caring mothers in Eliza Haywood's texts, who prioritize their children's wellbeing to the detriment of their own happiness.

Chapter Three is divided into three sections. In the course of my analysis I focus on the novels of Samuel Richardson: *Pamela I* (1740-41), *Pamela II* (1741), *Clarissa* (1747-48) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54). All of these novels discuss motherhood at different levels and are concerned with conflict within social classes. Within *Pamela I*, as a young girl being threatened with the loss of her virtue, Pamela



has to contend with many trials. Pamela has a mother, albeit an absent and very quiet one, but manages to acquire surrogate mothers, both good and bad, throughout the novel. The concentration on motherhood is more prevalent in *Pamela II* as Pamela produces seven children and also takes on the role of adoptive mother to Mr. B's illegitimate child. Pamela's determined ambition is to be a good mother and an avid teacher to her children and Richardson uses the eighteenth-century interest in mothers to venerate Pamela as an exemplary mother. This novel reads more like an instructional handbook as Mr. B. has requested that Pamela reads and then writes comments on *Locke's Treatise on Education*. Since the topic of breastfeeding is widely discussed in Richardson, I also refer to Pamela's constant debate on the subject.

Within *Clarissa*, the tragic heroine is a well-liked and virtuous young woman who is victim to her family's avarice and aspirations towards aristocracy. The protagonist's troubles begin when her grandfather leaves her his estate, thereby causing jealousy and a rift within the family. Clarissa's mother abdicates responsibility and colludes with her husband and Clarissa's siblings to force her into an arranged marriage for the sake of family aggrandizement. In *Clarissa*, Richardson is commenting on the overwhelming power of greed, particularly when Anna Howe remarks to Clarissa: 'You are all too rich to be happy.'<sup>25</sup> I focus on maternal affection and the lack of it which is very evident in the novel. Anna Howe and her mother have an argumentative but affectionate relationship; Clarissa's mother lets her down but Clarissa has a loving relationship with her former wet-nurse, Mrs. Norton, whom Clarissa can confide in. I consider the issue of breastfeeding which is also discussed within this novel when, following Clarissa's rape, Lovelace fantasises about her breastfeeding their twin sons.

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<sup>25</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady*, Angus Ross, ed. ([1747-8] London: Penguin, 1985), p. 68.

My focus on the issue of milk includes dairy and breast milk. I have compared the mothers within the text and have underscored the contrast between Clarissa's natural and wet-nurse surrogate mothers.

In *Sir Charles Grandison*, Richardson continues the debate about conflicting maternities in eighteenth-century fiction. *Grandison* is Richardson's attempt to portray a masculine version of his previous heroines. Sir Charles has to cope with various problematical circumstances and constantly acts as intermediary and resolves many estranged relationships. Richardson includes examples of reprehensible mothers to compare them with the benevolent selfless mothers within this novel and portrays the contemporary social concern regarding mother-child relationships. Sir Charles's mother, Lady Grandison, who is the wife of a philanderer and wastrel, dies leaving Sir Charles and his two sisters, who constantly eulogise her. Lady Grandison is used as a paradigm for the other incompetent mothers within the novel. I compare and contrast the various mothers and surrogate mothers. Following the birth of her child, Charlotte is re-invented as the ideal mother because of her breastfeeding. I analyze Charlotte's choice and also her reaction to her husband's delight at her decision.

Within Chapter Four I study the influence of Richardson on the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The new appetite for restoration of feeling and sentiment and the demand for reality within fiction increased the popularity of Richardson's novels in France. Rousseau's admiration for Richardson and emulation of his style is conspicuous in his first novel *Julie, or The New Eloise* (1760). Richardson's influence on this most important novel of sentiment written during the Enlightenment is evidenced by the use of the epistolary method. I also examine Rousseau's *Émile*, which is strongly influenced by Richardson, in particular by Richardson's celebrations of maternal breastfeeding.

I analyse Rousseau's *Émile*, and his influence on motherhood, education, swaddling and breastfeeding. Rousseau's birth was the cause of his mother's death and the loss was to affect his whole life; Rousseau was to acquire many surrogate mothers throughout his life. He continually advocated the traditional roles for women as wives and mothers; he commended the established female role and regarded it as a central means for social and moral edification. I discuss his appeals to mothers to provide an education for their offspring, his entreaties to them to breastfeed their babies and also his invective against what he saw as the cruel practice of swaddling.

I examine the role of the mother, which is often a pivotal one in works of fiction. Very often if the mother is absent from the narrative, other women provide the requisite maternal role. Many literary mothers vary from being portrayed as accolades to real-life mothering, to admonitory accounts of monstrous perversions of nature. If changes in the labour market mean that women's domestic and maternal functions are being celebrated and examined closer than ever before, then it follows that the subversion of these functions in the shape of the warped, inverted, or 'bad' mother offers special fears and fascinations. I hope to complicate the too easy label of 'wife and mother' as a definition of domestic virtue (and subordination of women) in the eighteenth century by illustrating key occasions when being a good wife and being a good mother are not necessarily compatible.

## CHAPTER ONE

***Historicizing Motherhood:  
Courtship, Education, Marriage, Child Mortality and Pregnancy.***

‘We have reason to conclude, that great Care is to be had of the forming Children’s Minds, and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their Lives always after.’ John Locke, *The Educational Writings of John Locke* (1693).

There have been significant debates about when the nuclear family first became apparent, Susan Greenfield argues that it is generally acknowledged that it was during the eighteenth century that it first began to materialize. According to John Gillis, ‘birth ceased to be something that happens to a woman and became the ultimate source of adult female identity.’<sup>26</sup> Michel Foucault places ‘the eighteenth-century mother at the centre of a bourgeois family, increasingly subject to and supportive of the governmental supervision of sexuality.’<sup>27</sup> Maternal authority on which this new family group relied and its innovation is also the subject of much disagreement. During this period, maternity was highly regarded; women were categorized by their ability to be mothers and this function was to become a whole-time occupation, one that would engage their constant attention and concentration.<sup>28</sup> This is evidenced by the contemporary writer Richard Allestree’s commentary on the family in his Preface to *The Ladies Calling* (1705):

I might urge the more regular Powers which appertain unto that Sex: that all Mankind is the Pupil of Female-institution: the Daughters ‘till they write Women, and the Sons ‘till the first seven years be past; the time when the mind is most ductile, and prepar’d to receive impression, being wholly in the Care and Conduct of the Mother. And whereas ‘tis observ’d by Aristotle in his Politicks, (and is a proof of his being as wise as he was a learned man) that the Republicks entirely hands of private families, the little Monarchies both composing and giving Law unto the great; ‘tis evident that the disposal of Families and all domestic concerns theirin, lies chiefly on the wife. [sic]<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See John R. Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making: Myth, Ritual and the Quest for Family Values* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), p.174. Quoted in Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters, Novels and the Politics of Family Romance: Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2003), p. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Susan C. Greenfield, *Inventing Maternity, Politics, Science and Literature, 1650-1865*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1999), p.3.

<sup>28</sup> See Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling* (1705) in two parts, by the author of the whole duty of man, &c. (Oxford, MDCCV). *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale: National University of Ireland, Maynooth. p. 12, accessed 6/03/2013.

In 1711, *The Spectator* published an article which bore a similar sentiment:

How many Instances have we of Chastity, Fidelity, Devotion?  
How many Ladies distinguish themselves by the Education of  
their Children, Care of their Families, and Love of their  
husbands, which are the great Qualities and Achievements of  
Womankind.<sup>30</sup>

This notion of a closed domesticated family was a symbol for society as a whole in the eighteenth century, during which this established family group with its well-defined masculine and feminine responsibilities and social restrictions became the basis for organized society. Great emphasis was placed on wealth, birth, breeding and family background within society. Throughout this period there was a clear demarcation of gender roles with extra importance being placed on the role of the mother and a 'cult' of childhood. Discussions about motherhood were the order of the day; debates about maternity were included in novels, conduct literature, periodicals, manuals and treatises. Without doubt, contemporary literature described to a greater extent male and female characteristics in conflicting ways.<sup>31</sup> As Julie Kipp maintains:

Widespread interest in the workings of the maternal body tended to make public the privately shared space signified by the womb or the maternal breast, both of which evidenced for writers of the period the radical exposure of mother and child to one another – for both good and ill.<sup>32</sup>

As indicated by the upsurge in medical articles and maternal guide-books on the topic, it is clear that the glorification of motherhood was rapidly increasing during this period. Furthermore, copies of paediatric manuals providing guidance on the rearing and nursing of children became available to mothers in the mid-century. These advice books were usually written by women and contained guidance on diet, exercise, and travel;

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<sup>30</sup> *The Spectator*, Number 73, May 24, 1711. Quoted in Helene Koon, 'Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, University of California Press, Vo. 2, No. 1, 1978, p. 47, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817409>, accessed 15/03/2013.

<sup>31</sup> See Rosemary Sweet, 'The Ordering of Family and Gender in the Age of the Enlightenment', *Ordering the World in the Eighteenth Century*, Diana Donald and Frank O'Gorman, eds. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 112-113.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.1.

they also included formulas for abortifacients which were frequently portrayed as concoctions to bring on menstruation or to eliminate false pregnancies. Pregnant women were informed that they should not ride horseback or in carriages and were told to refrain from eating piquant foods or drinking strong alcohol.<sup>33</sup> Such admonitions reflect the new awareness being brought to the supervision of children and to the loving relationship between mothers and children that elevated the mother's societal and didactic role over their offspring.<sup>34</sup> This approach to motherhood was particularly powerful in mid-century and was intended to put forward the notion that women within all of society should be envisaged as caring and tender and deeply devoted to the upbringing of their children.<sup>35</sup>

This preoccupation with maternity was linked to the increase in the middle classes in which bourgeois entrepreneurial pursuit was increasingly taking over from the landed and patronage-supported nobility. Within this new capitalist society it was generally acknowledged that the female's sphere of influence would be within the home while the role of male would be as breadwinner. Thus the representation of women within the home came to be associated with the rising middle-classes. Capitalism concentrated labour in ways that further delimited and overdetermined 'the feminine sphere.'

Within the middle and upper classes companionate marriages became more popular. Such unions differed from previous marriages as the feelings of the spouses were taken into consideration and it was assumed that a progressive husband would want his wife's love as well as her acquiescence. In this marriage, the wife would

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<sup>33</sup> See Julia Epstein, 'The Pregnant Imagination, Women's Bodies, and Fetal Rights', *Inventing Maternity*, p.114. Strong liquor was ill-advised while pregnant or breastfeeding as it was believed to be the source of childhood rickets. Surprisingly, wine was recommended as it was thought that the intoxication levels were acceptable.

<sup>34</sup> See Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 24.

<sup>35</sup> See Nussbaum, p. 48.

surrender political power in exchange for control over sensibility, values and domesticity. As Nancy Armstrong argues, there is no evidence to suggest that this relinquishment of power was calculated just to control women.<sup>36</sup> Laura Fasick maintains that contemporary observers believed that in spite of the fervent wish for a lasting love within marriage the passion of pre-marital courtship could not be sustained and that a wife should accept her husband's infidelity and should not expect to be his lover since that part of the marriage was now over. However, as marital love diminished, maternal devotion permitted a wife to be a symbol of love. Maternal affection thus became a façade, one in which a married couple, and society in general, could portray their relationship as maintaining the standards of marital and parental attachment. The lack of contraception made parenthood inevitable but children were also needed for the transfer of assets, for the safeguarding of the family lineage and as evidence for the consummation of the physical relationship between the couple.<sup>37</sup> Tanya Evans avers that recent historical work has dismissed the concern with stability and change, and proposed that there was not a conversion from patriarchal to companionate marriage but in fact there was an amalgamation of the two.<sup>38</sup> In her study of marriages in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England, Joanne Bailey maintains that an ideal of mutual dependency was a realistic description of these relationships. Bailey claims that wives were not completely inferior to their husbands but played a vital role in the management of the domestic finances which, when combined with childcare, made them absolutely crucial with the running of the household. Women's letters and diaries of the period have often revealed the love they have felt for their husbands and that this

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<sup>36</sup> See Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (London: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 41.

<sup>37</sup> Laura Fasick. *Vessels of Meaning* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois Press, 1997), p. 19; J. Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 8.

<sup>38</sup> See Tanya Evans, 'Women, Marriage and the Family', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 63.



affection was workable despite the segregation of roles within the family. Having lived as husband and wife for many years, most couples knew how to influence each other to their mutual advantage.<sup>39</sup>

The veneration of full-time motherhood that was generally consistent with the increase in the attachment of the ‘consanguinal’ family with its kinship connections was displaced by the ‘conjugal’ family in which the marital affiliation took precedence. This is different from previous periods. As young couples set up home independently of their families, the conjugal family usually became a self-governing entity in both financial and social interaction, so that the attachments to grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins were lessened.<sup>40</sup> Lawrence Stone gives a noteworthy explanation of the conjugal family in which the old family structure founded on masculine influence with its emphasis on ancestry was replaced by a more democratic arrangement of familial connections.<sup>41</sup> The result of this was a powerful sense of personal self-sufficiency and the value of individual free will.<sup>42</sup>

In Naomi Tadmor’s analysis of contemporary novels, she proposes that even within this purportedly new democratic bourgeois nuclear family the upper-class ideals of heredity and primogeniture were maintained. Birth and ancestry were crucially important in this century at all social levels and the extent and nature of this importance was always contested and debated.<sup>43</sup> Although approaching the topic from different perspectives, John Hajnal and Peter Laslett ascertained that the nuclear family unit was prevalent in England long before the beginning of industrialization and urbanization. Peter Laslett maintains that the fairly small household of 4.75 people had been standard

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<sup>39</sup> See Evans, p. 63.

<sup>40</sup> See Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* ([1957] London: Pimlico, 2000), p.138.

<sup>41</sup> See Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin, 1979), p.217.

<sup>42</sup> See Sweet, p.113.

<sup>43</sup> See Sweet, pp.114-115.

in England for a long time before the eighteenth century.<sup>44</sup> Historical sociologists Alan MacFarlane and Jack Goody reiterate that the nuclear family did not come about as a result of the industrial revolution, but was related to the system of direct inheritance concerned with the rights and conveyance of absolute property, in an inheritance scheme that had operated long before the 1750s.<sup>45</sup>

According to contemporary reports from merchant communities in London, Leeds and Hull, within business systems the importance of family links was vital. Capitalism originated within the family home and family relations were not destabilized by it. Richard Grassby asserts that the triumph of individualism usually connected with the rise of capitalism was ‘fundamentally a triumph of the individual household within a kinship structure.’<sup>46</sup> The main intentional energy behind merchant capitalism was the continuation of family and not just the accrual of wealth. From all walks of society the impetus was to support the family and prospective future generations with the assistance and backing of their kin.<sup>47</sup>

In the eighteenth century, in contrast to previous centuries, the abundance and availability of reading material from periodicals, novels and conduct manuals, with the inclusion of debates about marriage and family life from many perspectives, has made it much simpler to hypothesize the transformations in family affiliations.<sup>48</sup> Books instructing people how to behave with their relatives, dependents and employers were widely available. There were letter manuals giving advice on writing standardized

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<sup>44</sup> See Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations, The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 14-15.

<sup>45</sup> See Perry, p.14.

<sup>46</sup> Quoted in Sweet, p.124.

<sup>47</sup> Sweet, p.124; G. Jackson, *Hull In The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 95-120.

<sup>48</sup> See Sweet, p.113.

letters for all occasions depending on the circumstances, whether it was to borrow money, accept or decline invitations, or even proposals of marriage.<sup>49</sup>

With its obsession with social conduct, the novel of manners portrays an unstable rather than a predictable society. There were many novels available that included stereotypical characters within troubled families: children left orphaned by mothers not knowing who their father was, libertine brothers who gambled away the family silver, brothers who took advantage of the little legacies their sisters had been left, and unhappy daughters being forced to marry someone they despised.<sup>50</sup> This abundance of dysfunctional relationships and incomplete families within these texts were almost essential for any novelistic narrative. Dominant also were plots containing the segregation and isolation of the female protagonist from society, portraying the lack of any help or protection from friends and family. Ruth Perry asserts ‘this fiction characteristically included elements of disrupted kinship: orphaned children with complicated relations to their guardians, secret marriages, illicit seduction, sibling rivalry, and lost inheritance.’<sup>51</sup>

Before marriage or maternity, the one experience that all eighteenth-century women shared was that of being a daughter. The foremost responsibility of a daughter was compliance to her parents prior to marriage and afterwards to her husband who would take over her parents’ role. The traits considered assets in women were those of submissiveness, deference, sympathy and godliness; this made daughters to a greater extent more susceptible to familial demands than their brothers. The daughters often had to take on the burden of becoming the manager of household duties or nurses to elderly

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<sup>49</sup> See Perry, p. 30.

<sup>50</sup> See Perry, p. 30.

<sup>51</sup> See Perry, p. 30.

parents but in the case of a son, it would be his wife who would take on this task.<sup>52</sup> In 1688, the year of the so-called ‘Glorious Revolution’ which marks the starting point for what many historians regards as the ‘long eighteenth-century’, the Marquis of Halifax in *The Lady’s New-Year’s Gift: or Advice to a Daughter* wrote:

You must first lay it down for a foundation in general, that there is inequality in sexes, and that for the better economy of the world, the men who were to be the law-givers had the larger share of reason bestowed upon them; by which means your sex is the better prepared for the compliance that is necessary for the performance of those duties which seemed to be most properly assigned to it.<sup>53</sup>

This was the ultimate role that the rearing and edification of girls was geared towards. This all-encompassing viewpoint is apparent in the letters written by women during this time. During her pregnancy, Elizabeth Amherst wrote to her husband: ‘For my part, I believe I shall like a girl best, for they stay at home.’<sup>54</sup> A girl would be schooled for the proficiency required in the management of a household and other qualities needed to attract suitors.

In 1690, Mary Evelyn writes with sentimental reflection on the skills and instruction in the supervision of the family which would enable daughters to become outstanding wives. She argued against the reading of romances and of attending plays and ‘smutty farces’; she was in favour of spiritual and religious reading and commented that girls reared with these values could bring better qualities than wealth to a marriage, and would be was far superior to a richer person without these attributes.<sup>55</sup>

Elizabeth Rowe was one of the main contributors of poetry to John Dunton’s *The Athenian Mercury* between 1693 and 1696.<sup>56</sup> Dunton also published *Poems on Several Occasions*, a compilation of poetry, pastorals, hymns, in imitation of Anne

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<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Bergen Brophy, *Women’s Lives and the 18th-Century English Novel* (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991), pp. 41-42.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in Brophy, p. 42.

<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Brophy, p. 42.

<sup>55</sup> See Brophy, pp. 42-43.

<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth Rowe, *née* Singer, English poet and novelist (1674 -1737).

Killigrew, the artist and poet who died in 1685 aged twenty-five.<sup>57</sup> It was a ‘vehement defence of women’s right to poetry’ in defence of women ‘over’rul’d by the *Tyranny* of the *Prouder Sex*’.<sup>58</sup> A century later Lady Sarah Pennington in her *Lady Pennington’s Unfortunate Mother’s Advice to Her Absent Daughters* (1792) took a similar approach to Mary Evelyn and Elizabeth Rowe. It is apparent that attitudes had not changed within this time since the recommended readings she gave to her daughters were devotional, religious, historical and epistolary texts. She remarks:

Of *Novels and Romances*, very few are worth the trouble of reading: some of them perhaps do contain a few good morals, but they are not worth the finding where so much rubbish is intermixed. Their moral parts indeed are like small diamonds amongst mountains of dirt and trash ... I have accidentally met with one exception to my general rule, namely, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. That novel is equally entertaining and instructive, without being liable to any of the objection that occasioned the above restriction.<sup>59</sup>

Lady Pennington was alienated from her children by her husband, who refused to allow her access to them or permit them to read her letters. Sir Joseph Pennington was within his legal rights to prohibit his wife’s access to her children as only the father was the legal parent of a child. Until the end of the eighteenth century, English Common Law granted sole custody of children to the father and in the event of his death he was entitled to decide on their guardianship. Justice Blackstone explained in the late 1760s, ‘a father may by deed or will, dispose of the custody of his child, born or unborn, to any person,’ but the mother ‘is only entitled to reverence and respect.’<sup>60</sup> This was the case

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<sup>57</sup> John Dunton worked on a number of periodicals towards the end of the seventeenth century; these included *Pegasus* (1696), *The Night Walker: or, Evening Rambles in search of lewd Women* (1696-1697) and *Athenian Mercury* (1690-1697); Howard W. Troyer, *Ned Ward of Grub Street: A study of sub-literary London in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1968), p.30.

<sup>58</sup> Virginia Blain, Patricia Clements and Isobel Grundy, *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1990), p. 925.

<sup>59</sup> John Gregory and Sarah Pennington, *The Young Lady’s Parental Monitor: Containing Dr. Gregory’s Father’s Legacy to His Daughters; Lady Pennington’s Unfortunate Mother’s Advice to her Absent Daughters* ([1791] Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2008), pp. 82-83.

<sup>60</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Inventing Maternity*, p.2. Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780) was a jurist, judge, magistrate and Tory politician. He is most renowned for his writing of *Commentaries of the Laws of England*.

until 1839 with the passing of the Infant Custody Act, in which it was stipulated that the mother of legitimate children had legal rights over them until they reached the age of seven. In the event of marital separation, mothers were granted the right to retain or visit their children. This act was also the first to recognize a married woman's independent legal status.<sup>61</sup>

Lady Pennington felt that she had no option but to go public as she needed to give motherly advice and instruction to her daughters to give them a proper perspective for their future. She explains at the beginning of the text to her daughter, Jenny: 'Was there any probability that a letter from me would be permitted to reach your hand alone, I would not have chosen this least eligible method of writing to you.'<sup>62</sup> As a result of her own broken marriage she wanted to protect her girls from any ill-advised decisions. She unambiguously recommends that they refuse to comply with their father's choice of a husband if they do not agree with him:

As a child is very justifiable in the refusal of her hand, even to the absolute command of a father, where her heart cannot go with it; so is she extremely culpable in giving it contrary to his approbation. Here I must take shame to myself; and for this unpardonable fault, I do justly acknowledge that the subsequent ill consequences of a most unhappy marriage were the proper punishment.<sup>63</sup>

She advises them against believing that they can change a suitor once they are married 'so numerous have been the unhappy victims to the ridiculous opinion "*A reformed libertine makes the best husband.*"'<sup>64</sup> This was echoing Richardson's perspective when he wrote about the libertine Lovelace in *Clarissa*.<sup>65</sup> Lady Pennington not only directs them to disobey their father, she recommends that they disobey their husbands also:

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<sup>61</sup> Greenfield and Barash, p.2.

<sup>62</sup> Pennington, p. 56.

<sup>63</sup> Pennington, p. 89.

<sup>64</sup> Pennington, p. 90.

<sup>65</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady*, Angus Ross, ed. ([1747-8] London: Penguin, 1985).

the reasons for non-compliance ought to be offered in a plain, strong, good-natured manner; there is at least the chance of success from being heard ... it is your indispensable duty to disobey; all requests that are inconsistent with prudence, or incompatible with the rank and character which you ought to maintain in life, it is your interest to refuse.<sup>66</sup>

In 1705 William Fleetwood, a reputable critic on family life, put forward the notion that children were entitled to challenge their parents' wishes in order to marry someone that they themselves had chosen but that this defiance was only acceptable when it was supported by local public opinion.<sup>67</sup> Fleetwood wrote:

[I]f the Parent offer what the Child cannot possibly assent to, and what the Neighbourhood, and wise and unconcerned Persons blame, condemn, and reject, upon a competent and reasonable information of the whole Proceedings; if such refusal of the offer be made with decency, and great humility, upon the Childrens part, it will not fall under the head of sinful Disobedience.<sup>68</sup>

This was a big change from the contemporary belief that children should acquiesce to their parents in all aspects, including the choice of a husband or wife. It was supposed that by obeying their parents and ceding to marriage that love would eventually ensue. It was not until the eighteenth century that love was to be included in the requirements for a good marriage. Having researched educational writers from the seventeenth century, David Blewett declares that 'no seventeenth-century moralist would have maintained that the presence or absence of mutual affection was by itself a reason for marrying or not.'<sup>69</sup> Because of the prevalent views on the concept on female inferiority, well-educated or learned women became targets for derision and were warned of the threat of being de-feminized and becoming spinsters. This erudition was considered masculine, and Lady Pennington warns her daughters about this when she writes:

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<sup>66</sup> Pennington, pp. 96-97.

<sup>67</sup> William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants (1705)*, facsimile rpt. (New York: Garland, 1985), quoted in Perry, p. 204.

<sup>68</sup> See Perry, p. 203.

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 204.

all female learning ... tends only to fill the minds of the sex with a conceited vanity, which sets them above their proper business ... a sensible woman will soon be convinc'd, that all the learning her utmost application can make her mistress of, will be, from the difference of education, in many points, inferior to that of a schoolboy: — this reflection will keep her always humble.<sup>70</sup>

Lady Pennington chose to have her text printed as she felt it was her only way to reach them; it was a devoted mother's endeavour to connect with her daughters.<sup>71</sup>

In contrast, Lord Chesterfield's (1694–1773) series of letters written to his son Philip Stanhope (1732–1768) over a thirty-year period, were published after his death in 1774 by his son's widow, Eugenia. He corresponded almost daily with him with his didactic writing which included tutoring on propriety and making him more sophisticated. Each letter has a theme such as decency, virtue, the importance of keeping your word, excelling other boys and being cautious about trusting other people. He also made some very misogynistic remarks, which included:

Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid, reasoning good-sense, I never knew in my life one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four and twenty hours together. Some little passion or humour always breaks in upon their best resolutions.<sup>72</sup>

He notoriously wrote to his son that dalliances were an essential part of a young man's education and experience, and pleasurable, provided that they were handled with good manners.<sup>73</sup> Lord Chesterfield wrote:

From the time you have had life, it has been the principal and favourite object of mine, to make you as perfect as the imperfections of human nature will allow; in this view, I have grudged no pains nor expense in your education; convinced that education, more than nature, is the cause of that great difference which you see in the characters of men.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Pennington, p. 72.

<sup>71</sup> See Perry, p. 344.

<sup>72</sup> See Lord Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, David Roberts, ed. (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1998), p. 91.

<sup>73</sup> See Roy Porter, *Enlightenment* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 322.

<sup>74</sup> See *Chesterfield*, p. 169.



Samuel Johnson disliked these letters and accused Chesterfield of teaching ‘the morals of a whore and the manners of a dance master’ to his son.<sup>75</sup>

In the eighteenth century, ‘the season’ which took place in London in the spring and in Bath in the summer, involved the attendance of upper-class girls and youths from all over the country who could socialize at balls, assemblies and parties; it was a meeting-ground for the national marriage market. This succession of social rounds allowed for the watchful supervision of such young people but from the family’s perspective it was a poor alternative to the more familiar social scene that had preceded it.<sup>76</sup> These markets were not efficient, as marriage rates dropped by about five per cent.<sup>77</sup> As it was believed that capricious love affairs would not last, within decent society there was circumspection about deep feeling and physicality, therefore prudent marriage was recommended. The successful amalgamation of name and land was very important to families concerned with their own material advancement so that sons and daughters suitable for marriage were used as devices for aggrandizement. Many adult children objected to this commercial bargaining and were pessimistic about marriage. ‘People in my way are sold likes slaves, and I cannot tell what price my masters will put on me’ wrote Mary Wortley Montagu, who absconded and married as she was furious at her father’s choice of husband for her.<sup>78</sup> She wrote: ‘every thing ... I thought proper to move him, and proffer’d in atonement [*sic*] for not marrying whom he would, never to marry at all.’ Years later, having eloped with Wortley Montagu, she compared the pressure within her family as similar to that of Clarissa and her ensuing getaway in Samuel Richardson’s novel.<sup>79</sup> Within this century there are many statistics to indicate

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<sup>75</sup> See David Roberts, *Chesterfield*, p. xviii.

<sup>76</sup> See Rosemary O’Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), p. 80.

<sup>77</sup> See Stone, p. 51.

<sup>78</sup> See Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin, 1983), p. 41.

<sup>79</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 204.

that marriage was much more profit-related than before. Newspapers, by printing advertisements presenting or stipulating actual dowries and jointures, were effectively holding a marriage market. This often resulted in young women being forced into incompatible marriages just for financial benefit for their families.<sup>80</sup>

Early in the century there was a change in education practices for upper-class females as spiritual and municipal establishments became less religious and embraced a more social experience. Males received a very different education to females; the boarding school became an important part of male education and the Grand Tour, ‘that youthful rite of passage’ involving the touring of the major cities in Europe, played a gradually more important role in their education.<sup>81</sup> Young men were enjoying sophisticated living among the most cultural parts of Europe. Following their education, they pursued aristocratic entertainment usually around the family estate, although most of these families had town houses typically within the fashionable areas of London.<sup>82</sup>

For elite girls, refined schools were set up that focused on the art of being well-mannered, with the emphasis on female accomplishments such as deportment, etiquette, sketching, painting, sewing and dancing. Dancing played a very important part in the education of the privileged, particularly for girls, because posture and dance in the main were the central modes of conveying graciousness and in so doing, good breeding.<sup>83</sup>

The proximity of these schools was important as they were usually huddled close to areas such as London or Bath or any spas and towns with privileged social activity; the school and the social frivolities were part of the learning process where what these girls learned at school they could repeat socially. As one Northumberland father outspokenly acknowledged, he had sent his daughters to school ‘to bring them

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<sup>80</sup> See Watt, pp. 138-139.

<sup>81</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 267.

<sup>82</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 267.

<sup>83</sup> Peter Borsay, ‘Children, Adolescents and Fashionable Urban Society’, *Fashioning Childhood in the Eighteenth Century*, Anja Müller, ed. (Hants: Ashgate, 1969), p. 57.

home marriageable.’ Therefore, these balls were very important market places for the negotiations between parents of privileged brides and grooms. A successful pairing brought social rewards to the intended and their families and marriage was the most important device for ascertaining status.<sup>84</sup>

Lady Mary Chudleigh (1656-1710) was part of an intellectual circle that included Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Judith Drake, Elizabeth Elstob, Mary Astell, Elizabeth Thomas and John Norris. She wrote a poem called *The Ladies Defence* (1701), which was published anonymously as a retort to John Sprint’s article against women’s rights entitled *The Bride-Woman Counsellor* (1700) in which Sprint maintains that it is a wife’s duty to love, honour and obey her husband.<sup>85</sup> Sprint is antagonistic with his portrayal of women as inferior: ‘It is a Duty incumbent on all Married Women,’ he states as ‘the Foundation of my Discourse,’ to be extraordinary careful to content and please their Husbands.’ He has reservations that women will not be able to comprehend what he is saying ‘because Women are of weaker Capacities to learn than Men, and therefore when they have a hard and difficult Lesson, and but weak Abilities to learn it, they had need of more Help and Assistance.’<sup>86</sup> He concludes with his opinion of an ideal wife:

A good Wife ... should be like a Mirrour which hath no Image of its own, but receives its Stamp and Image from the Face that looks into it: So should a good Wife endeavour to frame her outward Deportment, and her inward Affections according to her Husband’s.<sup>87</sup>

Within her dedication, Chudleigh extols the virtues of plays and romances as harmless and very pleasing leisure activities; she also, like Pennington, advises the reading of holy writings and religious texts. However, within the actual poem she argues for the

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<sup>84</sup> Borsay, p. 58.

<sup>85</sup> Quoted in J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels, The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1990), p.190.

<sup>86</sup> Quoted in Hunter, p. 190.

<sup>87</sup> Quoted in Hunter, p. 190.

education for women so they will be excellent partners for good husbands and can enjoy each other's companionship or conversely they can be more than capable of tolerating a bad husband without rancour or animosity.<sup>88</sup>

Moral instruction was very important within the education system, particularly when motherly attention, whether through neglect or absence, was considered lacking. In a letter written by Marthae Taylor to her friend berating her on her handling of her daughter, she suggests that she enrolls her in a boarding school so she can get an enlightened education. Taylor warns that fond admirers wishing to become her husband who 'may make a prey of her and her fortune e'er you're aware; abuse the first, consume the last, make her miserable and sting you to the heart ... how necessary then is prevention.'<sup>89</sup>

The case of Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756) shows the two perspectives from male and female viewpoints. Elstob wrote a memoir at the request of George Ballard and explained that her widowed mother was an avid devotee of female education and a book enthusiast who encouraged her daughter's appetite for learning. As she had lost her mother at a young age and her brother was not old enough to care for her, Elstob became a ward of court to her uncle, Dr. Charles Elstob, Canon of Canterbury, who did not approve of women's education. He banned her from continuing her studies and rejected her frequent appeals, always dismissing her with 'that common and vulgar saying that one tongue is enough for a woman.'<sup>90</sup> At the age of nineteen, her brother was able to provide her with assistance to facilitate her studies. She was proficient in eight languages and went on to publish many grammar books and translations and some of her publications are pioneering works in the modern study of Old English.<sup>91</sup> In

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<sup>88</sup> See Brophy, pp. 46-47.

<sup>89</sup> See Brophy, pp. 47-49.

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in Brophy, p. 48.

<sup>91</sup> See Brophy, pp. 48-49.

contrast to Dr. Elstob, Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift were two of the well-known men who condemned the inequality of the education given to females; this deficiency in education was the reason for any inadequacy noted in women.<sup>92</sup>

Mary Astell was a conservative Anglican who was a notorious defender of women's academic capabilities and felt strongly about the lack of comprehensive instruction for girls. One of her well known works, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694-1697) summarized a decisive plan for female edification; in the first volume of *A Serious Proposal*, Astell called for women to fight the male control of education.<sup>93</sup> In her text *Some Reflections Upon Marriage* (1700), she infamously challenged Locke's political outlook with her ironic statement:

If all men are born free, how is it that all women are born slaves? As they must be if the being subjected to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown arbitrary will of men, be the perfect condition of slavery?<sup>94</sup>

She protests that in women's education:

So much and no more of the world is shown them, as serves to weaken and corrupt their minds, to give them wrong notions, and busy them in mean pursuits; to disturb not regulate their passions, to make them timorous and dependent, and, in a word, fit for nothing else but to act a farce for the diversion of their governors.<sup>95</sup>

Furthermore, she sarcastically remarks: 'alas! what poor woman is ever taught that she should have a higher desire than to get her a husband?' Astell rejects the notion that there is a correlation between physical and psychological strength hence women's brains are weaker because their bodies are less strong: 'strength of mind goes along with strength of body,' and 'tis only for some odd accidents which philosophers have

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<sup>92</sup> See Brophy, p. 51.

<sup>93</sup> See Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c. 1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p.18.

<sup>94</sup> Quoted in Rendall, p. 18.

<sup>95</sup> Quoted in Brophy, pp. 53-54.

not yet thought worthwhile to enquire into, that the sturdiest porter is not the wisest man.<sup>96</sup>

Investigations by history scholars of eighteenth-century novels and conduct literature show very conflicting experiences.<sup>97</sup> The conduct book could articulate societal objectives highlighting changing class boundaries, while educational advice could provide a chance for radicals, free-thinkers and traditionalists to be more politically aware. Education and academic improvement were crucially important to progressive women and their practical educational texts provided vital sources of income for them.<sup>98</sup> Many conduct and educational articles recommend reading suitable for women, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1788) and *The Female Reader* (1789) contain passages of recommended texts. It is not unusual for female writers to give a more comprehensive version than men of appropriate reading material. James Fordyce, author of *Sermons to Young Women* (1765) and John Gregory, author of *A Father's Legacy to his Daughters* (1778), two of the most widely read conduct writers, were loath to recommend reading.<sup>99</sup> Gregory recommended concentrating on dress, conduct and dialogue while Fordyce would prohibit all novels except Richardson's. He advises women to understand men rather than books 'in order to make yourselves agreeable and useful.'<sup>100</sup> Gregory's text is littered with inconsistencies; young women were to be seen and not heard but were permitted to protest if offended. He informs his daughters that:

wit is the most dangerous talent you can possess. It must be guarded with great discretion and good nature, otherwise it will create you many enemies ... Wit is so flattering to vanity, that

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<sup>96</sup> Quoted in Brophy, pp. 54.

<sup>97</sup> Sweet, p. 113.

<sup>98</sup> See Rendall, p. 24.

<sup>99</sup> See Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 43.

<sup>100</sup> Quoted in Pearson, p. 43.

they who possess it become intoxicated, and lose all self command.<sup>101</sup>

Gregory's texts often showed a conflict between concepts of male and female difference.

During the eighteenth century there was an increase in the popularity of history reading, partly due to the writings of David Hume (1711-1776), William Robertson (1721-1793) and Edward Gibbon (1737-1794). Many of the contemporary writers and intellectuals believed that history played a vital part in the education of women as it could help promote patriotism and an interest in classical history. It was highly recommended as suitable reading material for females by conformists and non-conformists.<sup>102</sup> Many women who kept a note of their reading included history, letters, chronicles and life histories on their list. Gregory, who was at a loss as to what books to recommend for women and girls, was of the opinion that history-reading could incorporate 'no impropriety.'<sup>103</sup> Most critics were concerned about female novel reading; Fordyce considered most readers of novels as 'spiritual prostitutes.'<sup>104</sup>

In 1753, Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act was passed. This legislation was greatly influenced by the nobility, whose daughters had been tricked into illegal marriages or abducted and forced into marriages by fortune hunters, who were assisted by men posing as priests. Richardson's *Clarissa* might have been protected by this Act. Nancy Armstrong states that the Act was a growing attempt to colonize private life, which 'institutionalized the household and placed it more firmly under state control than ever before.'<sup>105</sup> The other reason for the Bill was to eliminate secret pre-contracts and secret marriages which made bigamy very prevalent. The following year only the

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<sup>101</sup> Pennington, p.19.

<sup>102</sup> See Rendall, p.24.

<sup>103</sup> See Pearson, p.50.

<sup>104</sup> James Fordyce (1720-1796), the Scottish Presbyterian known for his conduct book *Sermons for Young Women* (1766), see Pearson, p.110.

<sup>105</sup> Quoted in Armstrong, p. 94.

church wedding was legally binding and had to be entered into the parish register and signed by the couple. This made many marriages illegal; previously, many couples just had verbal spousals. It also eliminated the marriages of couples under twenty-one which could not be validated without the consent of parents or guardians. Gretna Green in Scotland became popular for runaway couples disobeying their parents because it was exempt from the new Marriage Act.

Ruth Perry relates the history of a rich trader's daughter who falls for the charms of a gentleman from university. Refusing to be his mistress she agrees to a secret marriage; they married at the Fleet in London, in a service performed for money by the Chaplains of the Fleet and they lived together for some years.<sup>106</sup> He decides to leave her and informs her that because she was under-age and did not have her parents' permission when they eloped that their marriage was null and void. Believing that her marriage was legal, she is aghast, but he quotes the Hardwicke Marriage Act (1753) and then leaves her.<sup>107</sup>

In London in 1780, an extreme and bizarre response to the Marriage Act was published entitled *Thelyphthora; or a Treatise on Female Ruin in Its Causes, Effects, Consequences, Prevention, and Remedy; considered on the basis of the Divine Law: under the following heads, viz. Marriage, Whoredom, and Fornication, Adultery, Polygamy, Divorce; with many others incidental matters; particularly including an Examination of the Principles*

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<sup>106</sup> The Fleet was an area in London where many clandestine marriages took place.

<sup>107</sup> See Perry, pp. 277-278. More anxious about legal documents for the reassignment of property than relationships between people, the Hardwicke Marriage Act created men's and women's rights as equal regardless of the dissimilarity in their biological make up. The effect of this was that it essentially took away the male responsibility for children which had up to that time been endorsed by Church law. Opponents claimed that the Bill protected the interests of the rich and disadvantaged the poor. They argued that it was calculated to engross all the property in the kingdom to a few great and rich families while discouraging marriage among the lesser folk because of the expense and long wait entailed by the Act. They also argued that the Bill would ruin the reputations – and prospects – of women who had succumbed to lovers' vows but who, under the new Bill, would have no leverage to enforce legal marriage. As Robert Nugent put it, such duplicitous men ought to be punishable for rape: 'there is the same difference between a man who deflowers a girl under the pretence of a marriage, which he knows to be void in law, and a man who ravishes a girl, that there is between a man who cheats me out of my purse by false dice and a man who robs me of it upon the highway' (*The Parliamentary History of England*, vol. xv, p.22).<sup>7</sup>



and Tendency of Stat. 26 Geo.11. c.33. commonly called the Marriage Act. This monumental two-volume argument was published anonymously but it became known that the author was the Anglican Calvinist minister, Martin Madan. He insisted that polygamy would:

... put a stop to the ruinous, detestable, horrible and national evils, “namely, brothel-keeping, murdering of infants by seduced women, pregnant virgins committing of suicide, medicine taking to procure abortions, the venereal disease, seduction, prostitution, whoredom, adultery – and all the deplorable evils accompanying and following the mischievous sin of lewdness in this land.”<sup>108</sup>

Madan argued for what he claimed to be the laws of God rather than the laws of the land. He believed that a man should be considered married to a woman when he had seduced her and that this would help prevent prostitution.<sup>109</sup> According to Madan, the women under God’s law could compel their seducers to take them as their wives. He maintained that ‘marriage is a divine institution, that those who look upon it merely as a civil contract have different views from those given us in the scriptures, that a woman’s person cannot be separated from herself; whenever she bestows the one, the other is bestowed also.’ He ends his treatise by stating: ‘The author of this book pretends not to be a prophet, but judging from what has been to what may be, he entertains not the least doubt that a century hence the world may either wonder at the man who had wildness enough to attack the present system of things with regard to marriage or that there were found people who were absurd enough to abuse him for it.’<sup>110</sup>

Twenty years before Richardson wrote about a heroine being compelled to marry in *Clarissa*, Defoe wrote about it in *Conjugal Lewdness*. He criticized spouses who used their marriage bed for lustful desires and found that those who married with only ‘slight and superficial Affection’ contemptible. Because they have sex without

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<sup>108</sup> Quoted in Oscar Sherwin, ‘Madan’s Cure-All’, *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (July, 1963), pp. 427-443:427-428, <http://www.jstor.org/stable3485010>, accessed 14/08/2009.

<sup>109</sup> See Sherwin, pp. 427-428.

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Sherwin, pp. 433-434, 443.

love or affection, he writes: 'such persons are to me little more than legal Prostitutes.' He accuses parents who force their daughters to marry against their will as being guilty of rape.<sup>111</sup> He is scathing about them when he writes about sex within an enforced marriage:

If Violence is offered to the Chastity of a Woman, she has her recourse to the Law, and she will be redress'd as far as redress can be obtained. Where the Fact is irretrievable, the Man should be punished, and the Woman is protected by the Law from any farther Force upon her for the future. But where the Woman is put to Bed to the Man by a kind of forced Authority of Friends; 'tis a Rape upon her Mind; her Soul, her brightest Faculties, her Will, her Affections are ravished, and she is left without redress, she is left in the Possession of the Ravisher, or of him, who, by their Order, she was delivered up to, and she is bound in the Chains of the same Violence for her whole life. HORRID abuse!<sup>112</sup>

According to Defoe, marriage without reciprocal love and esteem is not a marriage, but matrimonial prostitution.<sup>113</sup>

Defoe's writing foreshadowed the life of Charlotte Smith (1749-1806), the novelist and poet who was forced into an early marriage by the death of her mother and her father's subsequent spending. As Defoe had alluded, she was 'put to bed' with the violent and extravagant spendthrift Benjamin Smith; she later referred to this as prostitution. Although the marriage was considered miserable, the couple had twelve children together. However, Smith eventually left her husband and subsequently wrote profusely to support her children. She was unable to support herself sufficiently on her writings and by the end of her life she was so destitute that she had to sell her furniture and books for fuel and food.<sup>114</sup>

At the age of twenty-four, in 1728 Mary Edwards inherited the enormous wealth of her father which included landed estates and a vast annual income reputed to

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<sup>111</sup> See Perry, p. 259.

<sup>112</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 259.

<sup>113</sup> See Perry, p. 259.

<sup>114</sup> See Perry, pp. 281, 327.

have been between fifty and sixty thousand pounds.<sup>115</sup> She had very definite ideas about arranged unions, and as a girl wrote to her mother about a society marriage: ‘The Duke of Bedford is justly to be pity’d, ‘tis exceeding cruel to marry Children and I wonder he who was at his own disposal wou’d consent.’<sup>116</sup> She decided she would choose her own husband but she made a bad choice. In 1731, she participated in a Fleet wedding, in which she secretly married Lord Anne Hamilton, godson of Queen Anne and son of the Fourth Duke of Hamilton. Within a short space of time he was spending her money extravagantly, and was gambling and transferring large amounts of stock from his wife’s assets to his own. Edwards had a son in 1733, and must have realized that she must safeguard herself and her child because in March 1734, she had the documentation of her marriage removed from the Fleet Chaplain’s registers and replaced the notice of her son’s baptism in the church register describing herself as a spinster. This was a drastic action at that time as she would have been considered a fallen woman and her son would be deemed illegitimate. Although Edwards would have been the centre of much gossip, she was protected by her vast wealth which allowed her freedom, hence by 1740 she was being described as a single wealthy woman.<sup>117</sup> Two years later, William Hogarth painted her portrait, which showed a vibrant, carefree young woman.<sup>118</sup>

Edwards commissioned Hogarth to paint *Marriage A-La-Mode* (1745), a series that included six scenes; she wanted Hogarth to educate society about the dangers of arranged marriages. The series begins with the fathers, lawyers and young couple at a meeting for an arranged marriage, the young couple are ignoring each other, and the groom has a black spot on his face that was probably a syphilitic sore. Syphilis was only

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<sup>115</sup> Jenny Uglow, *Hogarth: A Life and a World* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), p. 363.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Uglow, p. 364.

<sup>117</sup> See Uglow, p. 364.

<sup>118</sup> See Uglow, pp. 364-365.

one among many potential precarious consequences for young aristocratic women who had been compelled to marry strangers to satisfy their parents' financial desires. Each painting depicts different stages of the marriage which includes adultery and debauchery and culminates in the stabbing, and subsequent death of the husband in Plate 5 and the suicide of the wife in Plate 6.<sup>119</sup>

For the vast majority of couples in England, marriage was a permanent agreement which could only be severed by the death of a spouse. Among the poor there were other options rather than death as a means of escaping a bad marriage. Desertion, usually by the man as the woman would be left with the children, was deemed as ethically negating the marriage. Another means for the poor within the eighteenth century of annulling a marriage was 'the unofficial folk-custom of divorce by mutual consent by 'wife-sale'. The husband would put a halter around his wife's neck and lead her to market to be sold. This halter was supposed to be symbolic where the wife would be guided by the husband and then taken away by the buyer. The deal was frequently pre-arranged with the agreement of the wife because the price and the buyer were already organized.<sup>120</sup> At times, this buyer may already have been the wife's lover who would take on her expenses after discussions with her husband.

The family and marriage were crucial to British social and political culture of the period. Historians of women and gender have concentrated on the impact on society and the significance of how marriage and the family were changed. Instead of focusing exclusively on women as wives and mothers, they stress the variety of marital and family affiliations for females in many layers of society through the investigation of the change within courtship, sex, marriage and motherhood. It was within the home that men learned the relegation of women; much eighteenth-century prescriptive literature

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<sup>119</sup> Stephen Farthing, *1001 Paintings You Must See Before You Die* (London: Cassell Illustrated, 2006), p.301.

<sup>120</sup> See Stone, pp. 32-35.

had illustrated a husband's superiority and influence over his wife and outlined the pecking order within the extended household.<sup>121</sup> Although on paper women and their assets were taken over by the husband, in *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765), judge and legal commentator, Sir William Blackstone stated:

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being, or legal existence of the woman is suspended during marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband ... [her property] become absolutely her husband's which at his death he may leave entirely from her.<sup>122</sup>

In reality, the use of previously arranged marriage settlements in which it was agreed that women could control their own property was prevalent; it also meant that very often a woman could supervise both her husband's and her own financial assets.<sup>123</sup> This would be true for some middle or upper class women but it was very different for the poor as there were fewer assets to be concerned about.

The main responsibilities of a married woman in cultured society were fourfold. Initially, it was obedience to her husband then it was her duty to produce children. Correspondence of these women record the sickness, tiredness and general effect pregnancy had on their bodies, particularly in the case of Lady Bristol who married at nineteen years of age and produced twenty children within twenty years.<sup>124</sup> Having given birth to their children, the mothers in wealthy families passed them on to the hired help and had little to do with the rearing of their babies. The relationship between parents and their offspring was supposed to be reserved and even in many contented households deference was more apparent than love. Thirdly, the management of the extended household was the duty of the mistress of the house, this included the administration of household accounts, the ordering of provisions and the supervision of

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<sup>121</sup> See Evans, p. 57.

<sup>122</sup> See Evans, p. 58.

<sup>123</sup> See Evans, p. 58.

<sup>124</sup> Porter, *English Society*, p. 41.

servants. Lastly, her duty was to be polite and dignified, adept in the arts of fashion, good at conversation and a proficiency at music, painting or sewing.<sup>125</sup> Women were also warned in magazines about assigning too much time to household management; a magazine in the 1740s warned that it might win a lady ‘the reputation of a notable housewife, but not of a woman of fine taste.’<sup>126</sup> Although arranged marriages could be difficult, spinsterhood was not easy, as women were either beholden to their male relatives or they had to take up an occupation such as governess or needlework. Within fiction the unmarried woman of marriageable age or more, previously revered, was now reduced to being either a caricature or a detestable character within novels. If she did not have enough money for a dowry for a beneficial marriage, she could only hope that she could induce relatives or friends to provide for her.<sup>127</sup> As Juliet Granville in Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer* states:

How few, she cried, how circumscribed, are the attainments of women! and how much fewer and more circumscribed still are those which may, in their consequences, be useful as well as ornamental, to the higher or education class! those through which, in the reverses of fortune, a FEMALE may reap benefit with abasement!<sup>128</sup>

Later in the century there was a change in the way mothers reared their children; they had a more positive role and began to take the care of them out of the hands of servants.<sup>129</sup> Evangelical thinking at that time highlighted the ethical and cultural lower status of women by maintaining the female established positions of wives and mothers; to them the centre of the home was the place for the gentry and bourgeois women. The

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<sup>125</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, p. 42.

<sup>126</sup> Quoted in Porter, *English Society*, p. 44.

<sup>127</sup> See Robert Palfrey Utter and Gwendolyn Bridge Needham, *Pamela’s Daughters* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), p. 33.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Utter and Needham, p. 33. Original capitals.

<sup>129</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, p.42.

principles of submissive agreement, determined moderation and the preclusion of aggression and roughness were welcomed as female attributes.<sup>130</sup>

Within the social order most sections of society at this time were governed by men, this was underscored by the writings of contemporary men and afterwards by male historians. Women did have some authority in certain conditions and areas, but it was generally considered erratic and superfluous. Men were continuously aware of ‘petticoat power’ from ‘royal mistresses toying with helpless politicians or cuckold wives henpecking their husbands.’ This obstinate fortitude of a patriarchal society within the century does not indicate that gender roles remained static as society and culture were changing with this complex civilization.<sup>131</sup> Women were placed on a pedestal where their positions were considered important in the rise of modern civil society but it was as submissive conveyers of emotions and decorum; this endorsed the authorization of the female role in both domestic and societal environment.<sup>132</sup>

Among the working classes, mothers combined domestic work and child-rearing with work outside the home. Women through marriage received the affection, security, status, potency and wages of a husband, and in consequence men got the household organization and labour of his wife. Within farming, mercantile, textile and industrial business, parents required their children to work and contribute to the household budget. It was assumed that when the parents were no longer able to work either through ill health or old age that their children would support them.<sup>133</sup>

Roy Porter asserts that ‘women were laced tightly into constrictive roles: wives, mothers, housekeepers, domestic servants, maiden aunts;’ public life and the

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<sup>130</sup> Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History, 1688-1832* (London: Arnold, 1997), p. 345.

<sup>131</sup> See O’Gorman, p. 343.

<sup>132</sup> See Rendall, pp. 22, 24.

<sup>133</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, pp. 44-45.

professions were not open to women.<sup>134</sup> Contemporary women such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mrs. Delany or Mrs. Chapone, complained about many aspects of female society though they seemed to believe that men were superior.<sup>135</sup> Mrs. Chapone defends a husband's 'divine right to obedience.' Lady Mary Wortley Montagu recommends to her daughter that she 'conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness.' Dr. Gregory emulated this advice in his parental monitor to his daughter. When an unmarried Mary Wollstonecraft became pregnant she was snubbed by her friends Mrs. Inchbald and the actress Mrs. Siddons because they feared guilt by association.<sup>136</sup>

The huge mortality rates for both children and adults, together with the custom of sending a baby out of the home to be wet-nursed, meant that it was inevitable that the bond between the parent and child was not strong. Parents were reluctant to become close to their infants because of their uncertain future and it would make their grief harder to bear. To maintain their sanity parents tried to restrain their emotional attachment to their babies even when they were really wanted because of the high mortality rate. The high death ratio was class specific and the nobility who lived in rural areas could avoid outbreaks of illnesses and were healthier than city or town inhabitants or the poor.<sup>137</sup> According to Paul Sangster, books such as Rowland Hill's *Instructions for Children* (1794) encouraged young children to be ready for their own deaths, so that they would 'expire in a rapture of holy triumph' and be 'taken by angels to dwell for ever with the Lord.'<sup>138</sup> In contrast, examples of the terrible loss felt by

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<sup>134</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, p. 36.

<sup>135</sup> Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mrs. Chapone and Mrs. Delany among others, were part of the London literary circle.

<sup>136</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>137</sup> See Stone, pp. 48, 57, 59.

<sup>138</sup> Rowland Hills, *Instructions for Children* (London: G. Thompson, 1794), p. 26. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 19/09/2009, quoted in Katharine Kittredge, 'A Long Forgotten Sorrow: The Mourning Journal of Melesina Trench' and Hester



parents are to be found in the *The Mourning Journal of Melesina Trench* and Hester Thrale's *The Children's Book*, edited by Katharine Kittredge.<sup>139</sup> Thrale, wife of London brewer and friend of Samuel Johnson, grieves for her son Harry's death in 1776, she felt compelled to write about his death, more so than some of her school-going daughters who had already died. She blames herself for the loss of her son:

I was too proud of him and provoked God's judgments by my Folly: — Let this Sorrow expiate my Offences good Lord! And through the merits of him who dried the Mother's Tears, as She follow'd her Son's Bier & Bid her Weep not! Suffer me no more to follow my Offspring to the Grave.<sup>140</sup>

More than three months after Harry's death, Thrale discovers that she is pregnant, she writes: 'I shall not remain here long enough to rear him.'<sup>141</sup>

Melesina Trench was born in 1768 and orphaned at four years of age. She was reared by her elderly paternal grandfather, Richard Chenevix (1696–1799), Archbishop of Waterford, from whom she garnered the eighteenth-century beliefs that restraint on grief was 'good breeding' and that well bred women 'respected those able to control and master their emotions, and looked down on those who could not.'<sup>142</sup> It is not surprising she felt guilty about her grief as historian Richard Houlbrooke avers that excessive grief was a 'snare of impiety' and that a bereaved mother should not 'let her thoughts dwell too long on her loss, to the prejudice of her body and soul.'<sup>143</sup> Although written in 1806, Trench's attitude was formed by the late eighteenth-century cult of sensibility which considered grief proper and commendable. Trench's 'Mourning Journal' contains fifty-eight pages and just under 8,000 words, in the opening entry, her anguish is evident from the blots and alterations she makes as she attempts to describe her son. She

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Thrale's 'The Children's Book', *Death la Mort, Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 21., No. 1 (Fall, 2008), p. 163.

<sup>139</sup> See Kittredge, p. 157.

<sup>140</sup> Quoted in Kittredge, p. 171

<sup>141</sup> Quoted in Kittredge, p. 166.

<sup>142</sup> Quoted in Kittredge, p.163.

<sup>143</sup> Quoted in Kittredge, p. 3.

concentrates on her child's appearance as if she needs to have a clear image of him and there is a strong sense of a physical yearning.<sup>144</sup> In comparison, Thrale's account of her son's death is very detailed; she even describes how she did not hear his last words. Although Trench describes the doctor's diagnosis, she focuses more on Frederick, his feelings and his relationship with his parents. In Thrale's case, parenting appears to have been the sole responsibility of the mother but Trench shared the parenting with her husband.<sup>145</sup> Trench was still grieving when she had another baby and writes: '21 [July] – on the 16<sup>th</sup> I was again a Mother – of a strong, healthy, and handsome boy – but the child of my soul is gone forever.'<sup>146</sup>

During this time, England, which was to see many agricultural advances such as the increase in exchangeable farming, crop rotation, crops for animal feeds and improved marshland, the high rate of infant and child mortality was still very prevalent. Because of this mortality rate the death of a child was dreaded but could be expected. A member of the gentry, Edward Gibbon, historian and Member of Parliament, had six brothers and sisters who died in infancy. Gibbon maintained that he was sickly because his mother did not care for him properly and that he was starved by his nurse. Having survived an unhealthy childhood, he improved after his mother died when his beloved Aunt Kitty took over as his surrogate mother. He remarks: 'so feeble was my constitution, so precarious my life, that in the baptism of my brothers, my father's prudence successively repeated my Christian name of Edward, which, in case of the departure of the eldest son, this patronymic appellation might still be perpetuated in the family.'<sup>147</sup> Tens of thousands of women died in childbirth, and even the aristocracy did not escape as not one of Queen Anne's children survived to adulthood, the longest any

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<sup>144</sup> See Kittredge, pp. 155-163

<sup>145</sup> See Kittredge, p.163

<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Kittredge, p. 167.

<sup>147</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 257.

lived was a son who died aged eleven.<sup>148</sup> Lack of concern and disregard was the cause of death of many infants and children. Regardless of the acknowledged neglect of wet nurses, the wealthy continued to send their children away for the first year; this meant that the death rate of babies was twice that of those fed by their mothers. Parents and children were continually affected by a high mortality rate within the family.<sup>149</sup>

In poor areas where mothers went out to work every day, their children suffered. These mothers had to leave their children at home, unprotected from harm and emaciated, sometimes they were given opiates so that they would remain quiet. This failure to give proper care to the children was the cause of their death. Child mortality was much higher where the woman went out to work, on the other hand, where the mother stayed at home and the children survived, they had to endure starvation and insufficiency.<sup>150</sup> Contraception was considered wicked by many, and when Thomas Malthus called for sexual restraint, he believed that sexual natural tendencies may be normal but that some are deficient in the self-discipline required to abstain from sexual intercourse.<sup>151</sup> Malthus linked sex with food, both motivated by irrepressible appetite: 'So consumed by appetite, the poor appear as bearers of bad culture, the absence of economic restraint pointing to a more fundamental lack of sexual discipline and self-restraint.'<sup>152</sup>

Among the poor, there was an increase in the number of illegitimate children being born; the rate of illegitimate births rose from approximately two per cent in 1700 to five per cent or more in 1850.<sup>153</sup> This rise certainly encouraged intentional

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<sup>148</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, p. 27.

<sup>149</sup> See Stone, p. 66.

<sup>150</sup> See Stone, p. 296.

<sup>151</sup> Anita Levy, 'Reproductive Urges', *Inventing Maternity, Politics, Science and Literature 1750-1865*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), p. 200.

<sup>152</sup> Quoted in Levy, pp. 200-201.

<sup>153</sup> See Alannah Tomkins, 'Women and Poverty', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 156.

infanticide, the predicament of an unmarried woman with no income and a baby to support was so appalling that despair drove some to murder their newly born infants. Infanticide was regarded as a type of assault almost exclusively by the mother between 1700 and 1850 but it was not a specific crime under English law until 1938, when it was labelled in gendered terms as the murder by a mother during the first year after giving birth.<sup>154</sup> The crime was perceived as an extreme anomaly, something that went against the traditional natural maternal bonds between mother and child.

In 1624 a law was passed in order ‘to prevent the murder of bastards;’ this law was exceptional within the English legal system as it presumed guilt until innocence was established. If a single woman had not told anyone about her pregnancy and had hidden the birth, and if subsequently that child died, she would automatically be considered responsible for killing the infant and would be hanged at the gallows as punishment. This was not that unusual considering the shame linked with illegitimacy and the contemporary infant mortality rate. It was more often than not committed by unmarried domestic servants who were anxious to hide their pregnancies. It was not until the nineteenth century that this act was changed when Lord Ellenborough’s 1803 *Offences against the Person Act* (43 Geo. 111, c.58), made the homicide of a child the same as any other murder where the burden of proof was on the prosecutor, and the person innocent until proven guilty, although concealment of birth still carried a two year prison sentence.<sup>155</sup> During the eighteenth century, women could feasibly be condemned to death just because they hid their pregnancies even if there was not enough evidence to prove a charge of murder. There was a higher rate of charges against women for the murder of their child than other murders at that time.<sup>156</sup> Samuel

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<sup>154</sup> See Bowers, p. 98, n. 11.

<sup>155</sup> See Josephine McDonagh, ‘Infanticide and the Boundaries’, *Inventing Maternity*, pp. 217-218.

<sup>156</sup> See Anne-Marie Kilday, ‘Women and Crime’, *Women’s History: Britain 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (Routledge: London and New York, 2005), p.184.

Radbill maintains that the ways used by women for the slaying of their children had not changed much over the years 'Blood is rarely shed.'<sup>157</sup> Radbill's findings have been upheld by others. Keith Wrightson's study of seventeenth-century England and J. Kelly's investigation of eighteenth-century Ireland have claimed that various types of suffocation like drowning or strangulation prevailed over more brutal procedures.<sup>158</sup> It seems that the Scottish mothers who practised infanticide employed much more aggressive means than their English and Welsh counterparts. There are cases of mothers being extremely violent with their babies: at the High Court in Edinburgh in November 1720, Anna Brown was indicted and found guilty of defiantly and repetitively hitting her new-born son with a stone and then proceeded to throw him in into the river; in 1757 Sarah Quarrier was charged with lacerating her child's throat with a razor; Catherine McDonald was indicted in 1797 for striking her baby with a spade, leaving 'its left leg above the knee torn off ... its right leg was disjointed and its nose flattened.' She then fed the child's remains to a neighbourhood dog'.<sup>159</sup> These judicial subjects were posited as the ultimate nightmare mothers.

Because of the expense, the laws obliging parishes to look after children born under their authority created problems as many impoverished pregnant women were refused admission to lodgings. In his *Weekly Journal* in April 1727, Nathaniel Mist reports the story of a woman in Wolverhampton who was charged but acquitted of the murder of her child in similar circumstances:

It appeared that she was a poor Woman, and that her Husband was gone from her, that she wander'd about the Parish, and no Body would take her in, so that she suffer'd to be brought to Bed in a House of Office, to shelter her from the weather, where the Infant dy'd of Cold and Want, and the Mother forc'd

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<sup>157</sup> S.X. Radbill, 'A History of Child Abuse and Infanticide', *The Battered Child*, R.E. Helfer and C.H. Kempe, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p.9, quoted in Kilday, p. 184.

<sup>158</sup> See Kilday, p. 184.

<sup>159</sup> Quoted in Kilday, p.184.

to live many Days on Bread and Water only, the Parish refusing her any Assistance for Fear of bringing a Charge upon them.<sup>160</sup>

Mist asserted: ‘the Parishioners themselves ought decently to be hang’d for the said most shameful murder.’ The mother’s exoneration and Mist’s reaction were very unusual as his newspaper contained many reports of maltreatment and abandonment of children and suicides of many single mothers. Between May, 1725 and December, 1726, his newspaper contained reports of the trials and subsequent death sentences of fifteen women guilty of murdering their babies.<sup>161</sup>

Because infanticide created a severe problem within the eighteenth century, philosophical commentators such as David Hume, Adam Smith, George Ensor, William Godwin and Thomas Malthus were debating the issue. David Hume argued that ‘infanticide is preferable to the corrupt modern practice of placing unwanted children in foundling hospitals.’<sup>162</sup> While infanticide is morally reprehensible, William Godwin believed that to take the life of a child would be to spare it from a miserable existence and would be a logical moral act. He wrote: ‘I had rather a child should perish at the first hour of existence, than that a man should spend seventy years of life in a state of misery and vice.’<sup>163</sup> Godwin also asserts that perhaps infanticide was not that ‘unnatural’, considering that the neglect of children as well as the process of abortion that was used in many cultures to curtail the population growth.<sup>164</sup> During this time, two types of infanticide were written about, the first was the bad mother, the merciless, cruel woman who discards her responsibility as a mother, very often this bad mother is single.

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<sup>160</sup> Quoted in Bowers, pp.4-5.

<sup>161</sup> Quoted in Bowers, pp. 4-5.

<sup>162</sup> Quoted in Josephine McDonagh, p. 220.

<sup>163</sup> Quoted in Julie Kipp, p. 133.

<sup>164</sup> See Kipp, p.133.

Conversely, the self sacrificing and courageous mother who kills her baby, by giving up her child's life, is making the final sacrifice.<sup>165</sup>

It was not until the middle of the century that in England the mortality rates for infants and children started to decrease although the explanation for this is uncertain. A greater knowledge of obstetrics is a probability, progressive philosophy confronted body and health issues, challenging religious traditions with the worldly. The progressive medical profession began to control the problem regarding childbirth, doctors advocated for the ignorant midwives to be discarded and replaced with medically trained obstetricians and male midwives. Another improvement was the invention of efficient forceps in which it would remove the infant without crushing it in the procedure. Trained obstetricians generally left childbirth to nature and only in emergency intervened with this newly invented equipment.<sup>166</sup> This was a more humane and educated attitude both to childbirth and to the mothers. There was a greater value put on children in what J.H. Plumb called the 'new world of children'– 'beckoned a softening of traditional patriarchal attitudes.'<sup>167</sup> Without doubt the introduction of male midwives was unpopular with the traditional female midwives whose source of revenue was in danger, and with the professional doctors who correlated the business to that of abortionists: Sir David Hamilton was the first male midwife to receive a knighthood in 1703.<sup>168</sup> Having given birth in safety, mothers were encouraged to breastfeed and not to send their children to wet nurses; they were urged to allow their babies to have their limbs free and not to be swaddled.<sup>169</sup>

In 1765, William Blackstone in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* wrote that life 'begins in the contemplation of law as soon as an infant is able to stir in

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<sup>165</sup> See McDonagh, p.223.

<sup>166</sup> See Stone, p. 59.

<sup>167</sup> Quoted in O'Gorman, p. 347.

<sup>168</sup> See Stone, p. 59.

<sup>169</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 209.

the mother's womb.'<sup>170</sup> In the eighteenth century, women were the arbiters and the authoritative voices relating to their experiences of pregnancy and childbirth. A woman only became publicly pregnant when she felt the foetus move, known as 'quickening', only she could determine and describe this quickening. A pregnancy did not become viable until a report of this quickening by the pregnant woman and the baby did not exist until it was born alive. There was much contemporary debate in Europe on whether the mental psychological activity of the mother could be responsible for her foetus being deformed and consequently being born malformed.<sup>171</sup> English Surgeon Daniel Turner published a medical treatise in 1714 called *De Morbis Cutaneis: A Treatise of Diseases Incident to the Skin*. This was the first English dermatology text in the history of medicine but its notoriety is due to the intense arguments it incited, especially the chapter titled: *Of Spots and Marks of a diverse Resemblance, imprest upon the Skin of the Foetus, by the Force of the Mother's Fancy; with some Things premis'd, of the strange and almost incredible Power of Imagination, more especially in pregnant Women*, in which Turner claimed that the foetus was affected by the force of a mother's fantasies.<sup>172</sup>

A member of the London College of Physicians, James Augustus Blondel, reacted with outrage and asked:

What can be more scandalous, and provoking, than to suppose, that those whom God Almighty has endow'd, not only with so many charms, but also with an extraordinary Love and Tenderness for their Children, instead of answering the End they are made for, do breed [*sic*] *Monsters* by the Wantonness of their Imagination?<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Quoted in Julia Epstein, 'The Pregnant Imagination, Women's Bodies, and Fetal Rights', *Inventing Maternity: Politics, Science, and Literature 1650-1865*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999) p. 112.

<sup>171</sup> See Epstein, p.116.

<sup>172</sup> See Epstein, p. 116.

<sup>173</sup> Quoted in Epstein, p.116.



An early eighteenth-century midwifery book, *Aristotle's Compleat and Experience'd Midwife* contained similar nonsense to Turner's treatise:

Let none present any strange and unwholesome Thing to her, nor so much as name it, lest she should desire it, and not be able to get it, and so either cause her to Miscarry, or the Child to have some Deformity on that Account.<sup>174</sup>

Likewise, John Maubray in his book *Female Physician* (1724) puts the onus for any misfortunes solely on the pregnant woman:

She ought discreetly, to suppress all *Anger, Passion*, and other *Perturbations* of Mind, and avoid entertaining too *serious* or *melancholick Thoughts*; since all *such* tend to impress a *Depravity* of Nature upon the *Infant's Mind*, and *Deformity* on its *Body*.<sup>175</sup>

Maubray also advocated that pregnant women kept harmony within their households and marriages. The eighteenth-century perspectives that linked deformities in foetuses to psychological activity made women's role in reproduction fit in with the established concept of women's social status.<sup>176</sup> Legal scholar Reva Siegel claims that: 'Regulations governing the conditions in which women conceive, gestate, and nurture children express social attitudes about sexuality and motherhood and, in turn, shape women's experience of sexuality and motherhood.'<sup>177</sup>

Childhood as a social construction is affected by contradictory classifications in various societies. It is something continuously prone to varying pressures that are beyond control such as the economic, political and social structure constantly changes and is reinvented. If social stability was to depend on the good behaviour of the family, the conduct of its individuals had to be restrained: without taking into account religious and moral matters, the legitimacy of children was a vital concern in monetary matters, as it meant that an illegitimate child was not permitted to become heir to his father's

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<sup>174</sup> Quoted in Epstein, p. 117. This work was an anonymous and popular version of Aristotle's *De Generatione et Corruptione* and was continually in print into the 1930s in Great Britain.

<sup>175</sup> Quoted in Epstein, p. 117.

<sup>176</sup> See Epstein, p. 117.

<sup>177</sup> Quoted in Epstein, p. 122.

property.<sup>178</sup> Sir William Blackstone justified this rule and states: ‘the principal end and design of establishing the contract of marriage’ was not concerned with religious principles, but was established for the ‘care, the protection, the maintenance, and the education of children.’ He declared that if any children were to be legitimized following a marriage that the ‘institution of marriage would be at risk because ‘one main inducement’ to marry was not only ‘the desire of having children, but also the desire of procreating lawful heirs.’<sup>179</sup> Because marriage was a means of safeguarding and expanding property and augmenting the authority of the family, parents were by and large in charge of their choice of a marriage partner. Children consequently had to be precluded from getting involved in inappropriate choice of partners.<sup>180</sup> Sir William Temple, describing marriage at the end of the seventeenth century, remarks bitterly that: ‘our marriages are made, just like other common bargains and sales, by the meer [sic] consideration of interest or gain, without any love or esteem.’ He added that he could clearly recall ‘within less than fifty years, the first noble families that married into the city for downright money.’ Money and property were of greater significance and the contract of marriage was a way of accumulating and holding on to it.<sup>181</sup>

Henry Fielding, as a magistrate, wrote his *Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers*, published in January 1751. He states:

A new kind of drunkenness ... is lately sprung up among us, and which if not put a stop to, will infallibly destroy a great part of the inferior people. The drunkenness I here intend is ... by this Poison call Gin ... the principal sustenance (if it may be so called) of more than a husband thousand people in this Metropolis.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> See Anna-Christina Giovanopoulos, ‘The Legal Status of Children in Eighteenth Century England’, *Fashioning Childhood in the Eighteenth Century*, Anja Muller, ed. (Ashgate: Hants., 2006), p.46.

<sup>179</sup> Quoted in Giovanopoulos, p. 46.

<sup>180</sup> See Giovanopoulos, pp. 46-47.

<sup>181</sup> John Clarke, ‘Of Popular Discontents’, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, 4 vols. (London, John Clarke et al., 1757), vol. III, p. 6. This essay of Temple’s was published posthumously but his biographers suggest that it was written shortly after his retirement in 1684-5. Quoted in Perry, pp. 208-209.

<sup>182</sup> Quoted in Uglow, p. 493.

Gin, which was first brought into the country from Holland sixty years earlier by William and Mary, was the source of this so-called epidemic. This Gin Craze had a devastating effect on the poor whilst farmers and distillers thrived financially. It was used as a panacea, to placate hungry children, it brought escape from the bad weather and starvation; it was cheap which contributed to the enormous consumption and widely available and many drank it to oblivion.<sup>183</sup>

The most famous portrayal of this phenomenon is *Gin Lane* (1751) by Hogarth, which depicts the filth and despondency of a gin-swilling district, showing shocking sights of infanticide, lunacy, malnourishment, rot and suicide. In the midst of the pandemonium of drunkenness and debauchery, Hogarth portrays four mothers in different poses. To the foreground is a poorly dressed, inebriated and infectious looking woman who is oblivious when her child is falling from her exposed breast to his death in front of Gin Royal Inn, and she is smiling in a drunken stupor. As she is covered in syphilitic sores, she is presumably working as a prostitute to fund her gin habit. The sign over the cellar door contains a verse by James Townley:

Drunk for a Penny  
Dead Drunk for two pence  
Clean straw for Nothing.<sup>184</sup>

Hogarth would have been aware of the many incidents of abuse, theft and accidents associated with gin. In 1734, Judith Dufour retrieved her toddler from the workhouse where she had been supplied with a new set of clothes for the child: she then throttled the child and left the body in a ditch so that she could sell the clothes to purchase gin.<sup>185</sup>

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1748, there is a distressing article which reads:

At a Christening at Beddington in Surrey the nurse was so intoxicated that after she had undressed the child, instead of laying it in the cradle she put it behind a large fire, which burnt

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<sup>183</sup> See Uglow, p. 493.

<sup>184</sup> Quoted in Uglow, p. 497.

<sup>185</sup> See Uglow, p. 494.

it to death in a few minutes. She was examined before a magistrate, and said she was quite stupid and senseless, so that she took the child for a log of wood; on which she was discharged.<sup>186</sup>

The second mother in Hogarth's engraving is pouring gin down the mouth of her baby, a third mother rushes hysterically from the house after a mad drunk, who, having impaled her child on a spike, frolics around excitedly showing off his triumph. Another mother who has died, presumably from gin, is being placed in a coffin where her half-naked body is watched by her bawling child, who is consequently left on his own beside her. The scene is overflowing with hopelessness and insanity and depicts children on the trail of ruin with no hope for their future. Hogarth's *Gin Lane* is a depiction of single women; it encapsulates the story of maternal failure, and was one of the most important and compulsive topics within eighteenth-century literature. Fielding remarks: 'What must become of an infant who is conceived in gin, with the poisonous distillation of which it is nourished, both in the womb and at the breast?'<sup>187</sup>

The companion print and also the antithesis to *Gin Lane* was *Beer Street* (1751). In contrast to the wretchedness of *Gin Lane*, it is calm and comfortable and much more male orientated than *Gin Lane*. James Townley's verse on *Beer Street* is optimistic:

Beer, happy Produce of our Isle  
Can sinewy Strength impart,  
And wearied with Fatigue and Toil  
Can cheer each manly Heart.<sup>188</sup>

By picturing these eighteenth-century beer drinkers as successful, Hogarth's gin drinkers are 'a sad lot', without social links.<sup>189</sup> The beer scene is much more affluent, the tankards are full of beer, the baskets are packed with food and the butcher is holding up an enormous piece of meat. The rotund male characters and well-dressed females

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<sup>186</sup> Quoted in Porter, *English Society*, p. 35.

<sup>187</sup> Fielding, *Enquiry*, quoted in Uglow, p.500.

<sup>188</sup> James Townley, quoted in Uglow, pp. 498-499.

<sup>189</sup> See Hunter, p. 130.

depict the prosperity of the area. Unlike the *Gin* print, there are no children in this scene; it would be assumed that they were being cared for at home and not ill-treated or abandoned.

The abandonment of children in the eighteenth century reached a stage when it could not be ignored; their little bodies, mostly dead but some only just alive, were scattered in London and the countryside.<sup>190</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century it is recorded that approximately one thousand infants a year were conceivably dumped on the streets of London. This concurs with reports of that period of the numerous babies discovered on stalls, dunghills and streets of the metropolis. Most of these babies were abandoned by unmarried mothers but between a third and a half were abandoned by both parents. The most common reason for abandonment was poverty and this varied depending on the economic environment in certain areas. The apparent decrease in the number of foundlings during the eighteenth century was for the most part associated with the building of workhouses and by the founding of the London Foundling Hospital in 1739.<sup>191</sup>

Thomas Coram (1668-1751), a successful businessman in the 1720's while walking through London daily encountered the bodies of discarded infants on the roadside. Following the new Poor Law (1722), he had been trying to get a Foundling Hospital established in London similar to the establishments of the major European cities. Joseph Addison had written an article in the *Guardian* in 1713 putting forward the need for a Foundling Hospital. Coram and Addison had a sympathetic view of infanticide with Addison explaining that the mother's natural affection was over-ruled by 'the fear of shame, or their inability to support those whom thy given life to.'<sup>192</sup> Over

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<sup>190</sup> See Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680 -1760* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1996), pp. 3-4.

<sup>191</sup> See Fildes, pp. 140, 143.

<sup>192</sup> Joseph Addison, *The Guardian*, no. 105, 367, quoted in Bowers, p 5.

the next fifteen years Coram fought for permission for a hospital and lobbied prominent groups. He faced censure as well as the argument that it would encourage immorality. He won his argument by stating that instead of depravity, it would shield the upper classes from the ravages of the poor.<sup>193</sup>

During the reign of Queen Anne, her government had financed support for charity schools, orphans, and many more improvements, but during the subsequent reigns of her successors the economic relief for these destitute children dried up substantially.<sup>194</sup> In 1722, the laws were set up to establish workhouses that were supposed to be safe havens for the underprivileged but were in reality lethal for small children, as the mortality rate for death in these workhouses was very high. For the most part, the age of the infants being accepted in the Foundling Hospital was not new-born but usually aged about one month or more. Because of this it is doubtful that illegitimacy was the sole or even the main reason for abandoning their children; a mother who had to care and feed a child from birth could hardly hide his or her existence. The mother/child bond is very strong and if a mother looked after her baby for any length of time it would seem unlikely that she would just abandon the child. It seems more likely that it was the last resort for a mother because of dire circumstances that she had no alternative but to abandon or murder her child.<sup>195</sup> Although this was not always the case, as many children were well dressed and reasonably healthy when found. Very often there was a note with the child stating its name, age and whether it had been baptised; some of them even gave their reasons for desertion. Generally, there were three reasons why mothers reached a point where they resorted to the abandonment of their children. Illegitimacy would have been one of the reasons, the most likely other reasons for giving up their child were widowhood during or soon after

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<sup>193</sup> See Uglow, p. 329.

<sup>194</sup> See Bowers, p. 28.

<sup>195</sup> See Fildes, pp. 149–159.

a pregnancy, or because the husband had absconded, the consequence of both leaving the mother destitute and unable to care for her child.<sup>196</sup> The following is a letter attached to a child who was left at a gentleman's home on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 1709. From the date on the letter we learn that the decision was made a month before the baby was actually abandoned:

London ye 30<sup>th</sup> September 1709.

I am not able to subsist any longer by reason of my husband being dead & the times is severe hard & having had much sickness this half year, yet I cannot keep the child any longer by reason of infirmitys of body & limbs, being lame & cannot goe w<sup>'</sup>out helper, so ye see your speed & care is desired heirin, either to find a carefull nurse to your own liking or to find a good nurse for ye child. In so doing you'l obliges Sir.<sup>197</sup>

It was more common to abandon a son than a daughter as it was thought that girls were less expensive to rear than boys. Girls could help the mother by caring for younger children and helping with the household duties particularly if there was an absent father. As the parish had to finance the foundlings, and society regarded boys more highly than girls, it is possible that the mothers hoped that they would be more willing to devote more attention and education to a boy. Sometimes the father rather than the mother abandoned the baby but in most cases they were driven to it by poverty where the family could not afford to feed another child.<sup>198</sup>

Mentions of birth control practices in the eighteenth century include as many allusions to efforts to bring on a miscarriage as to contraceptive methods. There was an increased effort to control fertility by the use of reliable contraception instead of the long-established reliance on the undependable herbal abortifacients. The abortion issue is extremely important, and from it we can gain some valued knowledge in the reading of contemporary woman's childbearing role and her freedom to control it. With the

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<sup>196</sup> See Fildes, p. 153.

<sup>197</sup> Quoted in Fildes, p. 154.

<sup>198</sup> See Fildes, pp. 152-157.

threat of having illegitimate children it can be safely assumed that many single women considered it an option. Many questions about abortion are difficult to answer as women at that time would not openly admit to it but it is believed in impoverished families that these women had to resort to it. Eighteenth-century writings on abortion were for the most part restricted to the writings of men. Most of these texts by men were chiefly against the practice; the increase of opposition towards abortion in these articles is a direct correlation of the likelihood that more women were resorting to it.<sup>199</sup> Many women did try to plan their families by trying to space out their confinements, by continuing breastfeeding, by coitus interruptus or purely by abstinence. Newspapers at that time advertised sexual resources from gigolos to aphrodisiacs, sexually transmitted disease cures and also advertised officially patented abortifacients. These advertisements contained spurious warnings to pregnant women, by telling them what not to do to terminate a pregnancy, writers were able to tell women how to terminate unwanted pregnancies.<sup>200</sup> Many old fashioned alternatives for birth control were publicized such as this recipe by an eighteenth-century quack:

If the party ... would not conceive, take one paper of powders  
in a glass of warm ale, every morning after the man has been  
with her, and she shall be out of danger.<sup>201</sup>

Other accepted methods for abortion, such as hot baths, jumping from heights and enemas were endeavoured but with different effects.<sup>202</sup> Within the eighteenth century, because of the mortality rate, childbirth was high risk; abortion was also dangerous, the risk of bleeding to death from the physical attempts on the body elevated, and also many of the herbal remedies used as abortifacients were lethal.

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<sup>199</sup> See Angus McLaren, 'Barrenness against Nature: Recourse to Abortion in Pre-Industrial England', *The Journal of Sex Research*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (August, 1981), pp. 224-237: 224-225, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3812560>, accessed 25/01/2009.

<sup>200</sup> See Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 41, 279.

<sup>201</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 266.

<sup>202</sup> See Stone, pp. 266-267.



This theme of the unfortunate pregnant girl who feels compelled to take an abortifacient is included by Mary Wollstonecraft in her novel *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria* (1798). In *Maria*, she tells the tale of a seduced female servant Jemina who has to resort to abortion on the insistence of her seducer/master:

After some weeks of deliberation had elapsed, I in continual fear that my altered shape would be noticed, my master gave me a medicine in a phial, which he desired me to take, telling me, without circumlocution, for what purpose it was designed.<sup>203</sup>

In Wollstonecraft's text, the seduced girl at least survives her abortion.<sup>204</sup>

In *Anti-Pamela* (1741) by Eliza Haywood, Mrs. *Tricksy*, mother of *Syrena*, procures an abortifacient for her daughter: 'she prepared a strong Potion, which the Girl very willing drank, and being so timely given, had the desired Effect, and caused an Abortion, to the great Joy of both Mother and Daughter' which in this case 'Syrena pretty well recovered.' Herbal potions like the one Syrena drank were the most common ways of carrying out a successful abortion. Ergot of rye, pennyroyal and savin were the commonest prescribed herbs with savin being the strongest of the abortifacients.<sup>205</sup>

Urbanization played a huge part in the change in family life; the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century had been instigated in the eighteenth century. What had been an agricultural society was being replaced by one in which people were abandoning the land and migrating to the towns and cities which were enlarging at a vast pace. Within this society most of the workers were employed in factories or offices where there were more career opportunities.<sup>206</sup> This regular income was beneficial for the stability of families.

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<sup>203</sup> See Mary Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman*, William Godwin, ed. ([1798] New York: Dover Publications, 2005), p. 33.

<sup>204</sup> See McLaren, pp. 226-227.

<sup>205</sup> See Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela; or Feign'd Innocence Detected*, Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (Toronto: Broadview Literary Texts, 2000), p.84.

<sup>206</sup> See Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp.11, 53.

Family relationship is a theme that is central to many of the novels written in the eighteenth century, these accounts enlighten us about transformations within the family during that time. Novels with their emphasis on household relationships give a clear perception of how the notion of family altered and constraints that were placed on other relationships. The popular fiction of the eighteenth century relates these family stories from different perspectives; the dictatorial father, absent, bad or weak mothers and innocent patiently resilient children were characters contained in the plots. Disquiet was evidenced within families regarding mutual duties to individuals and society where the challenge between the consanguineal and conjugal systems was being substituted by the latter.

Acknowledging that huge changes took place in the early eighteenth century, historians have challenged the significance of population changes with increasing urbanization, the decrease in the size of the family unit, amendments in women's station and a changed outlook towards children. The psychological consequence of the changes of women's position within the family is very significant, within these contemporary novels there was passionate disquiet about family social structure itself.<sup>207</sup> Questions being asked within the novels are very similar, most are about the choice of a husband and the reasons for marriage that are the common dilemmas within society and within fictional scenarios. Within this society, it is the family who control the arrangements and decide on how finances and other assets are allocated. The way a family handles marriage, reproduction, the timing of independence for young adults and of the management of property was all part of the cultural mores at that time. Later in the century, due to a host of cultural, financial and political reasons, these intricate affiliations were displaced and families in all strata of society were altered, the change

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<sup>207</sup> See Perry, pp.1-3.

differed in families in varied classes. There were massive social and economic changes within this century, there were many legal changes including the regulation of marriage, laws affecting inheritance, legitimacy and private property; the increase in the number of an industrial employees affected the augmented urbanisation.<sup>208</sup> There were divided loyalties between the kinship family and their more recent families. Many of these novels contain estranged parents and children, siblings on bad terms, other relatives being deceived about the loved one, all having a negative influence on the experience of the main protagonist. Many of these situations although not authentic, characterize the difficulties within that culture and the resolution of the dilemmas confronting civilization. The plots within these novels are used by the authors and the readers to deal with the demands of their lives. This literature that a society generates and consumes presents an image of society with unrestricted adaptations of realism enjoyed by the contemporary audience.<sup>209</sup>

The novel's principal concern is to write about 'individual experience' which is always exclusive and as a result new or novel. The novel's plots differed from the majority of earlier literature because it draws on past experiences and understanding as the reason for current reaction. The author's most important undertaking is to communicate the sense of constancy to the characters' experiences. The portrayal of fictional characters and the presentation of their environment are two of the most significant features within the novel. It is unlike other types of literature with the emphasis it placed on the individualisation of its characters and comprehensive staging of their surroundings. A range of features within the novel contributed to what claims to be a genuine description of the real events of its characters.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> See Perry, p. 4.

<sup>209</sup> See Perry, pp. 5-6, 10.

<sup>210</sup> See Watt, pp. 7, 13, 17-18, 22.

Many novels written in English in the eighteenth century contained plots that include courtship, marriage, family, inheritance and legitimacy. Ruth Perry writes: ‘The convention of the absent mother together with the compensatory presence of an intelligent, independent, older woman who guides and comforts the heroine tells a story about disappearing maternal power and the suppression of maternal inheritance in this changing world.’<sup>211</sup> The portrayals within fiction made the monotonous routine exciting by making innocuous incidents seem absorbing as it underscored irony, exaggerated differences and contradictions. Even though characters are representative images of people and not realistic versions they give us an insight into the mind-set of people of that era. Many of the novels of the eighteenth century are about families where one of the children has been banished, disinherited or conversely being taken into another family. Authority by the father over the daughter, responsibility of the brother over his sister, the significance of the mother’s relatives and marriage for wealth and property aggrandizement or ancestry is a constant theme within these novels. These texts deal with the intricate and shifting relations in families which include usually a number of generations within the family unit and involve passion, love and money. Refusing to marry for the financial enhancement of the family and getting married for love as an alternative is an instance of a social stance that was prevalent within contemporary novels.

The development of new ideology within the large number of novels containing courtship, love and marriage may have added to these alterations in the changing fecundity. Edward Shorter traces:

the eighteenth-century belief in individualism and romantic love to the capitalist marketplace, which he believes effected a

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<sup>211</sup> See Perry, p. 7.

sexual revolution among the labouring class first and foremost.<sup>212</sup>

Randolph Trumbach asserts that among the eighteenth-century upper class there was a rising prevalence of mutual respect between spouses and love for their children.<sup>213</sup> Roy Porter claims that in the mid 1700s this new awareness of children is not simple to work out as in some ways children were new items for commodification with the onset of capitalism. Children previously seen and not heard were now swamped with new ideas of what was more educational for them.<sup>214</sup> This consciousness and commodification of their offspring made the mothers' roles more important in society and was emphasized within novels. Michael McKeon argues that the expansion of print culture and the increased popularity of the novel has evolved as mediation at eighteenth-century time of social upheaval, and 'also changed the nature of family relations'.<sup>215</sup>

Representations of mothers within novels reveal the contemporary diverse attitudes towards motherhood and some of the problems faced by authors in introducing their characters. Many contemporary moralists and writers had aligned themselves with Rousseau's argument that a mother's ultimate accolade was to devote herself to motherhood. Susan Greenfield notes: 'Even as motherhood evoked an increasingly standardized set of values, the concept was pliant and adaptable ... Maternity was, in this sense, continually invented and re-invented.'<sup>216</sup> Discussion about motherhood in the mid-century began to regard the maternal role as naturally feminine. Initially, full-time motherhood was designated by class and was generally accorded with the middle-classes but before long:

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<sup>212</sup> Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), quoted in Perry, pp. 28-29.

<sup>213</sup> Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth Century England* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1978), see Perry, pp. 28-29.

<sup>214</sup> See Porter, *English Society*, p. 286.

<sup>215</sup> See Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1744* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), pp. 20-22.

<sup>216</sup> Quoted in Susan Greenfield, 'Introduction', *Inventing Maternity*, p. 1.

this all-engrossing tenderness, long-term maternal breastfeeding, personal supervision and education of young children, complete restriction to domestic space, absence of sexual desire, withdrawal from productive labour ... [became] the exclusive markers of motherhood itself, universally imposed on women of all social positions.<sup>217</sup>

The practice came to be widespread with all mothers despite their station.<sup>218</sup> It was accepted that ideal or good mothers nurtured their children, educated them and had to deal with their everyday uncertainties. Mothers who did not breastfeed their own infants were regarded as unnatural. Seius Gaius wrote in 1702:

It is a thing again Nature, for a Mother to bring forth a Child, and presently to cast it from her; to nourish in her Womb with her own Blood, I know not what, which she saw not, and not Nurse with her milk, that, which she seeth already living, a Man, and imploring the duties of a Mother.<sup>219</sup>

From the mid eighteenth century there was vigorous promotion for maternal breastfeeding and I will discuss this in later chapters on Richardson and Rousseau.

Mothers considered monstrous were perilously good if they loved their children too much and were regarded as over-indulgent; the others who did not love their children enough were regarded as unnatural.<sup>220</sup> Examples of shocking scandalous mothers were compared with perfect idyllic mothers within fiction; the selfish and cruel mother was contrasted with the kind and altruistic mother. Notions of unacceptably bad mothers were circulated throughout the century.<sup>221</sup> Bad mothers were needed for good mothers to exist. There was a relentless obsession with nature; what is natural and what is unnatural? There are natural ties between a mother and a child, mothers are supposed to teach their daughters to be good but this is the reverse in *Anti-Pamela* by Eliza Haywood and *Shamela* by Henry Fielding in which the daughters are gold diggers. The

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<sup>217</sup> Quoted in Bowers, p. 28.

<sup>218</sup> See Bowers, p. 28.

<sup>219</sup> Seius Gaius (pseudonom, [sic]), *The Mother's Looking Glass* (London: Thomas Osborne, 1702), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 04/05/2009, quoted in Bowers, p. 160.

<sup>220</sup> See Bowers, p. 158-159.

<sup>221</sup> See Kipp, p.14.

way in which eighteenth-century novels construct mothers is central to the category of good and bad mothers.

Acknowledged thinking amongst some was that mothers can be detrimental to their children by loving them too much. Richard Allestree in *The Ladies Calling* (1673) outlined among others standards for maternal behaviour that would become part of eighteenth-century British tradition; he condemns mothers who are failures by either loving their children too much or too little, a notion that was prevalent throughout the century:

The doting love of a Mother blinds her eyes, that she cannot see their faults, manacles her hands, that she cannot chastise them, and so their vices are permitted to grow up with themselves. As their joynts knit, and gather Strength, so do their ill habits, 'till at last they are confirmed into Obstinacy: so setting them in a perfect opposition to that patern they should imitate[sic].<sup>222</sup>

He cautions those mothers who are over-fond of their children: 'The doting affection of the Mother is frequently punish'd with the untimely death of her Children.'<sup>223</sup> Mary Wollstoncraft reiterated this at the end of the century in *Vindication of the Rights of Women* when she alleged: 'Woman seldom exerts enlightened maternal affection; for she either neglects her children or spoils them by improper indulgence.'<sup>224</sup> Mr. B. tries to exonerate himself by telling Pamela that his unruly behaviour is his mother's fault 'for being impetuous in my temper, *spoiled, you know, my dear, by my good mother.*'<sup>225</sup> Rousseau also criticizes a mother's tendency to love to excess, being an emotional and sentimental individual she is more likely to over-indulge her children and to teach the child 'things which are of no use to him' and smother the child's nature with 'passions [she has] implanted in him.'<sup>226</sup> Jonathan Swift gives a derisive portrayal of the mother who pampers her son and anticipates that his tutor will follow her example with the

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<sup>222</sup> Richard Allestree, p. 208.

<sup>223</sup> Richard Allestree, p. 205. Quoted in Bowers, p. 158.

<sup>224</sup> Quoted in Bowers, p. 158.

<sup>225</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, Peter Sabor, ed. ([1740] London: Penguin, 1980), p. 504.

<sup>226</sup> Quoted in Kipp, p. 25.

instruction: ‘master must not walk till he is hot ... nor be wet in his feet’, nor must he be kept ‘too long poring over his book, because he is subject to sore eyes, and of a weakly constitution.’<sup>227</sup> Similarly, Daniel Defoe puts the culpability on the ‘Lady mother’ for the laziness and faults on the ‘head of the Heir to the Estate whom they have ‘robb’d of his education by keeping him at home in the nursery instead of letting him go to school.’<sup>228</sup>

David Hume in *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) gives an example of a ‘fond mother’ who is a benevolent selfless mother who discards self-interest when looking after her children:

Tenderness to their offspring, in all sensible beings, is commonly able alone to counterbalance the strong motives of self-love, and has no manner of dependence on that affection. What interest can a fond mother have in view who loses her health by assiduous attendance on her wicked child, and afterwards languishes and dies of grief when freed, by its death, from the slavery of that attendance?<sup>229</sup>

Adam Smith follows Hume in his praise of the lack of self-interest in mothers and their compassionate behaviour towards their children.<sup>230</sup>

What are the pangs of a mother, when she hears the moanings of her infant that during the agony of disease cannot express what it feels? In her idea of what it suffers, she joins, to its real helplessness, her own consciousness of that helplessness, and her own terrors for the unknown consequences of its disorder; and out of these forms, her own sorrow, the most complete image of misery and distress. The infant, however, feels only the uneasiness of the present instant, which can never be great.<sup>231</sup>

These authors did not make the distinction between over-fond indulgent mothers and loving mothers who disciplined their children as unruly children can sometimes need

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<sup>227</sup> Quoted in Michèle Cohen, ‘Mothers of Sons, Mothers of Daughters: the Ambiguous Figure of the Mother in Eighteenth-Century Educational Discourse’ in *History, Politics and Policy-Making in Education: a Festschrift for Richard Aldrich*, David Crook and Gary McCulloch, eds. (London: Institute of Education Press, 2007), p. 5.

<sup>228</sup> Quoted in Cohen, p. 5.

<sup>229</sup> Quoted in Kipp, p. 29.

<sup>230</sup> See Kipp, p. 30.

<sup>231</sup> Quoted in Kipp, p. 30.



tough love. Although child abuse legislation did not come into law until 1889, child abuse was not condoned nor concealed. Linda Pollock in her research in *Forgotten Children* gives an account of three hundred and eighty-five cases of child neglect and sexual abuse reported in *The Times* between 1785 and 1860, most of whom were found guilty.<sup>232</sup> Writing under the pseudonym of Juliana-Susannah Seymour in *On the Management and Education of Children* (1754), the prolific polymath, John Hill, outlines what it means to be a good mother and wife.<sup>233</sup> He constantly stresses the value of a mother's duty: 'I look upon the Behaviour of a Wife, and the Education of Children, to be the two greatest Points in the Conduct of Society; and yet I think, there is Reason to say, none are so much neglected, or so little understood.' He recommends vigorous activity for boys but the girls' delicate complexions and natural shape must be protected.<sup>234</sup>

Within this chapter I have used much historical evidence that reflects the raising of children in the eighteenth century. Courtship was vital for aspiring young people as the education of young women was designed so that they would be good wives, housekeepers and mothers. I examine the various marriages, which includes a discussion on sham marriages, marriages of convenience (for social or financial aggrandizement) and also the changes in marriage procedures following the Hardwicke Marriage Act (1753). I investigate the advice given to women during their pregnancy and also the myths and fabrications that were prevalent at that time. I discuss nursing and the advice given to women about over-indulging their children. I consider how the education of children is differentiated by gender and also the contemporary attitudes towards female education. I discuss child mortality and the laws regarding infanticide. I

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<sup>232</sup> See O'Day, p.165.

<sup>233</sup> See Felicity A. Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 209.

<sup>234</sup> Quoted in Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 210.

examine the role of the bad mother in eighteenth-century fiction and consider the eighteenth-century fascination with her, I also study the influence the figure of a bad mother exerted on fiction. This provides my context for exploring contemporary images, good and bad, of motherhood in this period.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *From Avarice in the Heroines of Defoe to Altruism in Eliza Haywood's Heroines.*

‘If a young Woman have Beauty, Birth, Breeding, Wit, Sense, Manners, Modesty, and all these to an Extream; yet if she have not Money, she’s no Body, she had as good want them all, for nothing but Money now recommends a Woman’. Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*.

When most people think of bad mothers they think of Daniel Defoe, I will begin this chapter with perhaps the most famous depiction of bad mothers during this period — that of *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*. I will examine the novels of Daniel Defoe and Eliza Haywood and the treatment of mothers, both bad and good, within their texts. Born in London circa 1660/61, by 1731 Defoe had become a prolific writer and social commentator who wrote in many genres. John Richetti refers to him as ‘arguably the most important writer of the first thirty years of the English eighteenth century, and perhaps the one nowadays most widely read.’<sup>1</sup> Money is a critical topic in all of Defoe’s texts; this is evidenced in the novels I have chosen to analyse. The characters of Defoe’s *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders* are illustrations of the effect avarice for wealth had on their roles as mothers.

Eliza Haywood was born more than thirty years after Defoe, circa 1693 – 1756, possibly in London. Like Defoe, she had a chequered career which included that of playwright, actress, and shopkeeper, she was a copious writer who has published more than fifty texts and edited a periodical entitled *Female Spectator*.<sup>2</sup> I examine Haywood’s loving mothers in *The Rash Resolve* (1724) and *The Force of Nature* (1725) whose main protagonists are the complete converse of Defoe’s leading characters.<sup>3</sup> Haywood’s *Anti-Pamela* is among the most significant of the *Pamela* counter-fictions and possibly the only one in English known for certain to be written by a woman. I analyse the author’s critique on Richardson’s novel and on a selfish mother.

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<sup>1</sup> John Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.2.

<sup>2</sup> Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela* [1741] and *Shamela* [1741] by Henry Fielding, Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004). p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *The Post-Boy* of Jan. 7, 1720/1 printed the following: ‘Whereas Elizabeth Haywood, wife of the Reverend Mr. Valentine Haywood, eloped from him her Husband on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> of November last past, and went away without his Knowledge and Consent; This is to give notice to all Persons in general, That if anyone shall trust her with Money or Good, or if she shall contract Debts of any kind whatsoever, the said Mr. Haywood will not pay the same.’ There is, however, some indication that she may have gone to Dublin to play in the Smock Alley Theatre as early as 1715. Quoted in Helene Koon, ‘Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, University of California Press, Vo. 2, No. 1, 1978. p. 43, f.1. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817409>, accessed 15/03/2013.

David Blewett informs us that for nine years Daniel Defoe independently wrote the *Review* (1704-1713), a newspaper that was issued as frequently as three times a week. Defoe had a strong interest in politics that in his later years grew into anxiety in which he examined the social order and family accountability.<sup>4</sup> Richard Steele edited and in the main wrote the *Tatler* under the pseudonym Isaac Bickerstaff, which appeared three times a week from 1709. The first *Spectator* followed on 1st March, 1711, which included the reflections of ‘Mr. Spectator’. This, with the exception of Sunday, was a daily periodical overseen by Richard Steele and Joseph Addison until December, 1712. These periodicals were often read out at home or in the coffee shop; they educated their readers and provided them with the information which they could then openly discuss.<sup>5</sup>

Defoe wrote on anything and everything — economics, history, geography, religion, politics and superstition. In his writings he frequently was anonymous and took on another persona for rhetorical effect or as a protective concealment. At the height of his power and his reputation as a writer, he turned to fiction.<sup>6</sup> At the age of fifty-nine Defoe wrote the first of his novels, *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventure of Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Pat Rogers asserts that Defoe in his last twelve years produced at least ten more novels or long narratives declaring them ludicrously as autobiographical. Defoe uses his didactic writing experience, which included essays, travels, dialogues, political pamphlets, and satirical verse for his novelistic work, with each novel focusing on the protagonist’s endeavours to survive in a materialistic world. With *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *The Fortunate Mistress*, better known as *Roxana* (1724), there is the added fascination of the female as a main character. Defoe uses this

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<sup>4</sup> Roy Porter, *Enlightenment* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), pp. 80-81.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Roxana*, David Blewett, ed. ([1724] London: Penguin, 1982), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Pat Rogers, *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 383-384.

as a strategy to include allusions to sexual incidents, and echo his interest, known from his non-fictional works, in showing the boundaries set for women in trade and public life. As Andrew Sanders remarks: both novels ‘have much-abused, belatedly penitent, entrepreneurial women as narrators.’<sup>7</sup>

Roy Porter argues that Defoe was constantly worried about vices such as avarice, arrogance, egotism and squandering; as a continuous moralizer, he was in favour of mercantile trade and with increase in wealth with middle class values. He believed that Trade was ‘certainly the most Noble, most Instructive, and Improving of any way of Life.’<sup>8</sup> Defoe believed that it would be advantageous for Britain to expand its foreign commerce, particularly with the colonies, whose promise had not yet been exploited.<sup>9</sup> Evidence of this is to be seen in both *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* as each novel includes both foreign and exotic locations.

Because of the importance placed on birth and ancestry, many satirists ridiculed the self-importance of those who felt superior because of their birth and lineage; Defoe defied the deference usually accorded to birth and breeding when he wrote *The True Born Englishman* in 1700:

What is’t to us, what Ancestors we had?  
If Good, what better? Or what worse if Bad? ...  
For Fame of Families is all a Cheat  
Tis Personal Virtue only makes us great.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 305.

<sup>8</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 383.

<sup>9</sup> ‘A True-Bred Merchant is a Universal Scholar; his Learning Excels the meer Scholar in Greek and Latin as much as that does the Illiterate Person, that cannot Write or Read: He Understands Language, without Books, Geography without Maps, his Journals and Trading-Voyages delineate the World, his Foreign Exchanges, Protests and Procurations, speak all Tongues; he sits in his Counting-House, and Converses with all Nations, and keeps up the most exquisite and extensive part of human Society in a Universal Correspondence.’ Daniel Defoe, the *Review*, Arthur Wellesley Secord, ed. *Defoe’s Review*, (1706] New York: Published by the Facsimile Text Society by Columbia University Press, 1938), vol. III, no.2. p. 6-7, quoted in Srinivas Aravamudan, ‘Defoe, Commerce, and Empire’, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Rosemary Sweet, ‘The Ordering of Family and Gender in the Age of the Enlightenment’, *Ordering the World in the Eighteenth Century*, Diana Donald and Frank O’Gorman, eds. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 116

Defoe's verse was deliberately provocative to contemporary readers.<sup>11</sup> As a member of the mercantile class, Defoe could admire those who elevated themselves through acquisition of money and land. In England, the new mercantile class could exalt themselves with wealth while in France ancestry was more important than money. Many in England had contrary opinions to Defoe. For instance, Sir Robert Atkyns, historian of Gloucestershire, in *The Antient History of Glocestershire* [sic] (1712) maintains that the study of family history:

stimulates and excites the Brave, to imitate the generous  
Actions of their Ancestors; and it shames the Debauch'd and  
Reprobate, both in the Eyes of others and in their own Breasts,  
when they consider how they have degenerated.<sup>12</sup>

Rosemary Sweet states that families were ennobled by the ability of being able to trace their ancestry, as records were more readily available among the gentry.<sup>13</sup>

The seventeenth century English philosopher, John Locke, had great influence on Enlightenment thinking when he maintained that every man has an equal right 'to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any man.' But he thought women (and animals) exempt from 'natural freedom' and declared they should be subordinate. Locke upheld 'the Subjection that is due from a Wife to her Husband.'<sup>14</sup> The Scottish Philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776), who visited the Paris salons (which included both male and female philosophical thinkers) enjoyed his visits so much that he declared in his autobiography that he once thought 'of settling there for life' because of 'the great number of sensible, knowing, and polite company with which that city abounds above all places in the universe.'<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, he was as misogynistic as Locke when he criticized France, which 'gravely exalts those, whom

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<sup>11</sup> See Sweet, pp. 115-116.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Sweet, p. 116.

<sup>13</sup> Sweet, p. 116.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser, *A History of their Own* (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 113.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Anderson and Zinsser, p. 113.

nature has subjected to them, and whose inferiority and infirmities are absolutely incurable. The women, though without virtue, are their masters and sovereigns.’<sup>16</sup>

The family was celebrated as the mainstay of British society; the significance of the family as the basis of all societal life and organization was important. Marriage was considered a permanent allegiance by all the churches; monogamy and lifelong faithfulness were preached; infidelity, divorce and homosexuality were prohibited, but what was officially demanded and what actually happened was different in many incidences. The wellbeing of the family was an indicator of the security of the entire society. Most people worked within the family unit, whether it was in manufacturing, in retailing or in farming. The family unit controlled economic and social wellbeing. The welfare of contemporary civilization relied on the continuing solidity of the family, the conduct, in particular the sexual conduct of the women, had to be vigilantly safeguarded. The idea of female chastity was a topic that writers at that time revisited on numerous occasions. Female indiscriminating sexual behaviour was a threat to the solidity of the family, and also as a result of separation, of the wellbeing of the children. Felicity Nussbaum writes: ‘The domestic virtue demanded of Englishwomen ensured the legitimacy of family and property.’<sup>17</sup>

Sweet avers that in contrast to earlier periods there was a huge amount of accessible literature, from all types of fiction to conduct books, with the emphasis on marriage and the family in different ways. In the eighteenth century, many changes occurred within society and family relationships, with the onward progression towards capitalism, the rise of the middle classes and the coming about of modernity. The eighteenth century saw a division of influence and a delineation of gender roles, together with the enhanced emphasis on motherhood, and the precedence given to

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<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Anderson, p. 113.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1995), p. 2.



married over family kinship.<sup>18</sup> The most important explanation of this interpretation has been that offered by Lawrence Stone, he states that previous family structures founded on wider ranging kinship systems, patriarchal influence and the veneration of ancestry, yielded to a more intense, loving and open relationship within the family and to less influence from previous extended kinship. A keen sense of individuality and the value of private choice and much of the guilt and transgression associated with sexual pleasure was abated.<sup>19</sup>

Anderson and Zinsser declare that in eighteenth-century England, rural and working class couples often had sex before marriage once a proposal of marriage had been offered and acknowledged. There was no social disgrace attached to the bride being pregnant at the marriage or having borne a child before the wedding. With the migration to the cities, this traditional understanding was no longer workable in rural areas as men had to travel to look for work; the result was that men abandoned the expectant women leaving them with the sole responsibility for the child. Anderson and Zinsser state:

The illegitimacy rates were also affected by the migration of young, single women into city households as servants, many of the women had no resource but to leave their children in foundling hospitals as these were unwed servants pregnant by fellow servants or by their masters.<sup>20</sup>

Roy Porter asserts that society at that time was many-layered; there was a multitude of occupations for the labouring masses. Occupations for men were diverse, street sellers of all descriptions as well as those who worked as coal-heavers, refuse-collectors, drovers, men in the building trades, rag-pickers and so on. Women were drawn to domestic service as it employed more female staff; sewing and knitting could offer a

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<sup>18</sup> See Sweet, p. 113.

<sup>19</sup> See Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin, 1979), pp. 28-29. Sweet, p. 113.

<sup>20</sup> See Anderson and Zinsser, p. 243.

steady income, keeping about a quarter of women in full time employment. There was a hierarchical standing within most occupations. The pecking order was apparent when the actress Mrs. Charlotte Charke, estranged daughter of Colley Cibber, admitted that when she was out of work she peddled sausages, but heatedly denied the scandalous remark that she had sold flowers. Roy Porter states that ‘Between the lords and the labourers were solid citizens whose occupations included master craftsmen, genteel merchants, tutors, professional men and established artisans.’<sup>21</sup>

In Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* (1722), the main protagonist is the product of her own environment; many of her actions are denoted by the demands of society on those who are its victims, the portrayal of Moll’s difficulties is deeply entrenched in the facts of contemporary life. Moll and Roxana are arguably the most famous bad mothers in eighteenth-century fiction. Many women at that time had no recourse but to abandon their children.<sup>22</sup> Evidence of the difficulty for a women keeping a child when unsupported, is, according to Valerie Fildes, the probable reason for abandonment. Many infants were found on the streets, stalls, and dunghills of the metropolis. The building of workhouses is the reason for the noticeable decrease in foundlings. There were notable seasonal differences in child abandonment in London. A greater number of children were abandoned in the months from November to April than from May to October. A reason for this may be that during the cold winter months the need for extra clothing and the requirement for additional food and shelter were more pronounced. Discarding her child, hoping it would be found and brought up by strangers would be very distressing. This was probably a last option, unless the situation was so appalling for the mother that she had no choice other than abandoning her progeny. Fildes describes how notes discovered with foundlings in the Westminster parish of St. Martin

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<sup>21</sup> Roy Porter, *London, A Social History* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 177.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*, G.A. Starr, ed. ([1722] Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1998), p. viii.

in the Fields in 1709 demonstrate the reasons why mothers were driven to the painful decision to desert their children. Although one may have been due to the child's illegitimacy, another common cause was the desertion by the husband, both resulting in the mother's poverty and inability to support the child.<sup>23</sup> Considering the economic climate, and the increased prevalence of abandonment, it appears likely that the foundlings of London were not all bastards but that countless of them were legitimate children whose parent(s) could not meet the expense of feeding and clothing another offspring.<sup>24</sup> The mothers who had to make the decision to dispose of their children were in danger of derision and punishment if discovered. They were compelled to take the child back even though they were incapable of meeting the expense of its keep. Some of these mothers simply relinquished the child in another parish. There are also some instances where the mother reclaimed the child while others were reduced to kidnapping them from their nurses. These scenarios probably indicate that the woman had either remarried or was in beneficial employment and could meet the expense of maintaining her child again. This also confirms the maternal emotions, sentiments and pledges articulated in many of the letters attached to the foundlings.

The onus for the care of any foundlings lay with the parish in which they were discovered.<sup>25</sup> Apart from the child being known to have been born in a different parish, or if the mother was located swiftly, the parish in which the child was abandoned had to bear the cost of nursing, education, and in due course, apprenticeship. There was a change in the established method of infant care from the early eighteenth century since the parish increasingly opened workhouses to provide lodgings for the underprivileged. The provision of these workhouses resulted in a decline in the numbers of children

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<sup>23</sup> See Valerie Fildes, *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990). p.152.

<sup>24</sup> See Fildes, p. 157.

<sup>25</sup> See Fildes, p. 158.

abandoned. Porter states that it was the responsibility of the Parish for law and order and the supervision of the aged, sick, disabled and unemployed. From 1722, the poor were developing into an increasing problem and the building of workhouses was permitted. Originally, the plan was to put the able-bodied to work but in reality, workhouses became dosshouses for the old, the sick and single-parent families.<sup>26</sup> This would validate the incident of Roxana's youngest child by her husband being taken in by the parish.

The change in the eighteenth-century social and cultural history is more or less outlined by the changes in eighteenth-century novels.<sup>27</sup> Max Novak maintains that Defoe's achievement was to portray his protagonists whose ascendancy from destitution and obscurity to a better life of comfort and prosperity was to give hope to those among the poor and deprived able to read and willing to listen. He believes that Defoe was a writer who was very aware of social structures and could envisage concepts such as retirement fund offices and schools for female education; he expressed strong moral principles and was eager to demonstrate his proposals in a multiplicity of his writings. Although most of Defoe's *Review* contained controversial polemic texts discussing domestic and foreign policy with an emphasis on trade, he also criticized contemporary political and social establishments by using fiction as a platform to articulate his views; nevertheless, his didactic intention is always apparent.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin: 1982), p. 144.

<sup>27</sup> J. Paul Hunter, 'The Novel and Social/Cultural History', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 29.

<sup>28</sup> Max Novak, 'Defoe as innovator of Fiction Form', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 56-57, 67. In *Review*, VIII, p. 153-156. He used fiction to educate his readers about economic and social philosophy: 'Defoe began with Necessity as the daughter of her father Pride and her mother Sloth. After spending her entire estate, she married Poverty. Her children were a son, Invention, and Wit, a daughter. The sons of Invention – Industry, Ingenuity, and Honesty – do very well. From them come agriculture and the handicrafts. Honesty's granddaughter, Mrs. Punctual, marries Barter and their child is Credit,' quoted in Maximillian E. Novak, 'Defoe's Political and Religious Journalism', *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, p. 33.

In *Moll Flanders*, Defoe's optimism for man's and woman's existence begins to cloud. The upbeat buoyancy and earnest hard work of Crusoe is replaced by Moll's scornful corruption and active use of deceit. The text is filled with uncertainties of appearance and dishonesty, apparent firstly in the ambivalent tone of the author's Preface and also corroborated by Moll's resolve to keep her name secret. Defoe's naming of Moll is very significant as a 'Moll' in the eighteenth century was either a prostitute or a thief. Moll was based among others on the early seventeenth-century pickpocket and harlot Mary Frith, her nickname was Moll Cutpurse who advanced to fencing stolen goods and becoming a pimp. Defoe used Cutpurse's early career for Moll and her later career was more similar to Mother Midnight. 'Flanders' relates to her life of material concerns and material survival. 'Flanders' lace was the name of a Belgian lace very fashionable at that time and was a highly valuable commodity.<sup>29</sup> Gerald Howson claims that Mary Godson or Golstone, known as Moll King, was the model for Defoe's protagonist.<sup>30</sup> In 1718, King was sentenced to seven years transportation for stealing a watch from a lady in St. Anne's Church, Soho. She returned illegally to England and was sentenced to death but was reprieved and remained in Newgate in autumn 1721. Defoe may have met her and amalgamated her experiences in his text.<sup>31</sup>

Ian Watt claims that *Moll Flanders* is among the first realist novels, that the 'realism' of this novel is directly connected with the information that Moll is a thief. He avers that the realist novels endeavour to portray a diversity of life's experience; it is not the sort of life it portrays that contributes to the novel's realism, but in how it is portrayed. Although the earlier prose writers had used proper names, as they tended to

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<sup>29</sup> See David Blewett, *Art of Fiction*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), pp. 56-57; Novak, p. 56.

<sup>30</sup> See Starr, *Moll Flanders*, p. xiii. n.2. 'Gerald Howson pieced together her career from court records, but other contemporary writings attest to her notoriety. See e.g. *Life of Mr. John Stanley* (1723), pp. 10-11 in *Works of Thomas Purney*, ed. H.O. White (1933), pp. 100-101.

<sup>31</sup> See Starr, *Moll Flanders*, p.xiii.

have exotic, ancient or literary implications they had no real connection to life at that period.<sup>32</sup>

The novel and autobiography are, as Patricia Meyer Spacks in 1976 says, ‘the two developing genres that flourished during the century’ so it is not surprising that they had similar characteristics.<sup>33</sup> The recounting of the individual tale of a hero or heroine is for the most part the focus of most eighteenth-century novels, writes J. Paul Hunter in 1990. Within the eighteenth century novels take the concept ‘I was born’ where novelists tell the story in the first person. They illustrate the examples of that life including the reasons the various incidents caused their life changes and decisions. The titles such as *Moll Flanders* advocate this point significantly; the titles are true to the novels’ accent on the expansion of that person’s story.<sup>34</sup> The narrative of *Moll Flanders* continually mentions, merely because of its choice of point of view, questions about her objectives and the dependability of her decision about herself.

*The Fortunes and Misfortunes Of the Famous Moll Flanders, &c. Who was Born in Newgate, and during a Life of continu’d Variety for Threescore Years, besides her Childhood, was Twelve Years a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own Brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight year a Transported Felon in Virginia, at last grew Rich, liv’d Honest, and died a Penitent.*<sup>35</sup> Hunter argues that the title page sounds audacious, and its inducements are adventurous and almost lustful or titillating. Its innuendos were designed to attract potential buyers and readers. Conversely, this novel is not provoking and sensational. With the exception of a few facts, the title page is not deceptive but the incidents are positively unambiguous, such as adultery, bigamy, pick-

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<sup>32</sup> See Watt, pp.10, 18-19.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels, The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth Century English Fiction* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1990), p. 327. Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 4, 301.

<sup>34</sup> See Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. 328.

<sup>35</sup> See *Moll Flanders*, title page.

pocketing, robbery, and incest, seem run of the mill in the framework of routine storytelling. Although this novel breaches social values in ways unimaginable to most readers, a measurement of Defoe's skill is in constructing Moll's life in a way that it gives the impression of it being unremarkable.<sup>36</sup>

In his essay, 'The Novel and Social/Cultural History' in 2008, Hunter asserts that *Moll Flanders* enlightens us about what a female has to endure in the eighteenth century London criminal gangland. Moll has to survive in an antagonistic metropolitan environment with no support from family and her upbringing, schooling and social status was of little benefit to her. She manages to get by; smart-witted, astute, relentless, and always aware of how she could increase her income particularly if it was by ill-gotten gains. Defoe could empathize with Moll because for a great deal of his life he was considered a social outcast, a lifelong Londoner and a person who lived by his acumen.<sup>37</sup> He was compelled to earn his living by writing and as a secret political agent for the prominent Tory politician, Robert Harley, whom he helped lobby others in favour of the proposed union of England and Scotland.<sup>38</sup> He spent years on the poverty line and was quite familiar with prison; as an isolated and secretive person he was accustomed to being hunted by debt collectors or adversaries. He was aware of the trials and tribulations of those who were poverty-stricken and what they had to resort to when confronted with predicaments of survival and integrity and the struggle with one's scruples. Defoe was not just relating an interesting tale or just providing the reader with social history: 'His novel has political and economic implications as well as aesthetic and emotional ones.'<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> See Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. 328.

<sup>37</sup> See Hunter, 'The Novel and Social/Cultural History', pp. 31-32.

<sup>38</sup> See John Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Hunter, pp. 31-32.

Novak argues that Moll uses wit, irony, sarcasm and ridicule upon herself and the follies of humankind. She is an accumulation of personas that include a pickpocket and shoplifter, a naïve young girl, a pessimistic woman and an actual woman trying very hard to deal with a challenge against an unsympathetic environment. Defoe blends all these diverse aspects and makes them work within the novel.<sup>40</sup> In *Defoe & Spiritual Autobiography* (1965), Starr asserts that Defoe's artistry lies in the handling of individual episodes. From about the age of eight Moll acquires a keen obsession about being a gentlewoman. When she first talks about becoming a gentlewoman, she has no notion of how this word can be misconstrued.<sup>41</sup> She states: 'all I understood by being a Gentlewoman, was to be able to Work for myself, and get enough to keep me without that terrible Bug-bear going to Service, whereas they meant to live Great, Rich, and High, and I know not what.'<sup>42</sup>

Defoe was a ground-breaking campaigner for female education; his emphasis was on the importance of educating young people not just for their natural aptitude. A contemporary of Defoe's, Bishop William Fleetwood, is representative of the notions of education for women when he argues:

A Parent is to take good heed that he never educate his Children above the Provision he designs to make for them ... it being much more easy to bear with a mean Condition constantly, than to fall into it from a plentiful and good one; which is the Case of People better educated than provided for: the soft and tender Usage of People, whilst young, capable of doing Labour and more Hardship, is truly a Diskindness to them, without an answerable Provision for them afterwards; for whenever they are left to shift for themselves, they are no better than expos'd naked, as it were, and defenceless, unable to procure than their Inferiours.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See Novak, pp. 57-58.

<sup>41</sup> See G. A. Starr, *Defoe & Spiritual Autobiography* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 127.

<sup>42</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p.13.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Starr, p. 129.



Moll is an example of when education surpasses her 'provision' and makes her susceptible to inappropriate persuasions.<sup>44</sup> In *Moll Flanders*, the disparity between Moll and the sisters in the family that she lives with after her nurse dies makes obvious that her innate capabilities are immense, but it makes just as obvious the difference between her refined accomplishments and her prospects in the world. The sister's speech makes it clear what Moll's expectations could be:

Betty wants but one thing, but she had as good as every Thing, for the Market is against our Sex just now; and if a young Woman have Beauty, Birth, Breeding, Wit, Sense, Manners, Modesty, and all these to an Extream; yet if she have not Money, she's no body, she had as good want them all, for nothing but Money now recommends a Woman; the Men play the Game all into their own Hands.<sup>45</sup>

Defoe tends to excuse the crimes of the poor in his journalism and in his novels merely because they are poor and consequently would go hungry if they did not transgress. On a slightly different tangent, Defoe is also putting forward attitudes towards females without money at that time when Moll quotes her sister-in-law's words:

That, as my Sister in Law, at Colchester had said: Beauty, Wit, Manners, Sence, good Humour, good Behaviour, Education, Vertue, Piety, or any other Qualification, wheather of Body or Mind, had no power to recommend; That Money only made a Woman agreeable.<sup>46</sup>

Defoe is laying the seed within the novel of the unavoidability of Moll's actions.

Peter Earle in 1976 avers that Defoe constantly blames society for the poverty that leads to transgression. He does not deny that it is a sin but argues that the compelling circumstances which made it happen are enough justification for lenience and pardon on the part of society. The misdemeanours of the poor are consequently explained by the sins of the wealthy. According to Defoe, the rich had neglected to encourage social welfare improvements which would prevent the poor from being in a

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<sup>44</sup> See Starr, pp. 128-130.

<sup>45</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 20.

<sup>46</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 69.

destitute situation thus committing sins of omission and it is also the wealthy who supply the inducement and the ways for the underprivileged to sin, consequently committing sins of commission. His feelings about Newgate Prison are apparent when Moll's mother/mother-in-law denigrates Newgate Prison when she describes:

how she had fallen into very ill Company in London in her young days, occasion'd by her Mother sending her frequently to carry Victuals and other Relief to a Kinswoman of hers who was a Prisoner in Newgate' she recounts 'how it ruin'd more young People than all the Town beside ... we all know here, that there are more Thieves and Rogues made by that one Prison of Newgate, than by all the Clubs and Societies of Villains in the Nation.<sup>47</sup>

In a *Review* of 1707, Defoe wrote that there were two types of poverty, one was where a person became poor by bad luck or negligence or a combination of both, the other was where a person was born into poverty. He believed that individuals should try to improve their circumstances and did not approve of those full of self-pity.<sup>48</sup> Defoe uses Moll as an example of how contemporary society treated the poor at that time. While perhaps not agreeing with Moll's activities, he portrays her actions as inevitable. As a moralist and didactic writer, under the guise of an autobiographical crime novel, Defoe is criticizing contemporary society.

In his introduction to *Moll Flanders*, Starr argues that the text reflects Defoe's enduring anxiety over the treatment by society towards marginal types who are defenceless and redundant; these include single women with no income, orphans, debtors, criminals and other categories. He constantly presents Moll as having double standards; at times she knows what she is doing is wrong but then justifies it.<sup>49</sup> Moll's double standards are evident when she rationalizes her stealing of the child's necklace, having initially thought about killing the child: 'the Devil put me upon killing the Child

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<sup>47</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 87.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Earle, *The World of Defoe* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), pp. 36-37.

<sup>49</sup> Starr, *Moll Flanders*, p. xiv.

in the dark Alley, that it might not Cry: but the very thought frightened me.’ She uses self-justification when she makes it seem as if she was doing the parents a good deed: ‘for as I did the poor Child no harm, I only said to my self, I had given the Parents a just Reproof for their Negligence in leaving the poor little Lamb to come home by it self, and it would teach them to take more Care of it another time.’<sup>50</sup> Moll goes on to estimate the value of her booty: ‘This String of Beads was worth about Twelve or Fourteen Pounds,’ and mocks the mother by stating: ‘the Vanity of the Mother to have her Child look Fine at the Dancing School’ and continues to justify her behaviour by stating: ‘I did the Child no harm, I did not so much as fright it, for I had a great many tender Thoughts about me yet.’<sup>51</sup> As Robert A. Erickson suggests in 1986, the language for Moll’s larceny has an electric, microscopic, concentrated feature, as though Defoe, through the voice of Moll, was providing essential instructions to the reader.<sup>52</sup>

Within the novel we are confronted with the need of making uncertain differentiation between what the author’s ironical intention was and what in fact works ironically, according to Dorothy Van Ghent in 1961.<sup>53</sup> Moll moralizes the adventure with the child, she also rationalizes the episode in which she robs a drunk, after a night prostituting and goes home to count her spoils. While she is counting her ill-gotten gains she deliberates on the sins that fathers bestow on their offspring by engaging in sex with prostitutes and inebriation, ‘for ’twas ten to one but he had an honest virtuous Wife, and innocent Children, that were anxious for his Safety ... how he would reproach himself with associating himself with a Whore?’<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 194.

<sup>51</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 195.

<sup>52</sup> See Robert A. Erickson, *Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), p. 58.

<sup>53</sup> Dorothy Van Ghent, *The English Novel: Form and Function* (New York & London: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), p. 41.

<sup>54</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 227.

Because of his corpus of didacticism, I regard Defoe as primarily a moralist who presents his protagonists first and foremost as examples of the social problems caused by poverty. Watt asserts that *Moll Flanders* has few instances of obvious and deliberate irony. There is dramatic irony in the episode in Virginia where a woman is telling the story of Moll's incestuous marriage. Unaware who she is talking with, she relates: 'when he was a young Man, fell in Love with a young Lady there ... and that consequently, that Son was his Wives own Brother, which struck the whole Family with Horror, and put them into such Confusion, that it had almost ruin'd them all.'<sup>55</sup>

On one occasion Moll decides to rob 'a young Lady big with Child who had a charming Watch ... in the very moment that she jostl'd the Lady, I had hold of the Watch, and holding it the right way, the start she gave drew the Hook out and she never felt it.'<sup>56</sup> The woman cries out, perhaps thinking first of her child, and Moll, grasping the watch, lets it fall into her hand. In Moll's mind there is a disparity between an infant and a watch. Within the novel, as Erickson points out, the adjectives for illustrating babies and watches are very similar, such as 'pretty', 'brave', 'good' 'charming'. From Moll's perspective at this decisive part of her life, watches are much more appealing and more precious commodities than babies. Moll has had enough of giving birth to unwanted children, unpredictable responsibilities as they are to a helpless mother.<sup>57</sup>

Moll is quite cold-hearted when describing her marriage to her first husband: 'for five Years that I liv'd with this Husband; only to observe that I had two Children by him, and that at the end of five Year he Died.'<sup>58</sup> She then disposes of her children: 'My two Children were indeed taken happily off of my Hands, by my Husband's Father and

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<sup>55</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 322. See Watt, p. 120

<sup>56</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 201.

<sup>57</sup> See Robert A. Erickson, *Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), pp. 60- 61.

<sup>58</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 58.

Mother, and that by the way was all they got by Mrs. *Betty*.’<sup>59</sup> This statement makes clear with convincing lack of morality what it means to be content and although she was to be relieved of the responsibility of her children; it also reveals that children may be convenient in resolving family obligations. Without any worries or awkwardness on Moll’s part, the children are transformed into commodities and she is free to get on with her life. Moll’s five years of marriage and motherhood have been converted into material gain.<sup>60</sup>

According to David Blewett, Moll’s abandonment of her children is an action that is repeated throughout the novel. It is also reminiscent of her birth in Newgate where she is forsaken when her mother is transported. It is necessary for Moll’s children to be taken off her hands for her to lead the life the plot requires. Later in the novel, her husband/brother in Virginia accuses her of being an ‘unnatural Mother’ because she wanted to abandon her children and return to England: ‘It was true, had things been right, I should not have done it, but now, it was my real desire never to see them, or him either any more.’<sup>61</sup>

After Moll’s first meeting with Mother Midnight, the old midwife’s non-nonsense philosophy of life becomes evident; her main motivation, for her as for Moll, is simply money: ‘the thing indeed, without which nothing can be done in these Cases ... you may suit your self to the Occasion, and be either costly or sparing as you see fit.’<sup>62</sup> She then offers her three bills of mounting expenditure in which Moll negotiates the cheapest. The mood of their discussion is that these two women comprehend each other; there is empathy between them. Moll reveals that, like many at that time:

[this] grave Matron had several sorts of Practise, and this was one particular, that if a Child was born, tho’ not in her house,

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<sup>59</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 59.

<sup>60</sup> See Van Ghent, p. 38.

<sup>61</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 91.

<sup>62</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 163.

for she had the occasion to be call'd to many private Labours, she had People at Hand, who for a Piece of Money would take the Child off their Hands, and off the Hands of the Parish too.<sup>63</sup>

One of her practices was to manage a lying-in service for prostitutes and unmarried mothers and another to sell children obtained from private labours. Ned Ward in *London Spy* tells of a pimp who procured between two and three hundred pounds for these sorts of dealings. Infants could be lucrative commodities at that time for those involved in this trade.<sup>64</sup> Men were excluded from the birth; only the midwives and 'gossips' could attend.<sup>65</sup> Moll's Governess is the sort of midwife that readers are warned about in the popular *Compleat Midwives Practice* of 1656. She is also a bawd, a deliverer and procurer of babies, Moll's confidante and a fence for Moll's stolen goods. *The London Bawd* of 1711 gives this description of a bawd:

A BAWD is the Refuse of an Old Whore ... She is one of Nature's Errata's and a true Daughter of *Eve*, who have first undone herself, tempts others to the same Destruction ... She 's a great preserver of Maiden-heads ... She's a great Enemy to all Enclosures, for whatever she has, she makes it common. She hates *Forty-One* as much as an *Old Cavalier*, for at that age she was forced to leave off Whoring, and turn Bawd ... she's never ripe till she's rotten.<sup>66</sup>

In 1750, the poet and satirist Christopher Smart wrote a periodical entitled *Midwife*, he was a serious political commentator, critiquing the government and using the pseudonym Mary Midnight, the bawd/midwife to lampoon them.<sup>67</sup>

Moll's Mother Midnight has a dual role; she is initially there to assist in the birth and unburdening Moll's unwelcome baby son then subsequently she will arrange

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<sup>63</sup> *Moll Flanders*, p. 168.

<sup>64</sup> See Erickson, p. 52.

<sup>65</sup> See Mary E. Fissell, Gale, *Encyclopedia of Early Modern: Midwives*.

www.answers.com/topic/midwives , accessed 03/08/2012. Gossips were female friends and relatives of the pregnant woman who supported her both emotionally and physically. Mother Midnight is an eighteenth-century name for a brothel keeper.

<sup>66</sup> Quoted in Erickson, pp. 24, 26.

<sup>67</sup> See Chris Mounsey, *Christopher Smart, Clown of God* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001), p. 100.

for the offloading of the commodities which Moll steals.<sup>68</sup> Moll is drawn into crime by necessity; Defoe saw the social problems of women like Moll as the main moral purpose of his novel. Moll, in contrast to Roxana, finds inner peace. Ann Louise Kibbie remarks: ‘The woman whose life was shattered by the discovery that she was an “unnatural mother” reclaims her son and her peace.’<sup>69</sup>

In *Roxana, The Fortunate Mistress* (1724), the main protagonist is Defoe’s darkest character within his novels. It portrays the emotional confusion of the heroine who deliberately chooses the exciting life of a courtesan over that of a married woman. Having abandoned her children, she forfeits her morality for wealth and a self-indulgent lifestyle. By and large, it is accepted that Defoe’s *Roxana* is set at the time of the philandering court of Charles II, and in addition alludes to the depravity of George I during that period. Rachel Weil proposes that writers were facilitated to comment politically through sexual creative writings that were not accessible in other texts, thus using sexual narrative, satires, and poems to comment on Charles II. She draws connections between oppression, totalitarianism, and Catholicism during the Restoration to reveal Charles’s sexual indulgence. Turkish despotism was aligned with Charles’s immorality with his court related to a Turkish harem, and his royal sceptre to a ‘sovereign penis’ and made explicit by John Wilmot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Rochester’s (1647-80) famous satire *A Satyr of Charles II* (1674).<sup>70</sup>

*Roxana* represents Defoe’s aspiration to criticize staunchly and compellingly contemporary society. David Blewett maintains that as the reign of George I progressed, Defoe believed that there appeared to be less stability and dependability within the

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<sup>68</sup> See Erickson, p. 57.

<sup>69</sup> Ann Louise Kibbie, ‘Monstrous Generation: The Birth of Capital in Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*’, PMLA, Vol. 5. Oct., 1995, pp. 1023-1034:1028. <http://jstor.org/stable/463027>, accessed 05/05/2009.

<sup>70</sup> See Nussbaum, p. 33. Rachel Weil, ‘Sometimes a Scepter Is Only a Scepter: Pornography and Politics in Restoration England’, in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500-1800*, Lynn Hunt, ed. (New York: Zone Books, 1993), pp. 125-53.

structure of the social order. Despite its setting in the reign of Charles II, the novel actually deals with Defoe's contemporary world. Defoe's objective to suggest similarities between his own time and that of Charles II explains the curious shape of *Roxana*, which outwardly is similar to romantic fiction written by contemporary authors such as Mrs. Eliza Haywood and Mrs. Delarivier Manley; this permitted their readers an insight into a glamorous, upper-class environment beyond their reach. Of particular benefit to Defoe, by constructing a novel that was similar to a romantic tale, as well as its enormous existing appeal, endowed with a romance, was an aristocratic location close up and the exposure of upper-class indiscretions. Central to this was the fact that many of these romances were positioned in the court of Charles II. Defoe was then in a position to condemn the court of his own time under the guise of a depiction of the court of the previous hedonistic monarch, thus simultaneously criticizing both.<sup>71</sup> Roxana's connection with court appears to refer to the lives of many of the mistresses of Charles II; however, using the outrageous and exciting earlier period suggested by the narrative prevents any allegations of libel.<sup>72</sup>

Some of the treatment meted out to Roxana by men includes her marriage to her first husband whom she married at fifteen, while the money left to her by her father was squandered by her brother.

Roxana warns other women about their choice of a husband:  
'Never, Ladies, marry a Fool: any Husband rather than a Fool; with some other husbands you may be unhappy, but with a Fool you *must*; nay, if he wou'd, he cannot make you easie; every thing he does is so awkward, every thing he says is so empty, a Woman of any Sence cannot but be surfeited, and sick of him twenty times a-Day.'<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See Blewett, *Defoe's Art of Fiction*, pp. 117-123.

<sup>72</sup> See Novak, p. 64.

<sup>73</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Roxana*, John Mullan, ed. ([1724] Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1998), p. 8. Original italics.



Defoe is showing his readers what abject and miserable situations women are placed in when they have no control over their possessions. Roxana criticizes her husband for his lack of application to business: 'I was willing he should draw out while he had something left, lest I should come to be stript at Home, and be turn'd out of Doors with my Children; for I had now five Children by him; the only Work (perhaps) that Fools are good for.'<sup>74</sup> She reiterates and articulates her fears:

Misfortunes seldom come alone: This was the Forerunner of my Husband's Flight; and as my Expectations were cut off on that Side, my Husband gone, and my Family of Children on my Hands, and nothing to subsist them, my Condition was the most deplorable that Words can express.<sup>75</sup>

Defoe was drawing attention to the situation of unsupported women with children in contemporary society.

The destitute Roxana becomes a courtesan. Roxana as a courtesan was in a different social class from Moll yet, as Starr argues, they are both culpable of much the same sins.<sup>76</sup> Roxana's behaviour and attitude also contribute to her moral fall from grace. Avarice gets a determined grip over her, initially she declares the overwhelming influence of poverty as a reason for her moral failure, she discovers that she has become wealthy beyond her imaginings of acquisitiveness, she concedes 'even avarice itself seemed to be glutted.'<sup>77</sup> Despite this, she cannot cast off her 'trade'; when she is introduced to a 'Person of Honour' she clarifies the situation with this individual by stating '*if your Lordship obtains any-thing of me, you must pay for it; and the Notion of my being so rich, serves only to make it cost you the dearer.*'<sup>78</sup> The outlook for women without financial independence in the eighteenth century was fairly bleak. The decline of domestic industry had an unfavourable effect on women. There was an excess of

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<sup>74</sup> *Roxana*, p. 10.

<sup>75</sup> *Roxana*, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> See Starr, p. 168.

<sup>77</sup> *Roxana*, p. 182.

<sup>78</sup> *Roxana*, p. 183. Original italics.

women in the labour market, which resulted in their wages being reduced to about a quarter of the average wage for men. Another consideration was that unless a woman could bring a dowry into a marriage it was more difficult to find a husband. Roxana did have a dowry, but as she had relinquished control to her husband, it was squandered like the rest of his money. Watt states that during this period there are indications implying that marriage became a great deal more commercial than had been the case in the past. Newspapers carried on marriage markets by printing advertisements containing tenders or stipulations of specific dowries and jointures, which resulted in young girls being coerced into blatantly inappropriate marriages on the basis of financial benefit.<sup>79</sup> The patriarchal legal position which meant that their husband had control over all their possessions made it unfeasible for married women to achieve the aspirations of economic individualism. Defoe was very aware of this dilemma and dramatized the seriousness of the predicament through the morally fraught measures which Roxana has to implement to triumph over the legal restrictions for women. She is aware that the quest for money cannot be combined with marriage; she argues ‘That the very Nature of the Marriage-Contract was, in short, nothing but giving up Liberty, Estate, Authority, and every-thing, to the Man, and the Woman was indeed, a meer Woman ever after, this is to say, a Slave.’<sup>80</sup> Roxana’s views anticipate those of Mary Wollstonecraft, who, having grown up with a violent father, did not believe in marriage. With the *Laws Resolution* of 1632, a man was legally entitled to beat ‘an outlaw, a traitor, a Pagan, his vellein, or his wife because by the Law Common these persons can have no action.’ As Sir William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-9) makes clear: ‘the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage’; she is turned into a *feme-covert*, in another word a ‘covered’ or ‘hidden woman’, obliterated

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<sup>79</sup> See Watt, p. 142.

<sup>80</sup> *Roxana*, p. 148.

in her legal protector.<sup>81</sup> The family is a microcosm of the state, stable marriage is important and is reflected in the state, hence Roxana's renunciation of marriage is a renunciation of society.

Starr asserts that in articulating the argument for female independence, many critics have remarked on Roxana as being very modern in her outlook. He argues that Roxana's arguments in support of female independence are inappropriate. From Defoe's perspective, the submissive acquiescence of accountability is not just consistent with but essential to real freedom.<sup>82</sup> Starr notes that Roxana sounds remarkably like Calista, the heroine of Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703) when she declares:

How hard is the Condition of Our Sex,  
Thro' ev'ry State of Life the Slaves of Man?  
In all the dear delightful Day of Youth,  
A rigid Father dictates to our Wills,  
And deals our Pleasures with a scanty Hand;  
To his, the Tyrant Husband's Reign succeeds:  
Proud with Opinion of superior Reason,  
He holds Domestick Bus'ness and Devotion  
All we are capable to know, and shuts us,  
Like Cloister'd Idiots, from the World's Acquaintance.<sup>83</sup>

Having declined the proposal of the Dutch merchant with whom she has been residing, she decides to return from Holland, pregnant and wealthy. Defoe illustrates Roxana's callous attitude towards her pregnancy where she states: 'I wou'd willingly have given ten Thousand Pounds of my Money, to have been rid of the Burthen I had in my Belly, as above; but it cou'd not be; so I was oblig'd to bear with that Part, and get rid of it by the ordinary Method of Patience, and a hard Travel.'<sup>84</sup> With the least amount of bother, she has her baby and abandons it to be looked after by someone else; her son barely gets a mention as she is clearly caught up with her financial considerations when she states:

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<sup>81</sup> See Lyndall Gordon, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A New Genus* (London: Little, Brown, 2005), p.10.

<sup>82</sup> Starr, *Spiritual Autobiography*, p. 175.

<sup>83</sup> Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent, A Tragedy*, as performed at the Theaatre-Royal, Dury Lane. Regulated from the Prompt-book, by permission of the managers, by Mr. Hopkins, Prompter: and printed from Bell's last characteristic Edition (Dublin: R. Marchbank, M,DCC,LXXXVII), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 04/05/2009.

<sup>84</sup> *Roxana*, p. 163.

‘I had now all my Effects secur’d; but my Money being my great Concern at that time.’<sup>85</sup>

The anguish endured by Roxana from her anxious conscience is a significant theme throughout the novel. Roxana’s distress is her punishment; in the world of Roxana, previous deeds have an impact on the present. There are always consequences when children are merely disposed of or confidantes possess important personal information; within the novel every deed is directed towards the final deed. Blewett maintains that Roxana is Defoe’s only leading character who is ‘passively evil.’ Roxana has to deal with problematical and disquieting moral options, such as the choice between righteous paucity and immoral affluence.<sup>86</sup> Some of the Roxana’s reflections made are evidence of this: ‘my Measure of Wickedness was not yet full ... as to the Child, I was not very anxious about it.’<sup>87</sup> This remark was made following her refusal of the Dutch merchant’s marriage proposal. She declares after living with the Lord: ‘I held this wicked Scene of Life out eight Years.’ Having spoken to her Dutch merchant about their son, she states ‘I was asham’d that he shou’d show that he had more real Affection for the Child, tho’ he had never seen it in his Life, than I that bore it; for indeed, I did not love the Child.’<sup>88</sup>

Peter Earle in 1976 asserts that the children who are the issue of Roxana and Moll are dealt with in a detestable fashion, farmed out, killed off or overlooked, and only brought up infrequently to impart some kind of theatrical tension.<sup>89</sup> Twenty years later in his introduction to *Roxana* in 1996, John Mullan states in that Defoe’s peripatetic, motivated, self-styled autobiographers have a propensity to be neglectful of their children. He argues that along with Roxana, Robinson Crusoe refers to his three

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<sup>85</sup> *Roxana*, p. 164.

<sup>86</sup> See Blewett, *Art of Fiction*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>87</sup> *Roxana*, p. 159.

<sup>88</sup> *Roxana*, pp. 117, 228.

<sup>89</sup> See Earle, p. 262.

children as an afterthought and Moll is happy when her in-laws take in her children. It is not just that they effortlessly discard them, but in addition they characteristically allude to them incidentally.<sup>90</sup> In Defoe's tales of individuality, these personalities endeavour to attain their aspiration by divesting themselves of their links to others. In *Roxana*, the narrator makes the reader aware of her deficit of maternal feeling. As she attempts to make her fortune, she disposes of her progeny without much bother; she cannot afford such biological attachments in the world that she has now become part of. When Roxana returns to England having spent several years abroad she does not display any inquisitiveness about her children. Blewett remarks that Moll's matrimonial wealth-seeking emphasizes the ethical argument of the novel. Likewise, the significance of Roxana's descent into transgression is underpinned and intensified by her way of thinking about money. Roxana's increasing prosperity and social position is aligned with her ethical deterioration; this is evident in the calculations she does of her riches after every affair. Defoe's Roxana is the richest of all his heroines, however her wealth is ill-gotten as it is the product of prostitution. As she admits: 'I had so long habituated myself to a Life of Vice, that really it appear'd to be no vice to me: I went on smooth and pleasant; I wallow'd in Wealth.'<sup>91</sup> Roxana's money compares with and highlights her maternal destitution. This wealth gives her remarkable independence to reside wherever and in whatever way she desires at any societal level, she remarks 'I had maintain'd the Dignity of Female Liberty, against all the Attacks, either of Pride or Avarice.'<sup>92</sup> Financial and sexual freedom prevents mothering in *Roxana*. The division of labour in this text is threefold: maternal, sexual and other types of productive labour. Nussbaum writes that both Roxana and the foundling mothers' petitions provide confirmation to the equally restricted kind of reproductive and productive labour in the

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<sup>90</sup> See John Mullan, *Roxana*, p. xii.

<sup>91</sup> *Roxana*, p. 188.

<sup>92</sup> *Roxana*, p. 225.

eighteenth century; women who had children for the most part were unable to work for remuneration. During that time petitioners attempted to change the apportionment of employment by creating awareness of the problem of simultaneously trying to work and look after children. Roxana gives evidence to that endeavour and discombobulates it in her attempt to accumulate her wealth through sexual labour, the exact sort of employment that is abhorrent to the mothers of the foundlings.<sup>93</sup>

Roxana's source of income is reliant on her obliterating the history of her motherhood; the personal arena of middle-class maternity and the passionate subject of sexuality cannot be resolved in her case without important financial consequences. Roxana has contradictory reactions towards her children, ranging from lack of interest and disregard, to the overpowering ardour she experiences for her daughter Susan and eventually to the yearning for Susan's demise.

Roxana belatedly recalls the five children she has abandoned and sends Amy to find out facts about them; it was sometime after this that she discovers that Susan has been employed as a servant in her own home in Pall Mall. Amy's discovery emphasizes Roxana's moral predicament, which grows in significance as the novel progresses. Roxana faces 'the great Perplexity between the Difficulty of concealing myself from my own child, and the inconvenience of having my Way of Living be known among my First Husband's Relations, and even to my Husband himself.'<sup>94</sup> The only time Susan had seen her mother recently was 'that publick Night when she danc'd in the fine Turkish Habit, and then she was so disguis'd, that I knew nothing of her afterwards.'<sup>95</sup> The sexually stimulating Turkish outfit which was her 'material' revenue effectively conceals Roxana's motherhood for a brief period.<sup>96</sup> This Turkish outfit is an important

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<sup>93</sup> *Roxana*, p. 302. See Nussbaum, p. 31.

<sup>94</sup> *Roxana*, p. 197.

<sup>95</sup> *Roxana*, p. 206.

<sup>96</sup> See Nussbaum, p. 37.

motif in the narrative and turns out to be a sign of all that is immoral in Roxana's life, her life as a courtesan, her requirement for disguise, and her dread of her own child.<sup>97</sup> Roxana begins to be troubled by the combination of her dual roles, her public identity as a 'Roxana' and her maternal identity as the mother of Susan. Roxana can only resolve maternity and sexuality by the sacrifice and death of her daughter who has knowledge that would have an impact on both her economic and favourable future. Roxana attempts to preserve her 'liberty' at the expense of the love and responsibility she owes to her daughter.

The tone of the story begins to be more solemn after the marriage of Roxana and the Dutch merchant. It alters because of the threatening apprehensions she begins to feel and the growing hopelessness that fill her reflections. Roxana's attitude towards her own children is evident when they are trying to decide in which country they will reside. She states:

I cou'd not but know that his Native Country, where his Children were breeding up, must be most agreeable to him, and that if I was of such Value to him, I wou'd be there then, to enhance that rate of his Satisfaction ... I brought him to give me leave to oblige him with going to live Abroad; when in truth, I cou'd not have been perfectly easie at living in England.<sup>98</sup>

She was willing to go away for his children but not for her own.

The careers of Defoe and Haywood, the two leading producers of popular fiction in the 1720s, are informative in diverse ways. Alexander Pope lampooned both these authors in *The Dunciad* (1728), his major satire of Grub-Street writing where he targets its authors and booksellers. Pope was a classical snob and believed that literature was endangered by the immoral desire for prose fiction and also the vast quantity being printed in answer to fashionable request. Other writers prevented themselves from being contaminated by this novelistic writing. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is a satiric

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<sup>97</sup> See Blewett, *Art of Fiction*, p. 141.

<sup>98</sup> *Roxana*, pp. 248-249.

alternative to the novel. Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759) offers within his narrative dissimilar features from the novels he criticized.<sup>99</sup> Pope and his colleagues in his influential literary sphere regarded working writers like Defoe with disdain and viewed them as literary prostitutes who provided debased popular fiction or political jargon. Within the *Dunciad*, Pope writes: 'Earless on high, stood unabash'd De Foe,' Pope's illustration of Defoe implies what was at that time a probable but rare punishment for seditious publication which was the cutting off of the perpetrator's ears.<sup>100</sup> Having written an incendiary text, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* (1702), Defoe was pilloried in July 1703. Swift, in a pamphlet in 1708, remarked that Defoe was 'One of these Authors (the Fellow that was pilloried, I have forgot his name) so grave, sententious, dogmatical a Rogue, that there is no enduring him.'<sup>101</sup>

'The Fair Triumvirate of Wit' is the name a contemporary panegyrist called Aphra Behn and her two most renowned successors, Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood in the early eighteenth century.<sup>102</sup> At that time women writers were making attempts for literary authority while the novel's distinctiveness as a new form was becoming recognized and the two progressions had an influence on each other. These women were pioneers in the male dominated literary world. By the mid and later eighteenth century, much more literature put an emphasis on household, family, and emotions linked with women.<sup>103</sup> Eliza Haywood was born in 1693 to middle-class parents; she was sufficiently educated to author a number of translations and to write

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<sup>99</sup> Hunter, 'The novel and social/cultural history' pp. 26-27.

<sup>100</sup> *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, John Butt, ed. (London: Methuen, 1963), p. 741, quoted in John Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 1.

<sup>101</sup> Quoted in Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, p. 1.

<sup>102</sup> From a verse 'tribute' prefixed to the third edition of Eliza Haywood's collected *Secret Histories, Novels, and Poems* (1732); See Richetti, *The English Novel in History 1700-1780* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 21.

<sup>103</sup> Jane Spencer, 'Women Writers and the Eighteenth-Century Novel', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 215-216.



prolifically in several genres. Haywood, badly in need of money, had a minor career as an actress and playwright; she also wrote many conduct books but is better known for her vast output of novels. She was one of the most famous practitioners of amatory fiction and made her entrance into the literary world with her first novel, *Love in Excess* (1719-20), which she chose to publish anonymously. She was known for portraying young women's experiences of erotic love which included allusions to sexual pleasure. She wrote at the same time as Daniel Defoe, whose first novel *Robinson Crusoe* was also published in 1719, although she was much more productive at novel writing than Defoe.<sup>104</sup> Cheryl Turner remarks on Haywood's productivity:

The level and consistency of her output [of fiction] in the 1720s was unequalled by any other woman throughout the century, although ... many of Haywood's works consisted of 100 pages or less, whilst a typical late eighteenth-century novel comprised three volumes of about 200 pages each. Haywood published fiction in almost every year of the third decade ... producing at least 35 novels or approximately 70 per cent of the total output ... by women in that period. Additionally, in most of those years she published more than one novel; for example in 1725 (the peak year for novel output in the decade) she produced ten.<sup>105</sup>

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Haywood were often the objects of ridicule, criticized for transgressing social and ethical norms and accused of undermining their own reputations.<sup>106</sup> Haywood was not in the same social class as Wortley Montagu was a member of the aristocracy. Haywood, like Defoe was a working journalist and edited a female periodical called *The Female Spectator* (1744–1746), the first written by, for and about women; it includes advice to women on love, marriage, children, education, and health.<sup>107</sup> In this text, Haywood's character, 'Mira,' represents herself as a sister to

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<sup>104</sup> Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela* [1741] and *Shamela* [1741] by Henry Fielding, Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004), p. 30.

<sup>105</sup> Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Routledge, 1994). Quoted in Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 167-168.

<sup>106</sup> See Staves. p.168.

<sup>107</sup> Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 80.

Addison's Mr. Spectator. Haywood's periodical and conduct books combine advice with short narratives intended to demonstrate advice; the stories were said to be true but were most likely frequently imaginary accounts.<sup>108</sup> Laetitia Pilkington was scathing when she wrote of Haywood's restructured technique in *The Female Spectator*: 'Mrs. Haywood seems to have dropped her former luscious Stile, and, for Variety, presents us with the insipid; Her *Female Spectators* are a Collection of trite Stories, delivered to us in stale and worn-out Phrases ...'<sup>109</sup> Haywood was frequently the victim of contemporary satire. Richard Savage, her former lover, initially commended her when he wrote a poem dedicated to her at the beginning of *The Rash Resolve*:

Doom'd to a fate, which damps the Poet's Flame,  
A Muse, unfriended, greet thy rising Name!  
Unvers'd in Envy's, or in Flatt'ry's Phrase,  
Greatness she flies, yet Merit claims her Praise;  
Nor will she, at her with'ring Wreath, repine,  
But smile, if Fame, and Fortune cherish thine ...<sup>110</sup>

Later, having quarrelled with Savage in 1724, Haywood was satirized by him in an anonymous poem, *The Authors of the Town*. At that time, in this envious and passionate environment of the literary landscape, pitiless satire was often a customary acknowledgment of success. Haywood responds by writing her own satiric account of Savage in *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom*.<sup>111</sup> Because she was humiliated by Alexander Pope's satire in *The Dunciad* her style of writing changed.<sup>112</sup>

Pope characterizes Haywood as a 'shameless scribbler' and describes her as follows:

See in the circle next, Eliza placed,  
Two babes of love close clinging to her waist;  
Fair as before her works she stands confessed,  
In flowers and pearls by bounteous Kirkall dress ...

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<sup>108</sup> See Staves, p. 246.

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in Staves, p. 284.

<sup>110</sup> Eliza Haywood, *The Rash Resolve: or, The Untimely Discovery* (London: 1724.), vol. 4. p. x, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Gale: National College of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 20/10/2011.

<sup>111</sup> See David Oakleaf, *Love in Excess by Eliza Haywood* ([1719] Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2000), p. 9.

<sup>112</sup> See Staves, pp. 10, 169.

yon Juno of majestic size,  
With cow-like udders, and ox-like eyes.<sup>113</sup>

Pope depicts Haywood's industrious writing as a monstrous motherhood, with her literary progeny being regarded as illegitimate offspring. Perhaps Pope considered that being a female writer was incompatible with decent motherhood and that all novelists were bad mothers and their writings a bastard form of literature.<sup>114</sup>

The noteworthy commercial success of Haywood and other female writers during the eighteenth century engendered hostile reaction from some male writers who believed that high literary standards were being jeopardized by uneducated women writers like Manley and Haywood. Pope uses this famous satiric poem to highlight what he considers the demise of high culture with the growth of low leisure distractions like ballad, opera, farce and popular fiction. Two years after *The Dunciad*, Fielding features Haywood as Mrs. Novel in his *Author's Farce* (1730).<sup>115</sup> Mrs. Novel is supposed to be a virgin who dies of a broken heart (like Violetta in *Love in Excess*), but it transpires that she was less than truthful and dies giving birth after being seduced and abandoned. A noteworthy aspect of Haywood being named as Mrs. Novel is that it identifies her as an important novelist and has aligned her with the prevalence of the novel as a female author's genre. Jane Spencer argues that Fielding, disregarding adjustments to her style, treated Haywood as an unfashionable writer of amatory fiction and derided her.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela* [1741] and *Shamela* [1741] by Henry Fielding, Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004). See Introduction, p. 32, n. 2. Pope's footnote mentions Haywood's "profligate licentiousness" and "most scandalous books" and describes her as one of those "shameless scribblers for the most part of That sex, which ought least to be capable of such malice or impudence) who in libellous Memoirs and Novels, reveal the faults and misfortunes of both sexes, to the ruin of publick fame, or disturbance of private happiness" (Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* [1728] Book II: 157-64, *The Poems of Alexander Pope*: Vol. V, *The Dunciad*, James Sutherland, ed. [London: Methuen, 1952], p. 119.

<sup>114</sup> See Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood, British writing and culture 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 124.

<sup>115</sup> See Staves, p.171.

<sup>116</sup> See Jane Spencer, 'Fielding and Female Authority', *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, Claude Rawson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 129, 133.

According to Christine Blouch, there was a twenty-year war of words between Fielding and Haywood; she retaliated many years later in *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) where she ridiculed him:

There were no plays, no operas, no masquerades, no balls, no public shews, except at the little theatre in the Haymarket, then known by the name F-----g's scandal-shop; because he frequently exhibited there certain drolls, or, more properly, invectives against the ministry: in doing which it appears extremely probable, that he had two views; the one to get money, which he very much wanted, from such as delighted in his low humour, and could not distinguish true satire from scurrility; and the other, in the hope of having some post given him by those whom he had abused, in order to silence his dramatic talent.<sup>117</sup>

In *The Dunciad*, Pope has Haywood as the first prize in the booksellers' pissing contest.

In Scriblerus's note he elucidates:

In this game is expos'd in the most contemptuous manner, the profligate licentiousness of those shameless scriblers (for the most part of that sex, which ought least to be capable of such male or impudence) who in libellous Memoirs and Novels, reveal the faults of misfortunes of both sexes, to the ruin or disturbance, of publick fame or private happiness.<sup>118</sup>

Haywood's extraordinary productivity and her commercial success worried Pope and other influential male writers anxious about the state of literature and their own future brand of literature.<sup>119</sup> Swift's letter to Pope on October 26, 1731, describes her as a 'stupid, infamous, scribbling woman.'<sup>120</sup>

Almost sixty years later, Clara Reeve in *The Progress of Romance* (1785), discusses Pope's treatment of Haywood with the dialogue between Hortensius, Sophronia and Euphrasia:

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<sup>117</sup> Eliza Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, Christine Blouch, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 1998), p. 60.

<sup>118</sup> See Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, James Sutherland, ed. (London: Methuen, 1963), p. 119, quoted in Staves, pp. 189-190.

<sup>119</sup> See Staves, pp. 189-190.

<sup>120</sup> Quoted in Helene Koon, 'Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, University of California Press, Vo. 2, No. 1, 1978. p. 44. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817409>, accessed 15/03/2313.

*Hort.* I fear they will not be so fortunate, they will be known to posterity by the infamous immortality, conferred upon them by *Pope* in his *Dunciad*.

*Euph.* Mr. *Pope* was severe in his castigations, but let us be just to merit of every kind. Mrs. *Heywood* had the singular good fortune to recover a lost reputation, and the yet greater honour to atone for her errors – She devoted the remainder of her life and labours to the service of virtue. Mrs. *Heywood* was one of the most voluminous female writers that ever England produced; none of her latter works are destitute of merit, though they do not rise to the highest pitch of excellence – *Betsy Thoughtless* is reckoned her best Novel; but those works by which she is most likely to be known to posterity, are the *Female Spectator*, and the *Invisible Spy* – this lady died so lately as the year 1758.<sup>121</sup>

Christine Blouch notes that at that time Clara Reeve could not have been aware that Haywood was the author of *Anti-Pamela*.<sup>122</sup>

The theme of motherhood emerges in Haywood's stories of love, seduction and duplicity, with pregnancy the outcome inevitably causing endless disgrace and guilt. These, usually unmarried, women are in terror of motherhood because of the scandal, loneliness, necessitation and loss involved. Unlike Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*, Haywood's protagonists are unwilling to choose between their children and their own welfare; they are resolute that they will have both and find that motherhood actually improves their lives. Haywood's maternal characters prosper but only when they are protected from dominant male intervention. *The Rash Resolve: Or, the Untimely Discovery* (1724) was published the same year as Defoe's *Roxana*. Discovering that she is pregnant, the protagonist Emanuella decides to leave her convent refuge, although she has had many misfortunes prior to this, the reader learns of her ruinous plight:

Now the Hour was come which was to make her know, that all she had endur'd ... were trifling Woes in competition with

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<sup>121</sup> Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance* ([1785] New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930), pp. 120-122. Original italics. See Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.175.

<sup>122</sup> See Blouch, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, pp. 11-12: 'Even now, *Anti-Pamela* is often attributed to Haywood only tentatively, for reasons that are not clear. Her authorship is verified by, among others, Alan D. McKillop, who cites the original publisher Cogan's catalogue record of selling the book, "by Mrs. Haywood" to Nourse in 1746,' quoted in Blouch, p. 18, n.10.

those in store for her – She found she was now destined to go through all that can be conceived of Shame – of Misery – of Horror ... With Child without a Husband!<sup>123</sup>

Emanuella would not consider abortion, which is described as ‘those Measures by which she alone could hope to secure her Reputation, and screen what had happen’d from the Knowledge of a censorious and un pitying World.’<sup>124</sup> Emanuella’s maternal concerns are evident when she feels responsible about her decision to travel as her child might be suffering: ‘Nature beginning to accuse her that she had acted an inhumane Part of the unborn Innocent within her who bore its share in all the Hardship she endured.’<sup>125</sup> When her baby is born she is consumed with her affection for him: ‘Never did maternal Tenderness reach to a height more elevated than hers ... She felt, indeed, all the Mother’s *Joy*, but with it infinitely more *Care* than ordinarily attended that Title.’<sup>126</sup> Haywood expands on Moll Flanders’ and Roxana’s maternal dilemma and foregrounds the emotional stress involved.

Emanuella is a doting mother to Victorinus and because of this she acquires a view contrary to accepted belief on female chastity: ‘All the ignominy which this Adventure, if divulg’d would bring upon her, was now no longer a Concern to her – Even Virtue was become less dear; and she could scarce repent she had been guilty of a Breach of it, so much she priz’d the Effect.’ Emanuella’s cousin Berillia pretends to be a confidante but in reality she orchestrates events to create misinterpretation between the two lovers and following the birth of Victorinus she disappears with Emanuella’s money. She is left destitute with a young baby but instead of seeing him as an impediment, she gets her strength to survive from her son and prioritizes him above all else:

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<sup>123</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>124</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 85.

<sup>125</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 90.

<sup>126</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 96.

Her Spirits had doubtless sunk beneath the weight of Sorrow,  
which oppress'd her, if the Vigour of her Care for her dear  
Child had not kept them up – Something must be thought on for  
the procuring for *him* the Necessaries of Life, whatever should  
become of herself.<sup>127</sup>

Moll Flanders' and Roxana's lack of money meant they were desperately burdened by their children, but in *The Rash Resolve*, this insufficiency of finance was also a difficulty but it was the mother's problem and the child was not an encumbrance. Emanuella becomes a self-reliant mother who earns an honest living which is in marked contrast to Moll and Roxana who turn to vice for survival. Emanuella's independence is then challenged when she meets Emilius, her former lover and her son's father with his new wife Julia, who contend for the mother's place in the infant's life. Emilius and Emanuella realize that they were both deceived by Berillia. Julia, the stepmother, confronts Emanuella's maternal authority when she insists that she allow her to look upon Victorinus 'with a Mother's Tenderness' and is adamant that there is 'another Tye, ... which you have not the power to disengage.'<sup>128</sup> Julia is steadfast that she must consent, because of patriarchal privilege Emilius's rights would override those of Emanuella's and her maternal influence and self-government would be commandeered. Realizing that she has no choice, Emanuella concedes and having relinquished her child to their care, she dies, within three days 'of no other Distemper than a broken Heart.'<sup>129</sup> Emanuella loses her child; Haywood raises the stakes within her text as this maternal grief is actually fatal.<sup>130</sup>

Haywood offers three positive maternal figures within the text; the poor mother who offers kindness to the pregnant Emanuella, Victorinus's dedicated nurse and the wealthy widow Donna Jacinta; these optimistic matriarchal figures assist Emanuella in

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<sup>127</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 107.

<sup>128</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 126.

<sup>129</sup> *The Rash Resolve*, p. 127.

<sup>130</sup> Bowers, pp. 125-130.

keeping her child. Jacinta is like a second mother to Victorinus she sustains Emanuella as a mother with benevolence but always allows her to be independent, she even promises to take on the role of Victorinus' mother should anything happen to Emanuella. Haywood, writes from the perspective of an unmarried mother of two children, she exposes the difficulties for unwed mothers who have to challenge patriarchal authority and offers an encouraging image of authoritative, constructive, and autonomous motherhood.<sup>131</sup>

*The Force of Nature: Or the Lucky Disappointment* (1725) was written the year after *The Rash Resolve*, where another distinctively strong unmarried mother, Berinthia, arrives in a courtroom to defend a murder charge against her son. It emerges that a wealthy young woman named Felisinda is in love with her father Alvario's impoverished ward Fernando. Alvario demands she marry the rich and handsome Carlos whom she has rejected, Carlos in deference to Felisinda's wishes withdraws his proposal. Alvario is so distressed about this that he becomes very unwell and dies. The upshot of this is that instead of leaving all his estate to his daughter, he divides it between Felisinda and Fernando, with the proviso they do not marry, he also directs his daughter to enter a convent run by his old friend, the Abbess Berinthia. While Felisinda accedes to her father's wishes and enters the convent, she and Fernando collude with Alantha (who is secretly in love with Fernando) to help Felisinda escape. Alantha by masquerading as her friend when Fernando's servant comes by covert means to fetch Felisinda takes her place. The servant tries to rape her and she does not encounter Fernando; Carlos prevents the assault and rescues her. Alantha in her gratitude confesses her subterfuge to Carlos in the deception of Fernando and Felisinda; they both head off to help the young couple. In the interim Fernando is arrested, tried, and given a

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<sup>131</sup> Bowers, p. 128.



death sentence for the abduction and assumed murder of Alantha. Following the sentence the tone of the text changes when the Abbess, in distress, begins to speak:

Donna Berinthia, who had sat all the Time of his Tryal in a Chair near the Bar, and with the greatest Anxiety of Mind imaginable, had listen'd to all that pass'd, no sooner heard the fatal Doom, than unable to contain herself, she cry'd out with a great Shriek; - Oh! My Son! – My dear unhappy Son! And fell the Moment motionless at the Judges Feet.<sup>132</sup>

With this outburst the mystery is revealed, Alvario and Berinthia had been young lovers who were prevented from marrying by her guardian who wanted to keep her wealth by arranging for her to marry his son. The result of the affair was Fernando; unable to marry, Berinthia was obliged to enter the convent thus leaving Alvario to care for his son. Alvario took care of him as his guardian; he subsequently marries another and has a daughter. When Berinthia gains her composure she cries: 'Oh let me fly to him, said she, let me take a last embrace – let me in Tears and Blessings now pour out all the Mother on him – A Mother never till now confess'd, and now too late.'<sup>133</sup> When Carlos arrives with Alantha in a late minute attempt to save Fernando, Alantha remains silent and Carlos gives evidence of her deception and Fernando is acquitted.

Berinthia admits that she would prefer not to have revealed herself but she asks 'Pardon, my Lords ... my Woman's Weakness ... if a Mother's Love cou'd not permit her only Son to go to Death unknowing of her Grief, it ought not have been this August Assembly my Complaints shou'd have disturb'd.'<sup>134</sup>

Some parts of *The Force of Nature* emulate certain incidents in *The Rash Resolve*, in particular both protagonists are in love and become pregnant.<sup>135</sup> Berinthia admits 'there stands the unhappy Product of his Mother's too great Affection and

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<sup>132</sup> Eliza Haywood, 'The Force of Nature, Secret Histories, novels and poems. In Four Volumes. (London: 1725), pp. 286, volume 4 of 4, p. 40. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale, National University of Maynooth, accessed 05/11/2011.

<sup>133</sup> *The Force of Nature*, p. 41.

<sup>134</sup> *The Force of Nature*, p. 42.

<sup>135</sup> See Bowers, pp. 135-140.

unresisting Tenderness!’<sup>136</sup> In Emanuella’s case, the father Emilius is not aware of his child until he meets her; Berinthia is effusive when she is describing Alvario’s treatment of her: ‘The care which Alvario took, said she, in concealing my Misfortune from the World, and at the same time, under a borrow’d name, expressing the most Indulgence to the Child, was some Alleviation to my Sorrow.’<sup>137</sup> Berinthia has to relinquish her motherhood to safeguard her reputation; although Emanuella’s story is tragic, Berinthia’s is also poignant as she has not had the benefit of experiencing motherly affection and dedication enjoyed by Emanuella. In an environment created and controlled by a patriarchal social order, both these texts depict distinct effective and self-determining mothers on the outskirts of society.<sup>138</sup> Haywood’s heroines are far more passionate than Defoe’s and are far more likely to be determined by extreme emotional reaction, particularly regarding their children.

Haywood was usually considered outrageous and as new popular literature became increasingly moralistic her ‘amatory’ fiction became less popular and was to be replaced in the middle of the eighteenth century by the sentimental novel. With the market for didactic fiction that is associated with Richardson, Haywood’s new style was popular. However, as evidenced in *The Female Spectator* (1744-1746), her observance of conservative middle class morality was only superficial. In accordance with her other instructive literature and novel, she makes use of narrative method and underlying allegories that oppose the traditional eighteenth-century romantic liaisons.<sup>139</sup>

Richardson, Fielding and Haywood were three of the most commercially incisive and clearly ranked authors of the eighteenth century. *Shamela* by Henry

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<sup>136</sup> *The Force of Nature*, p. 43.

<sup>137</sup> *The Force of Nature*, p. 46.

<sup>138</sup> See Bowers, p. 141.

<sup>139</sup> See Deborah J. Nestor, ‘Virtue Rarely Rewarded: Ideological Subversion and Narrative Form in Haywood’s Later Fiction’, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol. 34. No.3 (Summer, 1994), pp. 579-598, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/450883>, accessed 23/09/2009.

Fielding and *Anti-Pamela* by Eliza Haywood were both published the same year in 1741. *Pamela* was hugely popular and both recognised the commercial value of a response to *Pamela*. Haywood uses the same language of the amatory fiction that had made her so famous in the seventeen twenties. This text's vibrant depiction of a heroine with an uninhibited sexual desire is the complete antithesis to Richardson's virginal protagonist who refuses to succumb to her master's sexual overtures and eventually is successful. It resembles the more passionate tone of her earlier writings than her later transformed texts. There is a clear development after the publication of *Anti-Pamela*, in her representational style that is consistent with the changes in novel genre. She maintains the previous philosophy she promotes in her fiction; it seems she did not publish the follow up to *Anti-Pamela* that she alluded to on the final page but with her last two novels *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) and *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy* (1753), she resumed her satirical critique of Richardson.<sup>140</sup> In the previous Haywood texts discussed above, Haywood is writing about good mothers having to cope in a difficult patriarchal world, within *Anti-Pamela* she gives a critique on a bad mother who rears her daughter for selfish reasons. Syrena's mother is a scheming woman without any scruples who encourages her teenage daughter to have sexual relationships with men.<sup>141</sup>

Haywood's protagonist's main objective, on the advice of her mother, is to have financial gain and epitomizes a woman endeavours to achieve economic independence. The mother of Pamela Andrews is a benign character in *Pamela*, in contrast Syrena's mother Mrs. Tricksy is a scheming woman without any scruples who strongly influences and encourages her teenage daughter to have sexual relationships with men. Although *Anti-Pamela* is a critique and response to *Pamela*, it would not be

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<sup>140</sup> See Nestor, p. 581.

<sup>141</sup> Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela* [1741] and Henry Fielding, *Shamela* [1741], Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004).

necessary to read Richardson's *Pamela* before Haywood's text as it is a fully developed novel and can stand alone. *Anti-Pamela* has new and interesting characters that give the opposite perspective to *Pamela's* representation of virtue, chastity and respect. Peter Sabor notes that *Anti-Pamela* offers 'numerous telling allusions to scenes and incidents from the earlier work' that skilfully re-present 'such episodes to [Haywood's] own ends.'<sup>142</sup> The title page warns the reader about unwarranted gullibility and claims that the text is a warning for all young males: 'Publish'd as a necessary Caution to all Young Gentlemen' and is 'A Narrative which has really its Foundation in Truth and Nature; and at the same time that it entertains, by a vast variety of surprising Incidents, arms against partial Credulity, by shewing the Mischiefs that frequently arise from a too sudden Admiration.'<sup>143</sup> Haywood repeats the lines spoken in Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703) to warn about wanton women:

Fatally fair they are, and in their Smiles  
 The Graces, little Loves, and young Desires inhabit;  
 But all that gaze upon them are undone;  
 For they are false, luxurious in their Appetites,  
 And all the Heaven they hope for is Variety.  
 One Lover to another still succeeds;  
 Another, and another after that,  
 And the last Fool is welcome as the former;  
 Till having lov'd his Hour out, he gives his Place,  
 And mingles with the Herd that went before him.<sup>144</sup>

The text focuses on the escapades of this fifteen-year old who has been brought up to accept that she was to sustain herself economically with money she receives from men and 'Thus she was train'd up to deceive and betray all those whom her Beauty should allure.'<sup>145</sup> The text begins with the description of Syrena who was over-indulged by her mother. Syrena is treated like an only daughter, but later on in the narrative we learn that her mother has had other children who were taken from her. Mrs. Tricky was a:

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<sup>142</sup> Quoted in Ingrassia, *Anti-Pamela*, p. 36.

<sup>143</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 51.

<sup>144</sup> Quoted in *Anti-Pamela*, p. 50. Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent* (1703). See Benjamin Griffith Brawley, *A Short History of English Drama* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1921), p. 158.

<sup>145</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 54.

Woman of Intrigue in her Youth, was far from repenting what she had done; and one of the most subtil Mistresses in the Art of Decoying that ever was; the Girl was not out of her Bib and Apron, before she instructed her in Lessons, which she had the wicked Satisfaction to find, her pupil knew not only how to observe, but also to improve.<sup>146</sup>

Haywood is constantly criticizing this mother for being irresponsible in the upbringing of her daughter:

What Compassion is due to a Mother, who having no Portion to give her Daughter, shall fill her Head with Notions of Quality; give Half a Crown for the cutting her Hair, when perhaps half the Money must serve the whole Family for a Dinner; make her wear Gloves, Night and Day, and scarce suffer her to wash a Tea-Cup for fear of spoiling her Hands; when such one, I say, shall cry out Daughter is undone ...<sup>147</sup>

Syrena is also learning to be duplicitous 'I pretend, however to be mighty pleas'd, and do every thing they bid me with a great deal of Chearfulness, but it goes so against the Grain.'<sup>148</sup> Syrena goes through a range of men throughout the novel, when she has met Mr. Vardine and appears to be falling for him, she receives a letter from her mother warning her against him as he is not wealthy enough:

I tremble lest all the Counsel I have given you should not be sufficient to guard you from the Temptation. – Don't think Child, that I want to lay you under any unreasonable Restraints. – No, if we were rich and above Censure, I should be far from putting any curb to Nature; but as all our Hopes depend on your making your Fortune, either by Marriage or a Settlement equal to it, you must be extremely cautious of your Character till that Point is gain'd, and when once it is, you may freely indulge your Inclinations with this, or any other Man.<sup>149</sup>

Many of the episodes within the text parody *Pamela*; they outline the difficulties for many female servants who have to cope with their household chores and unwanted sexual approaches. Haywood criticizes the patriarchal society that encourages financial and sexual exchange; Syrena's employment is to provide pleasure for men although in

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<sup>146</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 53.

<sup>147</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 57.

<sup>148</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 59.

<sup>149</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 70.

Syrena's case, according to Peter Sabor, 'Syrena is predator rather than prey.'<sup>150</sup> Having disobeyed her mother's warnings against Vardine, Syrena discovers she is pregnant. This would ruin all her mother's plans for a future for them both, Mrs. Tricksy takes matters into her own hands and prepares an abortifacient for her daughter: 'To that end, she prepared a strong Potion, which the Girl very willing drank, and being so timely given, had the desired Effect, and caused an Abortion, to the great joy of both Mother and Daughter.'<sup>151</sup>

The novel is littered with stories of Mrs. Tricksy's and Syrena's contrivances, both financial and sexual, with various men; they also have quite a number of disagreements along the way with Mrs. Tricksy deceiving her daughter by writing anonymous letters. At one stage, Syrena receives a letter from a Mr. D. after he had read a letter sent to him by Mrs. Tricksy. He writes: 'A Letter from your vile Mother and Accomplice of your Crimes, has fallen into my Hands: I need say no more to let you know, I am no longer a Stranger to your Treachery to me, and the injured *Maria*.'<sup>152</sup> Mrs. Tricksy's anonymous letter to Maria is a contributory factor to her death.

Syrena takes a position as carer for an old lady whose daughter was married to a baronet called Sir Thomas. The couple have a twenty-two year old son, Mr. L. Both father and son accost her and she feigns innocence and chastity. Mr. L. suggests that she becomes his mistress, claiming that he cannot marry her because of the inequality between them. Sir Thomas also offers her a financial contract. Mrs. Tricksy advises her to try to make a husband of Mr. L. but to remain friendly with Sir Thomas, thus keeping her options open. With her mother's guidance, she concedes to Mr. L.'s wishes and has sexual intercourse with him. Following this incident Syrena makes the room and herself

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<sup>150</sup> Quoted in Ingrassia, *Anti-Pamela*, p. 40.

<sup>151</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 84. n. 2. Complications from a medicinally induced abortion could render a person sterile and there was a susceptibility to infection; it is interesting to note that despite continual sexual activity, Syrena never becomes pregnant again.

<sup>152</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 140.

dishevelled and accuses Mr. L. of rape, she takes a coach to her mother who 'highly applauded her management in this Affair, and gave her fresh Instruction for the perfecting of their most detestable Plot.'<sup>153</sup> Following his arrest for rape, Mrs. Tricksy believes he will marry her daughter in order to save his own neck: 'Thus Mr. L., who in the Morning thought himself happy in the possession of a beautiful innocent Creature, that loved him with the extremest Tenderness, found himself before the Sun went down, the wretched Property of a presuming, mercenary, betraying, perjur'd and abandon'd Prostitute. His friends incensed, his reputation blasted, his Liberty at the Disposal of the lowest and most despised Rank of Men, and his Life in Danger of the most shameful and ignominious end.'<sup>154</sup> When the mother's previously stolen letter to her daughter outlining their plot accusing Mr. L. of sexual assault was discovered, it lead to Mr. L. having his name cleared with the conniving mother and daughter having to escape and take a house in Greenwich.

Later Syrena meets an elderly gentleman, Mr. W., who having been given a sob story by her is sympathetic and agrees to help her. Mrs. Tricksy begins plotting again as she states 'an old Lover is the most doating Fool on Earth, especially if his mistress be very young.'<sup>155</sup> Syrena was the author of her own destiny while she was contriving to have Mr. W. propose to her, she has an illicit affair with a young man. Hoping to introduce his future wife to his son, Mr. W. discovers that his son is actually Syrena's lover and she is sent back to her mother.

The story contains a moral that despite Mrs. Tricksy's scheming, Syrena is set for a fall. Syrena and Mr. C. are duped with anonymous letters sent by Mrs. E. into arriving for an appointment at the *Kings-Arms*; the police are called and Syrena is arrested and placed in Newgate. Mrs E. then approaches Syrena's relatives to have her

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<sup>153</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 115.

<sup>154</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 118.

<sup>155</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 170.

sent to Wales where she would be out of reach of both her and other people's husbands: 'Thus was Syrena taken from the first Captivity she had ever been in; but when she consider'd, she was going to a second, which, tho's less shameful, would in all Probability deprive her entirely from all Conversation with Mankind, she was almost inconsolable.'<sup>156</sup>

Haywood denounces Mrs. Tricky's raising of her daughter when she remarks:

Here one cannot forbear reflecting, how shocking it is, when those who should point out the Paths of Virtue, give a wrong Bent to the young and unform'd Mind, and turn the pliant Disposition to Desires unworthy of it; but more especially so in Parents, who seem ordain'd by Heaven and Nature, to instil the first Principles for the future Happiness of those to whom they have given Being; and tho' we cannot suppose there are many, who like the Mother of *Syrena*, breed their children up with no other Intent than to make them Slaves of Vice.<sup>157</sup>

In questioning Richardson's representation of sexuality and class while deriding his technique and general standing within *Pamela*, Haywood's *Anti-Pamela* takes on a light-hearted tone that disdainfully reveals Pamela's virtue as disingenuous.

Haywood is the most important literary link between the age of Defoe and the age of Richardson. Haywood is unreservedly condemning both the form and content of *Pamela* by specifying sexual and pecuniary interactions. Haywood only uses the epistolary form to deliberately parody *Pamela* and also to illustrate that a servant, however fortunate, could not have the time to write so many letters. Pamela's parents encouraged the importance of honesty and virtue; in contrast Syrena's mother approved of trickery, egotism and depravity, she contravenes the notion of a good mother. The amatory fiction of the 1720s was the basis for *Pamela*, which is less sexual and more didactic; *Shamela* and *Anti-Pamela* are reacting to Richardson's moralizing. The

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<sup>156</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 227.

<sup>157</sup> *Anti-Pamela*, p. 56



exchange of ideas between these three texts underscores the different arguments that enhance the development of the eighteenth-century novel.

My reading suggests that *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* are symbols of what Defoe perceived as the detrimental changes in the eighteenth-century social and cultural society. The construction of the novels, both in terms of its discourses and plot devices, imply that Defoe had come to view contemporary society from a pessimistic perspective. I would suggest that because mothers are assumed as a rule to be of a nurturing and caring disposition and are expected to be outside the struggles of character formation, they are therefore expected to dedicate themselves to forming their children. I believe that Defoe deliberately choose these eponymous protagonists because they contravene the laws of nature and are constructive allegories that express his moral indignation within his didactic texts. Moll and Roxana's children are commodified, rarely have names, and are only referred to on reflection. Many of the episodic events in these texts have disastrous outcomes and act as a warning to readers about violating the laws of nature. What we get in *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* are narratives in which societal failure is converted into a tale of maternal failure.

The texts by Haywood that I have chosen for this chapter were written within a similar time-frame as those of Defoe. My analysis of *The Rash Resolve* and *The Force of Nature* suggests that Haywood has taken a more compassionate and sympathetic approach to her heroines. The novels' depictions of these women may be ascribed to her own life. She is writing from a female perspective and it seems to me that she is sensitive to the maternal feelings of her female protagonists. The unmarried mothers in these texts have had to sacrifice their own wellbeing for the sake of their children. Each of these women had to suffer separation from their lovers and also had to be deprived of their sons. My reading suggests that *The Rash Resolve* and *The Force of Nature* contain

loving mothers who are relegated to a secondary role because of their marital status. In Emanuella's situation the legal wife of the child's father is lawfully entitled to insist on being a mother to the child. In the case of Berinthia, she has had to seclude herself in a convent, thus permitting the father to raise the child, Haywood is exposing the adversities endured by women because of patriarchal supremacy.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *Pamela: the Exemplary Mother*

‘...we should then make better daughters, better wives, better mothers, and better mistresses.’

Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*.

### *Clarissa and the Milk of Human Kindness*

‘...virtuous, noble, wise, pious, unhappily ensnared by the vows and oaths of a vile rake.’

Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*.

### *Matronized by Motherhood in The History of Sir Charles Grandison*

‘Lady Grandison’s goodness was founded in principle: not in tameness or servility.’

Samuel’s Richardson’s *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*.

Katharine M. Rogers states that it has been generally acknowledged that Samuel Richardson's writings were supportive of women by recognizing their opinions and judgements in a patriarchal society.<sup>1</sup> Jocelyn Harris reiterates this in her thesis when she states that marriage and female education are prevalent throughout Richardson's works.<sup>2</sup> He was aware of positive traits in women, such as fine intellects and astuteness, which he sincerely believed should be encouraged, unusually for a male author in eighteenth-century society. Instead of being chattels to the male members of society, Richardson portrayed his female characters as independent and feisty. He exposed the unacceptable and immoral behaviour towards women by their male counterparts and scrutinized the apparent iniquitous subjugation of women which was inevitably customary within his environment.<sup>3</sup> Eighteenth-century periodicals contained many editorials portraying ideal women as decorative creatures, frequently presented as beautiful, cultured, chaste and reserved. Contemporary talents popular were skill at singing or playing a musical instrument; art and an aptitude for a European language were admired.<sup>4</sup>

In January 1741, two months after its publication, *The Gentleman's Magazine* stated that it was 'judged in Town as great a Sign of Want of Curiosity not to have read *Pamela* as not to have seen the French and Italian Dancers.'<sup>5</sup> Richardson notoriously had a coterie of women that he consulted while writing his novels; he also exchanged

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<sup>1</sup> See Katharine M. Rogers, 'Sensitive Feminism vs. Conventional Sympathy: Richardson and Fielding on Women'. *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Spring, 1976), pp. 256-270:256, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1345466/>, accessed 21/08/2008.

<sup>2</sup> See Jocelyn Harris, *Samuel Richardson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See Rogers, p. 256.

<sup>4</sup> See Ruth H. Bloch, 'American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1785-1815', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 4, No.2 (June, 1978), pp. 101-126:103, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3177453>, accessed 19/08/2008.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Frank Bradbrook, 'Samuel Richardson', *From Dryden to Johnson: A Guide to English Literature*, Boris Ford, ed. (London: Cassell, 1962), p. 294.

letters and received suggestions from them. Margaret Collier, a family friend who accompanied Henry Fielding, his wife and daughter to Lisbon before his death in 1754, wrote to Richardson. She stated that people were inferring that Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* must have been written by her as it was inferior to his other works.<sup>6</sup>

The esteem in which she held Richardson is evidenced by her declaration:

This is the disadvantageous light poor women are held in, by the ill-nature of the world ... as the only candid man, I believe, with regard to women's understandings; and indeed their only champion, and protector, I may say, in your writing; for you write of angels, instead of women.<sup>7</sup>

Male writers by and large overvalued the innocent, gullible female protagonist over the more rebellious, knowledgeable and sophisticated woman.<sup>8</sup> Richardson had a very modern attitude when he acknowledged the merits and intrinsic worth of his female characters with their intellect and self-determination; this was at variance with contemporary opinions and philosophy.<sup>9</sup> Ian Watt suggests that the eighteenth-century rise of the novel is the triumph of the particular. This triumph of the particular has been called the triumph of formal realism, a principle or practice that both Defoe and Richardson evidently applied. The novel is a complete and seemingly genuine account of a person's happiness and/or anguish which contains specifics of their conduct in such detail to persuade the reader of its genuineness.<sup>10</sup> Each of the important novelists of the century used realism in various ways with diverse conclusions. The novel is a good medium as it presents openings for conversation, observations and narrative with its deliberate measure of discovery. This new genre makes the reader aware of the

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<sup>6</sup> Jane Spencer, 'Fielding and Female Authority', *The Cambridge Guide to Henry Fielding*, Claude Rawson ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.122.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Spencer, p.122.

<sup>8</sup> See Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser, *A History of their Own, Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, Vol. II (Penguin: London, 1988), p.118.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony J. Hassall, Women in Richardson and Fielding, *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. VIX, No. II (Winter, 1981), pp. 168-174:170, <http://www.jstor.org/stable.1344851>, accessed 24/10/2008.

<sup>10</sup> See Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* ([1957] London: Pimlico, 2000), p.32.

character's deliberations and his actions as well as connecting the character's own perception and the author's perception of him.<sup>11</sup> Richardson was identifying the disturbing influence prevalent within his society and as he was very conscious of disparity between classes, he used the novel as an implement to highlight this inequality. Richardson was providing new clear insights and valuable representations for his contemporaries with his abundance of characters and episodes; this was demonstrated by their popularity. He was defining in fiction the feelings provoked by eighteenth-century conditions that both outlined contemporary expectations and put restrictions on the achievement of them.<sup>12</sup>

When Richardson decided to call his novels 'histories' he allowed himself the freedom to take his time to write long texts and approached his writing in the fashion similar to historians and encyclopaedia writers. Richardson tried as far as possible to maintain the idea that he was merely the 'editor' of this correspondence; after asserting he was not in fact writing a novel he used poetic licence as a method for repositioning an attractive woman. As the historians were inquiring into life, Richardson's novels are to be recognized as an investigation into life and his knowledge of it.<sup>13</sup> William Henry Hudson in 1969 argued that prior to Richardson, although a great range of prose fiction had been accomplished, no one hitherto had used 'normal' people in a specific location within everyday social and family life as the main focus for a novel.<sup>14</sup> Within Richardson's novels, the sentimental, emotional and honourable protagonists challenge society and cope with philandering behaviour, enduring distress and anguish which is

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<sup>11</sup> See Martin Price, 'The Divided Heart: Defoe's Novels', *Modern Critical Views: Daniel Defoe*, Harold Bloom, ed. (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1987), p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> See William M. Sale, Jr., 'From Pamela to Clarissa', *Samuel Richardson: Twentieth Century Views*, John Carroll, ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 39, 41.

<sup>13</sup> See Margaret Anne Doody, 'Samuel Richardson: Fiction and Knowledge', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 90-91.

<sup>14</sup> See William Henry Hudson, *An Outline History of English Literature* (London: G. Bells and Sons Ltd., 1969), p.148.

communicated through the epistolary method in which the reader learns the innermost thoughts and feelings of the main characters.<sup>15</sup>

Richardson's novels are what J. Paul Hunter cites as 'a new species' that materialized in England in the eighteenth century when contemporary Protestant, avaricious, self-doubting, mercantile society had to challenge their dictatorial and chequered religious past.<sup>16</sup> Both Richardson and Fielding challenged in their own ways this keen opposition to their new fiction. Richardson's achievement was that by aiming at a multiplicity of readers from various backgrounds, both urbane and unrefined, he could advocate his ethical, principled and convincing intentions. Even the satiric imitations that condemn his ethics emphasize how sincerely he had merged the essence of his morality into his creative work. Contemporary critics identified this Richardson work as innovative; many, including Samuel Johnson, questioned the ethics within Fielding's novels. When James Boswell admitted finding Richardson tedious, Samuel Johnson's recommendation was that 'you must read him for the sentiment.'<sup>17</sup> Fielding was very defensive of his novels that were inclined to be identified in the literary and traditional grouping instead of Richardson's moral and ethical category. In *Tom Jones*, he declares: 'I am, in reality, the Founder of a new Province of Writing ... and am at liberty to make what Laws I please therein.'<sup>18</sup> Richardson and Fielding collectively became a dual response to the literary and moral protestations against new ideas and originality early in the eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 15-16.

<sup>16</sup> See J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels, The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990), p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> John Mullan, 'Sentimental Novels', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 245.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Hunter, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> See Hunter, p. 19.

Richardson was a successful printer in London; his father was apparently aware of his thirst for knowledge and reading. In a letter to his Dutch biographer Johann Stinstra in 1753, he writes:

He [Richardson senior] designed me for the Cloth. But while I was very young, some heavy Losses having disabled him from supporting me as genteelly as he wished in an Education proper for the Function, he left me to choose ... a Business, having been able to give me only common School-Learning.<sup>20</sup>

An Oxford or Cambridge university education was required in order to be ordained as a Church of England clergyman and as one of nine children of a tradesman a university education would have been out of the question financially. A wealthy patron would have been an option for them; there may have been some hope as Richardson in his letter alludes to an enigmatic person, a ‘Gentleman ... greatly my superior in Degree,’ the ‘Master of ye Epistolary Style,’ who kept up correspondence with him telling about his travels.<sup>21</sup> Anne Richardson and Martha Bridgen, daughters of Richardson, in their letters in 1784, recall their memories of the description of Richardson’s aristocratic social contact, the munificent philanderer and bigamist who died in 1739.<sup>22</sup>

It was assumed by Richardson’s daughters that Richardson used the life of this colourful person as characters in his novels. The ‘Gentleman’ in volume II of *Pamela*, as a libertine but a decent landlord, may have resembled Mr. B. In *Clarissa*, he may have been emulating this gentleman’s life as zealous philanderer, letter writer, and as a man shown contempt by the unsophisticated family of the woman he is attracted to in the guise of Lovelace. Although not guilty of bigamy, Sir Charles Grandison is aligned with the scenario of a man torn between two women, the beautiful English rose Harriet and the passionate Italian Clementina. If the daughters are correct that this gentleman died in 1739, it would be the appropriate timing for Richardson to use this libertine’s

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, p. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, p. 93.

<sup>22</sup> See Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, p. 115, n. 6.



career as a template for the characters within his novels. Because of the secrecy involved with the correspondence and now with the death of his friend, he possibly felt free to investigate the sexual and social aspects of his correspondent's life; in comparison to Richardson's own life, it would have seemed exotic, glamorous and exciting.<sup>23</sup>

Richardson achieved financial security when he got the contract as printer for the House of Commons in 1733. As he printed the Debates of Parliament for that House, he was very well informed about political and social issues.<sup>24</sup> He tried to get involved in the Enlightenment exchange of ideas with his own venture. His initial participation was with the printing of the epistolary form although these letters were not written by him. He endeavoured by subscriptions to finance the publication of a pamphlet entitled *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Rowe. In his Embassy to the Ottoman Porte, 1621 to 1628*, he had in his possession letters written by a seventeenth-century English ambassador to Constantinople. He thought it would be interesting to explore the relations between both the Ottoman and English Empires and also the emotional responses of an Englishman to this exotic culture. It is likely that he knew of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's book created from her letters from Turkey and thought this book might help to motivate an interest in his. The printing was eventually subsidized by the Society for the Encouragement of Learning with Richardson as editor and although it was not well received, it represents Richardson's input into historical research. As all three texts work with letters, the *Rowe* papers, like sections of *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, illustrate the endeavours of a person to negotiate with an indiscriminate authority.<sup>25</sup>

In 1739, two booksellers, Rivington and Osborn, commissioned Richardson to assemble a volume of letters as a guide-book for those unfamiliar with the practice of

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<sup>23</sup> See Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, p. 93.

<sup>24</sup> See Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, p. 98.

<sup>25</sup> See Doody, *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 98-99.

letter writing. The letters were meant to demonstrate to young ladies how to think and behave honourably and wisely in day-to-day living and would serve as rules to act by. While he was working on this assignment his imagination was fired by recollecting an account he had heard of a young servant girl who, although she liked her master, defended herself against his sexual attacks and was successful in not only gaining his esteem, she also became his wife.<sup>26</sup> Following *Pamela*, Richardson completed his commission in 1741 and states in his preface that his principal endeavour was:

[to] inculcate the principles of virtue and benevolence; to describe properly, and recommend strongly, the social and relatives duties; and to place them in such practical lights, that the letters may serve for rules to think and act by, as well as form to write after.<sup>27</sup>

It was with the notion of turning his readers away from romance writing that he wrote *Pamela*, he used the methodical technique of the famous sentimental novels of seventeenth century France, such as Madeleine de Scudéry's *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* (10 vols. 1648–1653), and Roland Le Vayer de Boutigny, *Mithridate* (1648–51).<sup>28</sup> The changeover from the guide book *The Familiar Letters* to the novel *Pamela* was easy; he was quoted in one of his letters: 'I almost slid into the writing of *Pamela*'.<sup>29</sup> The subject matter of the novel, which is the refusal of the virtuous servant to comply with the master's endeavours to seduce her, was well known in Puritan literature. *Pamela* was written in only three months and published in two volumes in 1740: *Pamela in her Exalted Condition* was published later in two volumes. The novel was intended to demonstrate virtue rewarded; the title page describes it as 'a series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel to her parents ... published in order to

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<sup>26</sup> See Harry Blamires, *A Short History of English Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 1984), p. 201.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Sylvia Kasey Marks, *Sir Charles Grandison: The Compleat Conduct Book* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1986), p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> See Emile Legouis, *A Short History of English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 235.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Bradbrook, p. 286.

cultivate the Principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the Youth of Both Sexes.’<sup>30</sup>

Nancy Armstrong asserts that by assuming the voices of women, authors like Defoe and Richardson intentionally relinquished what Walter Ong calls ‘a sexually specialized language used almost exclusively for communication between male and male.’<sup>31</sup> This constructed feminine perspective was quite dissimilar from that of an aristocratic man and unlikely to express disapproval of the prevailing attitude. Because their gender associates them with having no entitlement to political authority, female narrators are particularly successful in instigating a concept of disinterested political appraisal that was not challenged as they could not vote. Novelists could have free rein in deducing a woman’s reaction if she construed it from a sexual rather than political or financial motivation.<sup>32</sup> Richardson within *Pamela* depicts an explicit illustration of political inconsistency, presented as a chronicle of an innocent lady’s maid who endures mistreatment from her ruthless employer; it portrays Pamela’s resistance as laudable though not very credible in the eighteenth century. When Mr. B. has a change of heart and proposes marriage to Pamela, it is conveyed as a form of repentance on his part instead of assumption on hers.<sup>33</sup> This reading was contested from the outset; one of the assertions in the Preface to *Pamela* written by Aaron Hill was to discern ‘under the modest Disguise of a *Novel*, all the *Soul* of Religion, Good-breeding, Discretion, Good-nature, Wit, Fancy, Fine Thought, and Morality.’<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Richardson, Samuel, *Pamela*, Peter Sabor, ed. ([1740] London: Penguin, 1980). Title page. Quoted in Bradbrook, p. 287.

<sup>31</sup> Walter Ong, quoted by Irene Taylor and Gina Luria, ‘Gender and Genre: Women in British Romantic Literature,’ in *What Manner of Woman*, ed. Marlene Springer (New York: University Press, 1977) p. 100, quoted in Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 28.

<sup>32</sup> See Armstrong, p. 29.

<sup>33</sup> See Armstrong, p. 49.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Tom Keymer, *Richardson’s Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 63.

Richardson's technique of categorization is in fictional depictions of characters similar to those in his most important precursor, that of Puritan devotional and religious literature.<sup>35</sup> The social system, family patterns, personal attitudes that were promoted by this religious set of principles that continued after its demise are being identified within the novel. By the beginning of the eighteenth century these models of behaviour were characteristic not only of a Dissenting background, but also of Anglicans. It was a combination of coping with religious administration but also family life, mercantile dealings, political ambitions and the details of one's own conduct. Self-examination was constant within this changing society where they reviewed the events of their lives and the state of their souls, usually by recording them in a diary and looking for guides and spiritual meanings.<sup>36</sup> Pamela and Clarissa display their concern with details but they are less presumptive and more reflexive to a greater or lesser extent.<sup>37</sup> Pamela in her letters constantly questions the motives of others while Clarissa is more cognisant of her need to examine her own motivations.<sup>38</sup> Dissenter Daniel Defoe's eponymous heroines, Moll Flanders and Roxana, are constantly self-examining and recording their thoughts and acquisitions.

With the expansion of the mercantile economy huge changes occurred in the lives of families who had previously followed the maxim of morality; their new wealth caused some personal displacement and many felt immense anxiety. The prevalence of it was what caught Richardson's attention; this community phenomenon was certainly not restricted to rare incidents, the disturbance was nationwide.<sup>39</sup> Beneath the level of the exceptionally wealthy merchants, there was a section of businessmen of all types

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<sup>35</sup> See Cynthia Griffin Wolff, *Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character* (U.S.A: Archon Books, 1972), p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> See Wolff, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> See Wolff, p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> See Wolff, pp. 19, 21.

<sup>39</sup> See Wolff, p. 5.

and trades who catered for the needs of the population, which was expanding in size and affluence. This layer expanded as economic life gathered speed as needs became more cultured and wealth increased as towns grew. Sir Dudley Ryder (1691–1756), the Attorney General, came from a mercantile family and offers vibrant descriptions of the melting pot of cultures that were clustered together. He advanced through the ranks from his parents' shop in Ironmonger Lane to the mansions of the wealthy; yet retained the behaviour and ideals that he had learned as he was growing up. True to tradition, Ryder kept a diary in which he reflected on his own condition, thoughts, beliefs and behaviour; he appears to exemplify a narrative of hardworking tradition. This was characteristic of the first and second generations of this section of mercantile society who were regarded as industrious, courageous and self-disciplined pioneers of a new and dramatically changing world. These changes meant that there was a society living in an unfamiliar world endeavouring to cope with everyday life.<sup>40</sup> From a business point of view, there was extra revenue for printers and authors as the upsurge in the reading public brought a huge increase in the demand for instructional literature.<sup>41</sup> Madeleine Kahn claims that in the eighteenth century there is a great deal of data to illustrate attempts to redefine sex and gender roles at every level of English society. Educators, clergymen, and worried parents created a great number of conduct books that set down for both young men and women the behaviour, considerations and ideas they must develop to be true men or women.<sup>42</sup> Richardson discusses female education in *Pamela* with his description of Pamela's learning under the tutelage of her master. He also gives an argument in favour of female education in *Part II* when Pamela lists the women of

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<sup>40</sup> See Wolff, p. 6.

<sup>41</sup> See Wolff, p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> See Madeleine Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism: Rhetoric and Gender in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 31.

her acquaintance whose erudition surpasses that of the men. Pamela argues for education for girls when she states:

we should then make better daughters, better wives, better mothers, and better mistresses: and who (permit me, Sir, to ask them) would be so much the better for these opportunities and amendments, as our upbraiders themselves.<sup>43</sup>

Haywood had also argued compellingly for this within the *Female Spectator*:

Why do they call us silly Women and not endeavour to make us otherwise? God and Nature had endued them with Means and *Custom* has established them in the Power of rendering our Minds such as they ought to be; how highly ungenerous is it then to give use a wrong turn, and then despise us for it.<sup>44</sup>

This is strikingly similar to the opinion Mary Wollstonecraft advocated fifty years later.

In the eighteenth century, many male writers and artists venerated the naïve, untutored heroine over other inspiring women of the world, such as Mary Astell (1660-1731), English philosopher, Catharine Trotter (1674-1749) dramatist and metaphysician and Damaris Lady Masham (1659-1708) English Philosopher.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, Sarah Fielding in her novel *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744), tells the tale of a guileless hero's search for a true friend who is treated with contempt because of his sentimental outlook on human nature.<sup>46</sup> Fielding was one of Richardson's inner circle of devoted admirers and was inspired by him. *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, was a bestselling novel at that time, and was also incorporated into sermons as an ideal young woman. There were also *Pamela* souvenirs such as prints, painting, fans and playing-cards with lines from Richardson's works. *Pamela* attracted a variety of readers from the lowly to the higher ranking; it bridged the disparity between rich and poor as Lady Mary Wortley

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<sup>43</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela, Part II*, M. Kinkead-Weekes, ed. ([1741] London: Everyman's Library, 1969), p. 417.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Helene Koon, 'Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, University of California Press, Vo. 2, No. 1, 1978. p. 48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817409>, accessed 15/03/2313.

<sup>45</sup> Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment, c. 1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850, An Introduction*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2005), p.18.

<sup>46</sup> Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple and Volume the Last*, Peter Sabor, ed. ([1744] Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998).

Montagu is reported to have said of *Pamela* that it had become ‘the joy of chambermaids of all nations.’ Lady Mary was not just disparaging Richardson’s success, she was also giving a backhanded compliment to the classless attraction of the novel.<sup>47</sup> A new aspect that was favourable within the novel was its declared moral purpose. Dr. Benjamin Slocock of St. Saviour’s in Southwark openly recommended it from the pulpit and Alexander Pope is quoted as saying it ‘would do more good than many volumes of sermons.’<sup>48</sup> Other admirers including a friend of Swift, Knightly Chetwoode, who, having read *Pamela*, wrote to the person who had loaned him the book, stating: ‘if all the Books in England were to be burnt, this Book, next the Bible, ought to be preserved.’<sup>49</sup> *Pamela*, a fifteen year old servant girl, has to endure many sexual trials by her master which she defends herself against but eventually influences him to marry her. She is portrayed as the embodiment of virtuousness, decency and morality. She is always deferential to Mr. B. who takes charge of her life; he raises her along with her family to his own social status and attempts to persuade her that he really loves her. She reiterates contemporary female epitome of a moral young woman who is innocent and respectful to the husband who condescends to select her.<sup>50</sup> Once married, Mr. B. sets out for *Pamela* forty-eight rules for what he expects in a wife. *Pamela* probably got off lightly by this as this was at a time when a judge in 1765 ruled that a husband was within his rights to beat his wife as ‘long as the stick was no thicker than a man’s thumb.’<sup>51</sup>

Among *Pamela*’s literary forerunners was the fifteenth-century anonymous poem, *The Nut Brown Maid*, Geoffrey Chaucer’s Patient Griselda from *The Canterbury*

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<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 308.

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1902), p. 31.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 59.

<sup>50</sup> See Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin, 1983), p. 38

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Porter, p. 38.

*Tales* in the sixteenth century and Mathew Prior's early eighteenth-century poem, *Henry and Emma*.<sup>52</sup> However, *Pamela* was largely celebrated for resisting her man while *Griselda* presents complete and unreserved compliance, *Pamela* may become *Griselda* but her original appeal is not *Griselda*'s — *Pamela*'s refusal to concede her chastity to Mr. B. before her marriage is the character most people remember and cherish.

European authors that include Rousseau, Diderot and Marivaux, had been affected by *Pamela* and used the idea of a pretty young female, lower class, who turns out to be a heroine as a result of her virtue. Because they withstood the seduction by wicked men, the females acquired the right of moral authority. Richardson wrote at a time of enormous economic and social transformation that put more emphasis on the significance of marriage for women than before. In *Pamela*, the relationship contains aspects of romantic love but is nonetheless concerned with strife within social classes and their conflicting perspectives and the discord involving sexuality and moral conventions.<sup>53</sup> Richardson in a letter to Aaron Hill explains the origin of his idea for *Pamela*'s story; it was a tale told to him years earlier about a married couple and their child who lost everything due to suretiships and like *Pamela*'s parents were honest and pious and had to take on menial agricultural work:

That the girl, improving daily in beauty, modesty, and genteel and good behaviour, by the time she was fifteen, engaged the attentions of her lady's son, a young gentleman of free principles, who, on her lady's death, attempted, by all manner of temptations and devices, to seduce her. That she had recourse to as many innocents stratagems to escape the snares laid for her virtue; once, however, in despair, having been near drowning; that, at last, her noble resistance, watchfulness, and excellent qualities, subdued him, and he thought fit to make her his wife. That she behaved herself with so much dignity, sweetness and humility, that she made herself beloved of everybody, and even by his relations, who at first despised her;

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<sup>52</sup> Anonymous, [www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-nut-brown-maid](http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-nut-brown-maid) , Mathew Prior, [www.poemhunter.com/henry-and-emma-a-poem](http://www.poemhunter.com/henry-and-emma-a-poem). Accessed 19/04/2009.

<sup>53</sup> See Watt, pp.137-138.



and now had the blessing both of rich and poor, and the love of her husband.<sup>54</sup>

Richardson enters into the debate about motherhood in *Pamela* and *Part II*; he includes a variety of mothers within his texts. Pamela's mother is a benign character whereas her replacement mothers have much more influence on her. We learn early in the text that Mr. B.'s mother, who has taken on the responsibility of Pamela's education, has died. Assuming she is being sent back to her parents, Pamela writes describing her education which she believes has left her ill-equipped for her former life:

So I shall make a fine figure with my singing and dancing, when I come home to you! To be sure, I had better, as things stand, have learned to wash and scour, and brew and bake, and such like. But I hope, if I can't get work, and can meet with a place, to learn these soon, if any body will have to bear with me till then.<sup>55</sup>

Mr. B.'s mother replaces her natural mother and educates her; Pamela consistently acquires other mothers throughout the novel.

In her Introduction to *Pamela*, Margaret Anne Doody writes that *Pamela* has always been a contentious text; it has certainly been a ground-breaking piece of work as it transformed the novel as a literary genre with its great changes in content, subject matter, technique and structure. There were many novels written mostly by women which covered the involvement of the female protagonists in the difficulties of affairs of the heart. The topics covered were love, romance, seduction, rape, marriage and motherhood; the authors show the inner feelings or consciousness of the heroines. The heroine can unreservedly challenge the prevalent domain of masculine power by being the focal point of the plot, with males merely characters in the narrative as Eliza Haywood does in *Miss Betsy Thoughtless*.<sup>56</sup> Richardson sees in this fiction potential that previous authors only suggest. By modifying this feminine and familial literature, he

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<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 29.

<sup>55</sup> *Pamela*, p. 109.

<sup>56</sup> Eliza Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, Christine Blouch, ed. ([1751] Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 1998).

elevates this fiction of 'low' status to a higher plane; this elevated fiction becomes part of the accepted literature in England and Europe. Surprisingly, despite the immense authority Fielding's writings enjoy within English literature and in terms of their astute manipulation of traditional and established conventions, his fiction, had little influence on European fiction and were not widely known in France. In contrast, Richardson's novels had substantial significance in the growth of European literature.<sup>57</sup> In 1742, The French novelist, Claude Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon, told Lord Chesterfield that 'without *Pamela*, the Parisians would not know what to read or say.'<sup>58</sup> Doody writes: '*Pamela*, which we with hindsight can see presages the era of the French Revolution and Romanticism, was to influence Rousseau, Diderot, Goethe and Pushkin.'<sup>59</sup>

The epistolary medium was advantageous to Richardson here as it is a useful platform to represent both the protagonist's inner deliberations and public account. By using particular measures he is able to collate this group of letters into a novel which connects the real meaning of his lessons, like a conduct book.<sup>60</sup> Although not used at quite the same intensity, the novel in letters had already existed before Richardson, particularly in French and English. Traditionally authors of popular fiction had used the letter form to express passionate emotions; forerunners to Richardson were *Letters of a Portuguese Nun*, written by the French Politician Gabriel-Joseph de la Vergne and published anonymously in 1669, *Lettres Persanes* (1721) by Montesquieu and *Love-Letters Between a Noble-man and his Sister*, written by Aphra Behn in the seventeenth century. By writing from the perspective of the correspondent, Richardson presents a dramatic character within unambiguous situations. He began this writing 'to the

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<sup>57</sup> See Margaret Anne Doody, Samuel Richardson's, *Pamela*, Peter Sabor, ed. ([1740] London: Penguin, 1980), p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 201.

<sup>59</sup> See Doody, *Pamela*, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> See A.M. Kearney, 'Richardson's *Pamela*: The Aesthetic Case', *Samuel Richardson*, John Carroll, ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p.34.

moment' in *Pamela* and expands on it in *Clarissa*; all Richardson's main characters are authors. He had a great interest in the dynamics of the authority of small social sets, particularly families, and the vibrancy which creates hostilities and affecting anxieties. The heroine is not conveying her own story retrospectively because of this 'to the moment' device which means that she does not have concluding authority.<sup>61</sup>

Pamela's virtue is endangered by Mr. B.; he enters her private space and gives her presents of her mother's clothes which permit him to display his awareness of the body he yearns.<sup>62</sup> He exercises malevolent power as an employer, as a male and as a member of the ruling class; because he is a Justice of the Peace Pamela cannot find solace within the law. The novel is based on Pamela's strength of insubordination; Pamela's virtue that is compensated within the novel is her rebellion.<sup>63</sup> Pamela expresses 'virtue' to appraise her confidence in the sacrosanct quality she has which is her 'personal integrity'.<sup>64</sup> Following the death of his mother, Mr. B. attempts to seduce Pamela. Mr. B.'s mother seems to have had a premonition of what would happen when in *Part II*, he discloses his conversation with his dying mother who is apprehensive about Pamela's wellbeing:

You are a young gentleman, and I am sorry to say, not better than I wish you to be — Though I hope my Pamela would not be in danger from her master, who owes all his servants protection, as much as the king does to his subjects. Yet I don't know how to wish her to stay with you, for your own reputation's sake, my dear son; — for the world will censure as it lists — Would to God! said she, ' the dear girl had the small-pox in a mortifying manner: she's be lovely though in the genteelness of her person and the excellence of her mind; and more out of danger of suffering from the transient beauties of countenance.'<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> See Doody, *Pamela*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>62</sup> See Jocelyn Harris, *Samuel Richardson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 10.

<sup>63</sup> See Doody, *Pamela*, pp. 7- 9.

<sup>64</sup> Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations, The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 242.

<sup>65</sup> *Pamela Part II*, p.114.

Even though Mr. B. was her own child, Pamela's mistress is very concerned about Pamela's future as if she was her own daughter; she refers to her as 'my Pamela.'

The novel begins with a letter from Pamela to her parents recounting the death of her 'good lady' and the instruction to 'My dear son! ... Remember my poor Pamela!' She then describes Mr. B.'s kindness with his promise that 'I will take care of you all, my good maidens; and for you, Pamela ... for my dear mother's sake, I will be a friend to you, and you shall take care of my linen.'<sup>66</sup> She tells of his generosity to her and her confusion when he enters his mother's dressing room just as she is folding the letter to her parents, which he insists on reading. In reply to her letter her parents are equally alarmed and warn her:

Why should he take such a poor girl as you by the hand, as your letter says he has done twice? Why should he deign to read your letter written to us, and commend your writing and spelling? Indeed, indeed, my dearest child, our hearts ake for you; and then you seem so full of *joy* at his goodness, so *taken* with his kind expressions (which, truly, are very great favours, if he means well) that we *fear* — Yes, my child, we *fear* — you should be so grateful, and reward him with that jewel, your virtue, which no riches, nor favour, nor any thing in this life, can make up to you.<sup>67</sup>

Losing one's virginity had very different consequences for women than for men; abstinence from sexual activity was not expected from men but women had to remain chaste in order for the lineage to be unadulterated. Samuel Johnson writes:

The chastity of women is of all importance, as all property depends on it ... between a man and his wife, a husband's infidelity is nothing ... Wise married women don't trouble themselves about infidelity in their husbands ... The man imposes no bastards upon his wife.<sup>68</sup>

Within her parents' letter the reader learns that Pamela has worked for this lady for 'three or four years past' who educated her and gave her 'clothes and linen', she had a great fondness for Pamela and was maternal towards her.

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<sup>66</sup> *Pamela*, p. 43.

<sup>67</sup> *Pamela*, p. 46.

<sup>68</sup> See Porter, p. 39.

Pamela seems to attract motherly attention; Lady Davers takes an interest in her and as she considered her 'too pretty to live in a bachelor's house', she offers to have her go and live with her.<sup>69</sup> The housekeeper 'Mrs. Jervis uses me as if I were her own daughter,' Pamela is complimentary about her, asserting that she is a fine woman who is protective of, and is constantly advising Pamela.<sup>70</sup> Pamela admits that next to her parents, she loves her best of all. The excuse Mr B. gives to his sister for his refusal to allow Pamela to live with his sister was 'as his mother loved me, and committed me to his care, he ought to continue me with him; and Mrs Jervis would be a mother to me.' and also that he was fearful for her that she would be a target for Lord Davers's nephew's bad intentions.<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately for Pamela, she also receives the attentions of the London bawd, Mrs. Jewkes who colludes with her master to seduce Pamela. Rather than a surrogate mother, Mrs. Jewkes behaves like a wicked stepmother.

Regardless of the speed with which *Pamela* was written, Richardson was not satisfied about his own credentials as a writer or the completed novel; his constant appeals for guidance when he was writing display his need for approval and counsel, advice seldom accepted; it does nevertheless show his need to discuss his private concerns. Although Pamela was very popular, the triumph was not unadulterated; Pamela was accused of being a cunning flirt. Fielding makes fun of *Pamela* in his *Shamela* (1741); his prose is in contrast to Richardson's blatant intense instruction. He constantly mocks the absurdities of Richardson's fiction and the contemporary society that was so accepting of it. Haywood in *Anti-Pamela* (1741) gives instruction also but she does it by supplying negative examples. Haywood's texts deal with many concerns

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<sup>69</sup> *Pamela*, p. 48.

<sup>70</sup> *Pamela*, p. 49.

<sup>71</sup> *Pamela*, p. 53.

connected with women's social and economic wellbeing.<sup>72</sup> V.S. Pritchett in 1946 accused Richardson of being 'prurient and obsessed by sex.' Mark Kinkead-Weekes disagrees, he argues that the scenes are distinctly theatrical, and would seem to be an attempt at parody.<sup>73</sup> A.M. Kearney in 1968 states that *Pamela* had been lambasted by critics more than other novels of the day; its conflicting moral perspectives and voyeuristic subject matter invited an abundance of condemnation in its own day. Arnold Kettle who probably reflects twentieth-century outlook writes in 1966: 'Pamela remains only as a record of a peculiarly loathsome aspect of bourgeois puritan morality.'<sup>74</sup> Terry Eagleton writes in 1982 that '*Pamela* is a sickly celebration of male ruling-class power; but is also a fierce polemic against the prejudice that the most inconspicuous serving maid cannot be as humanly valuable as her social superiors.'<sup>75</sup> The subsequent satiric writings like those of Fielding's entertaining parody *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews*, and then in his novel *Joseph Andrews* were detrimental to Richardson's confidence. Tom Keymer writes that Fielding's *Shamela* shows the tale is not just that of the servant overcoming adversity but that it is a story that cannot avoid challenge.<sup>76</sup> Kinkead-Weekes asserts that a Danish writer speaks of 'two different parties, Pamelists and Antipamelists. Some look on this young Virgin as an example for ladies to follow ... Others, on the contrary, discover it the behaviour of an hypocritical, crafty girl ... who understands the Art of bringing a man to her lure.'<sup>77</sup> In contemporary times the Antipamelists succeeded. *Shamela* is justified and it is largely accepted that

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<sup>72</sup> See Ingrassia, Eliza Haywood *Anti-Pamela* [1741] and Henry Fielding *Shamela* [1741] ed. Catherine Ingrassia (Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004), pp. 10-11.

<sup>73</sup> See Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 107.

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Kearney, pp. 28, 34.

<sup>75</sup> Quoted in Terry Eagleton, *The Rape of Clarissa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. 37.

<sup>76</sup> See Tom Keymer, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 30.

<sup>77</sup> Quoted in Mark Kinkead-Weekes, 'Pamela', *Samuel Richardson: Twentieth Century Views*, John Carroll, ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 21.

Pamela's behaviour is insincere and duplicitous.'<sup>78</sup> Bernard Kreissman, who catalogues and criticises *Pamela*, remarks: 'An attentive reading of the novel reveals behind Pamela who minces across its pages is the Shamela whom Fielding exposed.'<sup>79</sup> The anonymous eighteenth-century author of *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, and Pamela* (1754) states that 'Pamela is a pert little minx whom any man of common sense or address might have had on his own terms in a week or fortnight.'<sup>80</sup> Richard Steele in *The Spectator* in 1712, prefigured *Pamela* when he remarked that prude and coquette are alike in that they have 'the distinction of sex in all their thoughts, words and actions.' Like 'the lady doth protest' the more the heroine is denying sexuality, she is more inclined to be preoccupied with it.<sup>81</sup> Jina Politi asserts in 1987 that if Richardson had made his protagonist a young woman of quality and not a servant that her motives and her character would not have been in doubt.<sup>82</sup> Nancy Armstrong writes that Fielding thought the idea of Pamela's refusal to concede as ridiculous as a man of Mr. B.'s position would never have been prepared to 'risk his reputation'.<sup>83</sup> This seem disingenuous for Fielding to have written as Fielding himself went on to marry his late wife's lady's maid when she was six months pregnant.

Richardson uses the stress and strain between Mr B. and Pamela to explain the discord between love and society. Within Pamela's social structure in Bedfordshire Estate following her 'lady's' death, she no longer has a clearly definitive position. Following the death of his mother, Mr. B. is now in charge of his estate. Therefore, he no longer has to keep control over his emotions and lets his suppressed feelings

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<sup>78</sup> Quoted in Kinkead-Weekes, 'Pamela', *Samuel Richardson: Twentieth Century Views*, p. 21.

<sup>79</sup> Quoted in Tassie Gwilliam, *Samuel Richardson's Fictions of Gender* (California: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 26-27.

<sup>80</sup> See Gwilliam, pp. 26-27.

<sup>81</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, 'Pamela', *Samuel Richardson: Twentieth Century Views*, p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> Jina Politi, 'The Miracle of Love', *Samuel Richardson: Modern Critical Views*, Harold Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), p.108.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted in Armstrong, p. 115.

materialize.<sup>84</sup> Pamela and Mr. B. have two different outlooks on life and love; love from Pamela's perspective means deference, esteem and mutual respect for each other's intellect and body; for Mr. B. it means lust, obsession and eventually ownership of the cherished prize. Mr. B. with his aristocratic background defines the importance of position, prosperity and influence; in contrast Pamela's upbringing puts emphasis on the importance of morality, nature and intellect. For Mr. B., a mistress's ultimate role is as a sexual companion, whereas a wife's position is more identified with that of mother, supporter, and domestic manager. With his upper-class arrogance, Mr. B. cannot understand why Pamela's virtue should be of such importance to her.<sup>85</sup>

Mr. B. was once victim of the scheming middle-class mother of Sally Godfrey; Pamela is curious about Sally because of the hints she has received from Lady Davers. Following their marriage, Mr. B. decides to introduce his daughter to his wife who is enchanted with her. She has a 'strange grief and pleasure mingled,' she explains to her husband:

I cannot help being grieved for the poor mother of this sweet babe, to think, if she be living, that she must call her chiefest delight her shame: if she be no more, that she must have had sad remorse on her mind, when she came to leave the world, and her little babe: and, in the second place, I grieve, that it must be thought a kindness to the dear little soul, not to let her know how near the dearest relation she has in the world is to her ... And I have a twofold cause of joy. First, that I have had the grace to escape the misfortune of this poor lady; and next, that this discovery has given me an opportunity to shew the sincerity of my grateful affection for you, sir, in the love I will always bear to this dear child.<sup>86</sup>

On the way home Mr. B. relates the story of Miss Godfrey to Pamela. He explains that her mother was devious and how she was determined, since he was heir to a great estate, to dupe him into a marriage with her daughter. This involved a feigned attack on him,

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<sup>84</sup> Roy Roussel, 'Distance and Presence in Pamela', *Samuel Richardson: Modern Critical Views*, pp. 88-90.

<sup>85</sup> See Wendy Jones, 'Pamela and Creative Cognition', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol.34, No.2 (June, 2011), p. 188.

<sup>86</sup> *Pamela*, p. 497.



threatening him with death if he did not marry the young lady instantly as they had a clergyman waiting. Believing that the daughter was involved he left the house vowing never to visit her again. Subsequently, having cleared his suspicions of her conduct, Miss Godfrey visited him in Oxford where he was studying; she succumbed to his charms and eventually became pregnant. Mr. B. evaded another attempt by her mother to save the young lady's name by marrying her. Miss B. (afterward Lady Davers) took control, paid the expenses, hushed up the entire affair and took care of Miss Goodwin until she was put to boarding-school, where she remains. Pamela explains to her parents: 'Mr B. has settled upon the child such a sum of money as the interest of it will handsomely provide for her; and the principal be a tolerable fortune, fit for a gentlewoman, when she comes to be of age'.<sup>87</sup> Pamela is horrified and asks 'But how, sir, can the poor mother be content to deny herself the enjoyment of so sweet a child?' 'She lives,' says Mr B.:

contentedly in Jamaica, and very happily too. For you must know, that she suffer'd so much in Child-bed, that nobody expected her Life ... recommending to me by a very moving Letter, her little Baby, and that I would not suffer it to be called by her Name, but *Goodwin*, that her Shame might be the less known, for hers and her Family's sake; she got her Friends to assign her Five hundred Pounds, in full of all her Demands upon her Family, and went up to London, and embarked, with her Companions, at Gravesend, and so sailed to Jamaica; where she is since well and happily marry'd; passing, to her Husband, for a young Widow, with one Daughter, which her first Husband's Friends take care of, and provide for.<sup>88</sup>

Sally Godfrey must live a life of deceit to prevent her disgrace; she endures a self-imposed separation from her child, her lover, friends, family and home and has no money; she also has to suffer humiliating culpability. In contrast, her seducer, Mr. B., upholds his position in society; as son and heir he retains his affluence, has access to

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<sup>87</sup> *Pamela*, p. 500.

<sup>88</sup> *Pamela*, pp. 500-501.

their child and feels free enough to attempt to take another's girl's virginity.<sup>89</sup> Siring an illegitimate child was not held to be the basis to disqualify any young gentleman. Sally's mother, who is not a defined character within the novel, is also responsible for Sally's downfall. Because of her scheming and manipulation, her daughter weakly loses her virtue and is impregnated and forsaken by her lover.

Thomas Seward, father of Anna Seward, the Swan of Avon in his poem *The Female Right in Literature* (1748) castigates Mr. B. 'The coward insults of that tyrant, man' who 'looks on slav'ry as the female dow'r'. He criticises countries where women are enslaved in seraglios and kept from 'th'exertions of th'enlightened mind'. He urges rebellion if Mr. B. causes Pamela to be 'a kept Slave' and maintains 'she had the right to refuse to accept her domestic, her undeserving king.'<sup>90</sup> This novel was to a great extent about the conversion of Mr. B. from a potential rapist to a loving husband as it was about the protection of Pamela's chastity.<sup>91</sup>

Sally Godfrey is a warning of what Pamela's destiny could have been; she also symbolizes what many readers thought of Pamela, a hypocrite preserving her virtue to marry above her station. The duplicity is twice over as it becomes apparent that it was Sally's mother who was the manipulator and not Sally, who exemplifies what could have happened to Pamela and hence underscores the importance and consequence of Pamela's victorious virtue; Pamela succeeds where Sally and her mother fail. Feminine watchfulness, so important in conduct books, appears to be sanctioned within this novel.<sup>92</sup> This alliance with the conduct book is more obvious in the follow-up to *Pamela*.

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<sup>89</sup> See Harris, p. 14.

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in Harris, p. 19.

<sup>91</sup> See Jones, p. 189.

<sup>92</sup> See Gwilliam, pp. 36-37.

The popularity of *Pamela* led to the inevitable sequel, published in September 1741 and originally given the title of *Pamela's Conduct in High Life*.<sup>93</sup> Austin Dobson asserted that this novel was devoid of merit or contemplation and that Richardson had 'put forth two dull and platitudinous tomes with a maximum of instruction and a minimum of incident, which Mrs. Barbauld justly characterizes as 'less a continuation than the author's defence of himself.'<sup>94</sup> Because Richardson had presented Pamela as a real person, his only option to keep control of his character was to write the sequel himself. In August 1741, a month before the publication of *Part II*, Richardson wrote to his brother-in-law James Leake outlining the difficulties he was undergoing with his sequel:

It is no easy Task ... to write up this Work as it ought ... For her [Pamela's] Behaviour in Married Life, her Correspondencies with her new and more genteel Friends; her Conversations at Table and elsewhere; her pregnant Circumstance ... Her Notions of Education, her Friendships, her relatives Duties, her Family Oeconomy and 20 other subjects as material ought to be touched upon ... it will be consider'd only as a dry Collection of Morals and Sermonising Instruction that will be more beneficially to a Reader, found in other Authors; and must neither Entertain or Divert, as the former have done beyond my Expectations.<sup>95</sup>

It is apparent from the above cited quotation that Richardson was very conscious of the problems he anticipated within this publication.

*Part II* was the sequel that Richardson had not intended writing but his hand had been forced, as he explains in a letter to James Leake, having heard that the bookseller Chandler had commissioned a writer, John Kelly, to continue *Pamela*, he complained to one of Kelly's friends. Chandler visited Richardson, claiming that he had understood that Richardson would not continue it himself. Richardson responded that he had said so but only because he believed that no one would 'meddle' with it without his

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<sup>93</sup> See Dobson, p. 38.

<sup>94</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 39. Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825), poet, essayist, literary critic, editor and children's author.

<sup>95</sup> Quoted in Dobson, pp. 56-57.

consent. He declared that if someone attempted it that his ‘characters, in all probability, depreciated and degraded by those who knew nothing of the story, or of the delicacy required to continue it, he was resolved to complete it himself.’<sup>96</sup> Richardson then under duress agreed to write the sequel but complained about ‘the baseness of the procedure’ and the ‘Hardship it was, that a Writer could not be permitted to end his own Work, when and how he pleased, without such scandalous Attempts of Ingrafting upon his Plan.’<sup>97</sup> Although Richardson did produce the continuation, it was more difficult to claim ownership, as Messrs. Chandler and Kelly continually spread the rumour that he was not the real author of *Pamela*.<sup>98</sup> John Kelly wrote his counterfeit sequel, *Pamela’s Conduct in High Life* (1741), in which Pamela finds out that she is originally from an aristocratic background.<sup>99</sup>

In *Part II* the activity resumes although in an atmosphere of hindsight against the experience of the past. In the author’s original preface to *Part II*, Richardson explains more diplomatically his reasons for writing the sequel:

The First part of *Pamela* met with a success greatly exceeding the most sanguine expectation: and the Editor hopes, that the Letters which compose this Part will be found equally written to Nature, avoiding all romantic flight, improbable surprise, and irrational machinery; and the new passions are touched.<sup>100</sup>

He says Pamela has changed from *Part I*, where she was a ‘dutiful *child*.’, ‘spotless *virgin*’, ‘modest and amiable *bride*’ and develops in *Part II* into an ‘affectionate *wife*’, ‘faithful *friend*’, ‘polite and kind *neighbour*’, ‘indulgent *mother*’ and ‘beneficent *mistress*’.<sup>101</sup> Ruth Bloch argues that within *Part II*, by adapting the original Pamela into a proficient mother, Richardson articulated the importance of the maternal role. He

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<sup>96</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 55.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 56.

<sup>98</sup> See Dobson, p. 56.

<sup>99</sup> See Katherine Binhammer, *The Seduction Narrative in Britain, 1747-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 118.

<sup>100</sup> *Pamela Part II*, p. v.

<sup>101</sup> *Pamela Part II*, p.v.

incorporated elements of previous standards of motherhood with this representation of a knowledgeable good mother.<sup>102</sup>

A.M. Kearney asserts that although it would be incorrect to say that *Part II* is just an ethical thesis, it does lose the tempo of the first novel. Richardson seems to enjoy explaining things retrospectively and the text reads like a long lecture on behaviour. *Part II* appears to be an apology for *Part I*. He seems pleased about his second novel and defended the deficiency of energy by maintaining that it was in the ‘interests of instruction.’<sup>103</sup> Richardson sent copies of *Pamela* and *Part II* to Warburton the year after the publication of *Part II* in 1742, asking for his advice and modestly asking for Warburton’s amendments. With another edition in mind, he also refers to the praise of *Pamela* that he had received from Pope, whom Richardson called ‘the first Genius of the Age.’ Warburton sent back a polite letter stating that he and Pope had agreed that Pamela’s letters in her exalted life would have been an excellent subject, but stated ‘The follies and extravagancies of high life ... to one of Pamela’s station and good sense would have appeared as absurd and unaccountable as European polite vices and customs to an Indian.’<sup>104</sup> He suggested that at their next encounter he would elucidate his ideas more clearly, but it is unlikely that Richardson ever followed up on this.<sup>105</sup> In contrast, Richardson’s contemporary, Edward Young, in a letter to Richardson describes the ‘second Pamela’ as ‘a fortune herself.’<sup>106</sup> In a letter to Dr. Cheyne in 1742, Richardson admits:

I labour’d hard to rein in my Invention ... and indeed had so much Matter upon my Hands to give probable Instances of what a good Wife, a tender Mother, a faithful Friend, a Kind Mistress, and a worthy Neighbour shou’d do (including the first parts of Education, which might fall under the Mother’s Eye)

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<sup>102</sup> See Bloch, p.109.

<sup>103</sup> See Kearney, p.32.

<sup>104</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p.58.

<sup>105</sup> See Dobson, p.58.

<sup>106</sup> See Binhammer, p. 119.

that ... (I) had not Field for Excursions of Fancy & Imagination  
... For I always had it in View, I have the Vanity to repeat, to  
make the Story rather *useful* than *diverting*.<sup>107</sup>

Richardson's biographers, in 1971 T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel's remark regarding *Part II* that 'it is hard to think of another work by a reputable writer for which there is so little to be said for the second part of *Pamela*.'<sup>108</sup> According to Terry Castle in 1986, it was generally derided by literary historians as its design is deficient because nothing 'happens' in it; she is scathing when she remarks: 'the constant burbling praise Richardson devoted to his faultless heroine is repetitious and charmless, even vaguely squalid.' Castle maintains that the text is dissatisfying because occasionally it is offensive as it is mistreating our anticipated previous standards.<sup>109</sup>

The novel is so full of household information which includes family rows, domestic administration, births, weddings and so on that there is no excitement or titillation within the text. The exception is the peculiar anticlimax of Mr. B's assumed affair with the Countess where even the frisson of sexual attraction is lacking. The problem with this text is that although it contains the requisites of a novel such as plot, character and episodes, it works more like a conduct book in which motherhood becomes the focus that virginity had previously been.<sup>110</sup> From *Part I*, where Pamela is constantly battling to preserve her chastity, she is exalted by Lady Davers in *Part II*: 'Pamela, you are a charming creature, and an ornament to your sex.'<sup>111</sup> In *Part II*, Richardson examines conduct literature's handling of motherhood and criticizes its main sets of beliefs, particularly those regarding motherliness. The early conduct books all showed marked similarities; they defined standards for maternal behaviour.

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<sup>107</sup> Quoted in Kinkead-Weekes, p. 85.

<sup>108</sup> Quoted in Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization, The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth Century English Society* (California: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 131

<sup>109</sup> See Castle, p. 131.

<sup>110</sup> See Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood, British writing and culture 1680-1760* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1996), p. 155.

<sup>111</sup> *Pamela Part II*, p. 18.

‘Tenderness’ by the mother seems to have been a requisite, while also required from the mother was the care, education and breastfeeding of her children. Most significant and ground-breaking was their resolve that these obligations should be looked after by the mother herself. Eighteenth-century mothers are advised to be in constant attendance with their offspring; this was a first in the history of English conduct books which were specifically aimed at the financially advantaged who generally did not look after their children daily. Mothers were the most important carers and educators of their children.<sup>112</sup> In this poem written in 1759 the mother’s role as educator was sufficiently recognized to be put into sentimental verse by Thomas Marriott:

The Females, the first Rudiments of Speech,  
The brightest Orators, and Poets, teach;  
The wisest, greatest, of what-e’er Degree,  
Were first instructed, on a Mother’s Knee ...  
These first Impression, who can e’er forget?  
No filial Duty can repay the Debt.<sup>113</sup>

In *Mothering Daughters*, Susan Greenfield argues that authors were unable to portray idyllic motherhood within the eighteenth-century novel because of their maternal absence within the texts; either the mother is deceased, has abandoned her child or is present without her daughter’s awareness, hence novels commend the contemporary endorsements of maternal advice such as maternal nursing by disapproving illustrations of the negatives aspects of it rather than their achievements.<sup>114</sup>

As many conduct books at that time advocated breastfeeding, because it was their duty, if mothers did not breastfeed, it was insinuated that they were not just flawed but were unnatural. The anonymously written conduct book *The Young Lady’s Companion; or, Beauty’s Looking-Glass* (1740) gives contradictory advice. The reader is informed that ‘the Government of your House, Family, and Children ... is the

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<sup>112</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, pp. 156-158.

<sup>113</sup> Quoted in Bowers, *Politics*, p. 158.

<sup>114</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters: Novels and the Politics of Romance, Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2003), p.18.

Province allotted to your Sex, and ... discharging it well, will, for that Reason, be expected from you.’<sup>115</sup> The reader also discovers that ‘A Woman’s Tenderness to her Children is one of the least deceitful Evidences of her Virtue but yet the Way of expressing it, must be subject to the Rules of good Breeding.’<sup>116</sup> The author does not give unambiguous tutoring on how to be a good mother but warns about spending too much time with them: ‘You may love your Children without living in the Nursery, and you may have a competent and discreet Care of them without letting it break out upon the company.’ This advice may have been offered in order to prevent contemporary fears of ‘over-fond mothers’.<sup>117</sup>

Medical texts at that time promoted maternal breastfeeding; this would be in contrast to the advice in *The Young Lady’s Companion* as it would mean mothers spending more time with their children. Gaius Seius (1702), citing the erudite seventeenth-century Frenchman, Pierre de la Primaudaye, states: ‘Mothers ought to take great delight in nourishing their own Children, than in committing them to the Hand of Strangers, and hired Nurses.’<sup>118</sup>

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was considered normal for the upper classes and gentry to send their babies to wet nurses for a minimum of twelve months. By the 1740s, when *Pamela* and *Clarissa* were written, it was far more prevalent for these privileged classes to suckle their own babies. Within the conduct books these breastfeeding mothers were being described as good, selfless and natural.<sup>119</sup> Richardson obviously agreed with this, as Pamela gives a very strong argument in favour of breastfeeding when she writes to Miss Darnford:

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<sup>115</sup> Quoted in Rebecca S. Davies, ‘The Maternal Contradiction: Representing the Fiction Mother in Richardson’s *Pamela II* (1741)’, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (September, 2010), p. 382.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Davies, p. 382.

<sup>117</sup> Quoted in Davies, p. 382.

<sup>118</sup> Quoted in Davies, p. 383.

<sup>119</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, p. 160.



Could you ever have thought, my dear, that husbands have a dispensing power over their wives, which kings are not allowed over laws? I have had a smart debate with Mr. B., and I fear it will not be the only one upon this subject. Can you believe, that if a wife thinks a thing her duty to do, which her husband does not approve, he can dispense with her performing it, and no sin shall lie at her door? ... Did you ever hear of such a notion, before? Would you care to subscribe to it?<sup>120</sup>

Richardson reiterates this argument again in a later letter from Pamela to Miss Darnford:

One point, indeed, I have some apprehension *may* happen; and that, to be plain with you, is, we have had a debate or two on the subject (which I maintain) of a mother's duty to nurse her own child: and I am sorry to say it, he seem more determined that I wish he were, against it.<sup>121</sup>

Mr. B. does not want Pamela to breastfeed as he would be jealous of the time she would have to spend with the baby. If she is not nursing her baby her body would be at Mr. B.'s disposal; Richardson cannot permit Pamela physical independence as a mother while she is sexually needed by her husband.<sup>122</sup> Breastfeeding in public was considered immodest and was not to be taken flippantly in the eighteenth century. Elisabeth Badinter avers: 'If the mother nursed, she had to hide from the world and that in turn interrupted for a long time both her social life and her husband's.'<sup>123</sup> This male objection was certainly not limited to the wealthy; similarly, a famous middle class instance of a child being sent off to an unhealthy wet nurse was that of Samuel Johnson, whose father Michael had refused to allow his wife Sarah to breastfeed and persuaded her to send the sickly baby to a wet nurse. Unfortunately, Johnson was one of many who had been contaminated by a consumptive wet nurse; as a result he was scarred from scrofula, and was blind in one eye.<sup>124</sup> Although the mothers might want to feed

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<sup>120</sup> *Pamela 11*, pp. 202-203.

<sup>121</sup> *Pamela 11*, p. 214.

<sup>122</sup> See Davies, p. 391.

<sup>123</sup> See Elisabeth Badinter, 'Maternal Indifference', *French Feminist Thought, A Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Basil Blackwell: Oxford, 1987), p. 159.

<sup>124</sup> See Peter Martin, *Samuel Johnson: A Biography* (London: Phoenix, 2008), pp.18-19.

their children themselves the husbands still had the final authority.<sup>125</sup> Pamela acquiesces: 'For it is, that if the husband is set upon it, it is a wife's duty to obey.'<sup>126</sup> Pamela submits to her husband's wish to employ a wet-nurse, thus sacrificing her religious scruples for her social principles.<sup>127</sup> Like the conduct books at the time, Lady Davers is resolute that Pamela's main obligation as a wife is to bear children; she is reiterating contemporary conduct literature, which is adamant in insisting that motherhood is obligatory for all wives. In her letter to Pamela she states:

... no child, we will not permit you, may we have our will, to *think* of giving us a girl, till you have presented us with half a dozen boys. For our line is gone so low, we expect that human security from you in your first seven years, or we shall be disappointed.'<sup>128</sup>

All Pamela's virtues will mean nothing if she does not bear children.<sup>129</sup> Obedient as ever, she plays the dutiful wife and sets an example for others in the number of pregnancies she undergoes, producing seven offspring as requested. It is noteworthy that in *Part II*, Pamela initially becomes a mother by adopting Miss Goodwin, which is accomplished without sexual intercourse.<sup>130</sup>

The novel continuously remarks on the conduct books' requisite maternal 'tenderness' which Pamela feels for her new son; this is markedly different from Mr. B.'s bad-tempered manner towards him as he is jealous of the time his mother devotes to him. When writing to Lady Davers she remarks:

... after every little absence, rises upon me in a true maternal tenderness, every step I move toward the dear little blessing! Yet sometimes, I think your dear brother is not so fond of him as I wish him to be.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, pp. 161-163.

<sup>126</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 228.

<sup>127</sup> See Davies, p. 384.

<sup>128</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 236.

<sup>129</sup> See Toni Bowers, 'A Point of Conscience, Breastfeeding and Maternal Authority in *Pamela 2*', *Inventing Maternity*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), p. 141.

<sup>130</sup> See Castle, p. 151.

<sup>131</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 275.

When Billy becomes unwell with smallpox, Pamela blames herself for becoming what Allestree calls this too-loving mother:

My dear baby is taken with the small-pox ... I am sure! — But I had, notwithstanding too much pride and too much pleasure; on this happy occasion ... I fear the nurse's constitution is too hale and too rich for the dear baby! — Had *I* been permitted — But hush, all my repining *ifs!*; and this is, if it be got happily over, it will be best he had it so young, and while at the breast!<sup>132</sup>

Pamela is the first English novel protagonist to become so obsessed by motherhood that it becomes her full time occupation; she reads, writes and constantly worries about it. It also supplies her with an authentic excuse to avoid the social visit, an area in which she is uncomfortable because of her background. The one virtue that Pamela does not practice is that of breastfeeding. It proclaims that for Richardson the subordination of the wife to the husband's authority is more important.<sup>133</sup> Pamela is unable to perform her nursing function because patriarchy has power over her maternal body.<sup>134</sup>

With the exception of breastfeeding, Pamela is moving towards being the perfect mother; she takes on an educational role which is intellectual rather than physical where the ideal becomes the written mother. Pamela is being educated by and for her husband; Mr. B. controls her reading material although he has not enlightened her as to suitable reactions in her new station. Pamela has chosen to take on biblical precedents as her models of the idyllic, but Mr. B. criticizes her choice of praiseworthy scriptural maternal exemplars during their argument concerning breastfeeding:

If you tell me of Sarah's, or Rachel's, or Rebecca's, or Leah's, nursing their children, I can answer, that the one drew water at a well, for her father's flocks; another kneaded cakes, and baked them on the hearth; another dressed savoury meat for her husband; and all of them performed the common offices of the household; and when our modern Ladies are willing to follow such Examples in every thing, their plea ought to be allowed in this.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 333.

<sup>133</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, p. 69.

<sup>134</sup> See Davies, p. 390.

<sup>135</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 229.

It is the one area in which she disagrees with him and writes to her parents for advice. Inevitably they tell her to ‘acquiesce in this point with cheerfulness’<sup>136</sup> Mr. B. with his rant is also reminding Pamela that she is now in an exalted state.

Mr. B. takes Pamela to London where she attends a number of dramatic performances; in her letter to Lady Davers she complains about *The Distressed Mother*, a Philip Ambrose translation of Racine’s *Andromaque* (1675). The preface of the play describes the leading character Andromaque as ‘a tender Mother, an affectionate Wife, and a Widow full of Veneration for the Memory of her husband.’<sup>137</sup> Pamela remarks that a great many beautiful things are in it; but half of it is a ‘tempestuous, cruel, ungoverned rant of passion, and ends in cruelty, bloodshed, and desolation, which the truth of the story not warranting it ...’<sup>138</sup> Pamela’s main objection is to the epilogue spoken after the play and also to the bawd-type character of Mrs. Oldfield. Pamela argues that by presenting Andromaque as a mother who uses her sexuality that it ‘could be calculated only to efface all the tender, all the virtuous sentiments, which the tragedy was designed to raise.’<sup>139</sup> In essence, the epilogue demolished the notion of idyllic sentimental maternity. The insinuation is that by belittling Andromache as a conniving harlot, Pamela’s own maternal virtue might be interpreted as fake and corrupt.<sup>140</sup> Pamela is repulsed by the representation of motherhood in the theatre, and is therefore insisting that representing motherhood in any shape or form, carries with it grave moral responsibilities.

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<sup>136</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 232.

<sup>137</sup> Ambrose Phillips, ‘*The Distrest Mother, A Tragedy*. As it is acted at the theatre-royal in drury lane by her majesty’s servants’ (London, 1712). *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University Of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 04/09/2009.

<sup>138</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 252.

<sup>139</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 252.

<sup>140</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, p.183.

Richardson enters into eighteenth-century debate taking place regarding the care of children. In *Part II*, Mr. B. asks Pamela to write her sentiments on Locke's *Treatise on Education*:

I admire Mr. Locke, replied he: 'and I admire my Pamela. I have no doubt of his excellencies, but I want to know the sentiments of a young mother, as well as of a learned gentleman, upon the subject of education; because I have heard several ladies censure some part of his regimen, when I am convinced, that the fault lies in their own over-great fondness for their children.'<sup>141</sup>

Pamela advises him that she 'may be three or four years in completing it, because I shall reserve some subjects to my further experience in children's ways and tempers.'<sup>142</sup> She agrees with some aspects of Locke's treatise and disagrees with others. She agrees with *Sleep* being an important part of the child's health 'because it keeps the nurse unemployed, who otherwise may be doing it the greatest mischief, by cramming and stuffing its little bowels, till ready to burst.'<sup>143</sup> She also agrees with him regarding the prohibiting of *too warm* and *too strait clothing*, 'This is just as I wish it. How often has my heart ached, when I have seen poor babies rolled and swathed, ten or a dozen times round then blanket upon blanket, mantle upon that; its little neck pinned down to one posture ...'<sup>144</sup> This foreshadows Rousseau's later condemnation of swaddling as being cruel and unnatural. Pamela compares female education with the swaddling of babies:

The education of our sex will not permit that, where it is best. We are forced to struggle for knowledge, like the poor feeble infant in the month, who is pinned and fettered down upon the nurse's lap; and who, if its little arms happen, by chance, to escape its nurse's observation, and offer but to expand themselves, are immediately taken into custody, and pinioned down to their passive behaviour. So, when a poor girl, in spite of her narrow education, breaks out into notice, her genius is immediately tamed by trifling employments, lest, perhaps, she should become the envy of one sex, and the equal of the other.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 372.

<sup>142</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 373.

<sup>143</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 374.

<sup>144</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 375.

<sup>145</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 386.

Where Pamela would learn Latin from religious education, she questions mothers' ability to educate their children in various sciences, Pamela wants the education of girls to be the same as that of boys:

But what I would now touch upon, is a word or two still more particularly upon the education of my own sex; a topic which naturally arises to me from the subject of my last letter. For there, dear Sir, we saw, that the mother might teach the child *this* part of science, and *that* part of instruction; and who, I pray, as our sex is generally educated, shall teach the *mothers*? How, in a word, shall *they* come by their knowledge?<sup>146</sup>

Proposals about children, childhood and early edification were included in writings of other philosophers and intellectuals besides Locke; these anticipated Rousseau in the eighteenth century. There were contrasting views about children, the belief that children were innocent and natural opposed the previous religious notion of them being contaminated and born in a state of transgression. Locke illustrates his ideal of a child being born into the world as a 'tabula rasa' or blank slate to be educated to goodness and civilization; his views to a great extent helped kindle more parental affection and tenderness, and also to moderate corporal violence at school.<sup>147</sup> Locke explained: 'We have reason to conclude, that great Care is to be had of forming Children's *Minds*, and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their Lives always after.'<sup>148</sup> Rousseau's ideal natural child was to communicate happiness and high spirits.<sup>149</sup>

Pamela agrees that the child should be beaten but disagrees with Locke's advice that children should be corporally punished when the parent is calm. She believes that the child should be chastised while the parent is angry: 'how shall one be able to whip the dear creature one has ceased to be angry with? ... [whipping] 'should

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<sup>146</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 413.

<sup>147</sup> See Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p.34.

<sup>148</sup> Quoted in Simonton, p. 34.

<sup>149</sup> Dorothy Johnson, *Fashioning Childhood in the Eighteenth Century*, Anja Müller, ed. (Hants. England: Ashgate, 2006), pp.101-102.

always appear to be inflicted with reluctance, and through motives of love.’<sup>150</sup> Lloyd de Mause asserts that Susanna Wesley, considered to be the Mother of the Methodism Movement, wife of Samuel and mother of twelve, said of her babies:

When turned a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly, by which means they escaped the abundance of correction they might otherwise have had, and that most odious noise of the crying children was rarely heard in the house.’<sup>151</sup>

De Mause also includes a mother’s description of her disciplining her four month old infant: ‘I whipped him til he was actually black and blue, and until I *could not* whip him any more and he never gave up one single inch.’<sup>152</sup> The Wesley parents were very strict with their offspring: ‘In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to conquer is their will and bring them to an obedient temper.’<sup>153</sup> Wesley endorsed her children’s endeavours and goodwill thus persuading them to make an effort to succeed. It was a control quite similar to that suggested by Locke; it was authoritarian but also encouraging and constant.<sup>154</sup>

Richard Brantley had studied Wesley’s ideas regarding Locke’s philosophy. He construed that Wesley’s theology was based on Locke’s emphasis on experience as the foundation of knowledge. Locke’s influence concerning knowledge was the basis of the Wesleyan movement with its belief that true knowledge came from intellectual sensitivity as well as rationality.<sup>155</sup> Brantley explores the influence of Lockean ideas and

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<sup>150</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 401.

<sup>151</sup> Quoted in Lloyd de Mause, ‘The Evolution of Childhood’, *The History of Childhood*, (New York: Jason Aronson, 1995), p. 41.

<sup>152</sup> Quoted in de Mause, p. 41. Original italics.

<sup>153</sup> Quoted in de Mause, p. 41.

<sup>154</sup> See Stone, p. 294.

<sup>155</sup> Herbert Schlossberg, ‘The Cultural Influence of Methodism’, [www.victorianweb.org](http://www.victorianweb.org), accessed 08/02/2012.

contends that Wesley had adapted the language of empiricism to express religious concepts.<sup>156</sup>

Pamela receives a heart-breaking letter from Sally Godfrey Wrightson who relinquishes her claims on her first-born. She is fulsome in her praise of Pamela but the distress in her letter is tangible:

Imagine, I say, that in this letter, you see before you the once *guilty*, and therefore, I doubt, *always* guilty, but *ever penitent*, Sarah Godfrey; the unhappy, though fond and tender mother of the poor infant, to whom your generous goodness has, I hear, your worthy protection: God for ever bless you for it! prays an indulgent mother, who admires at an awful distance, that virtue in you, which she would not practise herself.<sup>157</sup>

Neither Pamela nor Lady Davers, who both read the letter, appear to discern the sadness in it. Pamela is very complimentary in her reply to Mrs. Wrightson but she does admit that Sally Goodwin was already in her charge for about a week and that if she had not received her permission for custody that:

I believe we should one and all have joined to disobey you, had *that* been the case; and it is a great satisfaction to us, that we are not under so hard a necessity, as to dispute with a tender mamma, the possession of her own child.<sup>158</sup>

This episode appears to challenge the text's attempt to show her consummate motherly goodness.

Pamela relates a number of nursery stories to the younger children and a longer woman's story especially for Miss Goodwin, who is the only child old enough to comprehend its moral allegory. In her letter to Lady G., Pamela describes how she entertains them with moral lessons:

Let me acquaint you, then, that my method is to give characters of persons I have known in one part or other of my life, in feigned names, whose conduct may serve for imitation or

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<sup>156</sup> Elizabeth Brocking, Review of *Locke, Wesley, and the Method of English Romanticism* by Richard E. Brantley, *South Central Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), pp. 83-86: 83, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3189417>, accessed 29/6/2012.

<sup>157</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 355.

<sup>158</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 358.



warning to me dear attentive Miss; and sometimes I give instances of good boys and naughty boys, for the sake of my Bill and my Davers.<sup>159</sup>

Pamela forms a text where she is the ideal mother; she portrays the mother as the pivotal character in each family and makes insubordination to her person a fear-provoking concept. The tears from Pamela's offspring are not for the children within the story but for their mother. Pamela's parable educates her children that their mother's word is the rule and her power over them deified.

In a similar vein to the nursery stories, Pamela tells the 'woman's story' with a lesson to Sally Goodwin. The story is a succession of tales about young ladies named Coquetilla, Prudiana, Profusiana and Prudentia. The first three contain off-putting illustrations of flirtatiousness, prudery and lavishness and the final one is moral and intelligent. Pamela uses these ladies as a device to tell stories about their mothers. This story was tailor-made for Sally so she can imitate Prudentia's morality and her capacity to consider an aunt interchangeable with a mother:

Far otherwise than what I have related, was it with the amiable Prudentia. Like the industrious bee, she makes up her honey-hoard from every flower, bitter as well as sweet; for every character is of use to her, by which she can improve her own. She had the happiness of an aunt, who loved her, as I do you; and of an uncle who doated on her, as yours does: for, alas! Poor Prudentia lost her papa and mamma almost in infancy, in one week: but was so happy in her uncle and aunt's care, as not to miss them in her education, and but just to remember their persons. By reading, by observation, and by attention, she daily added new advantages to those which her education gave her ... Then folding my dear Miss in my arms, and kissing her, tears of pleasure standing in her pretty eyes, 'Who would not,' said I, 'shun the examples of the Coquetilla's, the Prudiana's, and the Profusiana's of this world, and choose to imitate the character of PRUDENTIA! the happy, and the happy-making Prudentia.'<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 461.

<sup>160</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 471.

Sally notices that the ‘excellent Wife, Mother, Mistress, Friend and Christian’ is the ideal depiction of Pamela.<sup>161</sup> O Madam! Madam! said the dear creature, smothering me with her rapturous kisses, Prudentia is YOU! Is YOU indeed! It *can* be nobody else ! O teach me, good God! To follow *your* example, and I shall be a Second Prudentia Indeed I shall.<sup>162</sup> The perfect raconteur and substitute mother has, by the goodness of her maternal superiority, turned out to be the focus of her own story. All of Pamela’s nursery stories seem to turn into glorification of her maternal excellence.<sup>163</sup> This scene foreshadows that of Sarah Fielding’s *The Governess or, The Little Female Academy* (1749) where the governess, Mrs. Teachum, who was ‘so prudent a mother’ teaches her young ladies good behaviour by example: ‘Mrs. Teachum’s school was always mentioned throughout the county as an example of peace and harmony and also by the daily improvement of all her girls.’<sup>164</sup>

Richardson’s novels are still being discussed many years later with the character Euphrasia in *The Progress of Romance* (1785) by Clara Reeve stating:

Mr. Richardson published his works, at a considerable distance of time from each other. — Pamela was the first, it met with a very warm reception, as it well deserved to do. — I remember my mother and aunts being shut up in the parlour reading Pamela, and I took it very hard that I was excluded. — I have since seen it put into the hands of children, so much are their understandings riper than mine, or so much are our mother of Education improved since that time.<sup>165</sup>

Also, in one of Samuel Coleridge’s short and somewhat characteristic responses to Richardson’s novels, in *Anima Poetae* he states in 1803:

I confess that it has cost, and still costs, my philosophy some exertion not to be vexed that I must admire, aye, greatly admire,

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<sup>161</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 471.

<sup>162</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 471. Original italics.

<sup>163</sup> See Bowers, *Politics*, pp. 185, 191, 193.

<sup>164</sup> Sarah Fielding, *The Governess, or, The Little Female Academy*, ([1749] Dodo Press), pp.1, 137.

<sup>165</sup> Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance* ([1785] New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930), p. 133.

Richardson. His mind is so very vile, a mind so oozy, so hypocritical, praise-mad, canting, envious, concupiscent.<sup>166</sup>

Within his novels Richardson amalgamates a large amount of varying features, many off-putting characteristics as well as overwhelming volume. This combination of enthrallment and repugnance that is Coleridge's response to the novels is fairly widespread.<sup>167</sup>

In the late twentieth century, Ruth H. Bloch writes that *Pamela II* was one the first works that proclaimed the new, romanticized idea of motherhood.<sup>168</sup> She maintains that: 'By transforming the virginal chambermaid Pamela into the wise matron Mrs. B., Richardson merged parts of the older ideals of domestic competence and ornamental purity with the new image of the moral mother.'<sup>169</sup> In his conclusion to *Pamela II*, Richardson writes:

She made him the father of seven fine children, five sons, and two daughters, all adorned and accomplished by nature, to be the joy and delight of such parents; being educated, in every respect, by the rules of their inimitable mother, laid down in that book which she mentions to have written, by her for the revisal and correction of her consort; the contents of which may be gathered from her remarks upon Mr. Locke's Treatise on Education, in her letter to Mr. B., and in those to Lady G.<sup>170</sup>

Pamela is a paragon from the beginning of *Pamela* where she is moral and continues to be a shining example as a devoted wife and mother in *Pamela, Part II*. She is exalted because of her virtue and her mind and marries above her class; Richardson takes advantage of eighteenth-century interest in motherhood and further glorifies her as an exemplary mother.

Eighteenth-century critics accused Richardson of prurience and of being obsessed with sex in *Pamela* but for a modern day reader his writing would seem

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<sup>166</sup> Quoted in Bradbrook, p.285.

<sup>167</sup> See Bradbrook, p. 285.

<sup>168</sup> See Bloch, p. 108.

<sup>169</sup> Quoted in Bloch, p. 109.

<sup>170</sup> *Pamela II*, p. 471.

relatively tame. As my focus is on bad mothers, *Pamela II* was more relevant for my examination of the texts. Motherhood was on the periphery of *Pamela* as the main story involves Pamela's trial where her virtue is threatened and her defiance is compensated for by marriage. Moreover, it was not until the introduction of Mr. B's daughter Sally Goodwin that the concentration on motherhood is apparent. Although *Pamela II* was not as popular as *Part I*, my evaluation of it suggests that it reads more like a conduct book for mothers. Within *Pamela II*, Pamela tries to assert herself but as a wife has to abide by the will of her husband and so loses the feistiness of her original character. There is little narrative to be told until Pamela becomes pregnant. She is now under Mr. B's male authority and governance and the supremacy of Pamela of *Pamela I* is overturned and she must now submit to her husband's will. The composition of the novel suggests that Pamela has come to view her husband's domination as acceptable. Pamela's role as a mother advances increasingly in importance as her mentorship of her children determines her power. She is constantly under instruction from Mr. B and her role as an edifying tutor emanates from his command and authority. Pamela acquiesces on most occasions with the odd exception when she has a rant about breastfeeding and venerates herself with her allegories while teaching in the nursery. In the latter part of the novel Pamela becomes the ultimate symbol of motherhood, yet her authority is contingent on her procuring her place as an exemplary wife. In *Pamela II* marital duty supersedes maternal duty, although sometimes marital and maternal obligations seem to collide, particularly in the work of Richardson, and with very interesting results.

### 3.2

### *CLARISSA*

In contrast to *Pamela*, the failings of a mother are examined in this section. In *Clarissa*, Richardson darkens the mood as he epitomizes what can happen to a young woman whose mother relinquishes her maternal responsibility and conspires against her. *Clarissa* has four chief epistolary writers — Clarissa Harlowe, her best friend, Anna Howe, Robert Lovelace and his friend John Belford and also a number of other minor letter or note writers. The text is multi-voiced, which allows it to exploit its numerous perspectives: Richardson imposed order on this multiplicity with a calculated chronological order. The novel begins in January; Clarissa is drugged and raped by Lovelace on Midsummer Night and dies in December. Terry Castle describes it as ‘a *cacophony* of voices, a multiplicity of exegetes struggling to articulate different ‘constructions’ of the world.’<sup>171</sup> William Beatty Warner suggests that the text is a combat zone which he states is ‘a vast plain where Clarissa and Lovelace ... and the two ways of interpreting the world they embody, collide, and contend.’<sup>172</sup> *Clarissa* portrays the complete and most theatrical investigation of this new literary experience. The letters replace reported episodes and it is the writing that is the energetic accomplishment within the novel.<sup>173</sup> Because of his use of multiple writers, the epistolary technique was better modified for the staging of individual relationships than in his first novel *Pamela*. Within this novel, the letter form transmits the entire weight of the tale which is what Richardson calls a ‘dramatic narrative’ rather than a

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<sup>171</sup> Quoted in Tom Keymer, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 47.

<sup>172</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 47.

<sup>173</sup> See Keymer, p. 48

‘history’.<sup>174</sup> This commitment to the epistolary form highlights the trend towards letter writing which was one of the most important aspects of literary history within the eighteenth century.<sup>175</sup> As the literary public used the letter to communicate their daily news, worries, affection and thoughts with family and friends, this explosion of letter writing provided Richardson with an instrument for his literature.<sup>176</sup>

The rawness of *Pamela* has mainly abated in *Clarissa*; hence the novel is much more notable. Richardson’s move from *Pamela* to *Clarissa* displays an unpredictably triumphant change from romantic happy ending to tragic finale. Richardson within both novels creates two couples, Pamela and Mr. B. and Clarissa and Lovelace, well-known paradigms of the scrupulous virgin and the libertine within English literature with similar scenarios being developed by many subsequent writers. Richardson, who disliked Restoration comedy, reproduces in the character of Lovelace a relic from another age, that of the Court of Charles II.<sup>177</sup> After the reign of Charles II and post Glorious Revolution, the reputation of the rake became tawdry. William Hogarth in 1735 began a series of eight paintings entitled *A Rake’s Progress* where the young heir advances into depravity and concludes with him in a madhouse.

Clarissa is a very dissimilar heroine to her predecessor, Pamela. Richardson unambiguously states on the title page that the novel is designed to show ‘The Distresses that may attend the Misconduct Both of Parents and Children in relation to Marriage.’ Clarissa’s primary recklessness was that she allowed herself to be duped and drawn to a man of Lovelace’s debauched charm. Clarissa’s good traits are meant to be

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<sup>174</sup> Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (London: Pimlico, 2000), p. 209.

<sup>175</sup> The huge improvements in the postal service contributed to this. Founded in London in 1680, the penny post became increasingly more efficient by the 1720’s and was unsurpassed throughout Europe.

<sup>176</sup> Watt, p. 189.

<sup>177</sup> Fergus Linnane, *The Lives of English Rakes* (London: Portrait, 2006), pp. 19-20. The Restoration libertine was a high-spirited, sharp witted and sexually active aristocrat during the English Restoration. (1660-1688). Well-known members of his group, nicknamed ‘The Merry Gang’ by poet Andrew Marvell, were the Earl of Rochester, George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Dorset.

emulated while her faults are presented as a warning to others.<sup>178</sup> In his introduction to *Clarissa*, Angus Ross writes:

To read *Clarissa* is not only to meet an indispensable document in the history of English (and indeed European) fiction in the eighteenth century, but also to become engaged with one of the greatest European novels, the haunting life of which has been acknowledged by many and diverse successors of Richardson himself and which in surprising places in the text still has the force to startle, and the spirit to enmesh, its modern audience.<sup>179</sup>

Concerned about the length of *Clarissa*, Richardson invited Edward Young, satirist, poet and writer of blank verse *Night Thoughts*, to suggest potential reduction which Young prudently declined. Aaron Hill proposed many ideas for curtailment of *Clarissa* at the turn of 1746 but his suggestions were not well received by Richardson who later stated he wished that he ‘had never consulted any body but Dr. Young.’<sup>180</sup> This proclivity by Richardson of writing enormous tomes is apparent in the well-known comment by his contemporary Samuel Johnson, as documented by James Boswell: ‘Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as giving occasion to the sentiment.’<sup>181</sup> Johnson is referring not just to the length of Richardson’s novels but also to the slowness of plot development. What is distinguishing about Richardson’s novels is the genuineness of its novels presentation of emotion. Rousseau and Voltaire’s ideological and temperamental differences were reflected in their opposed reactions to the novel. Rousseau liked *Clarissa* very much but Voltaire was derogatory about it, one of Voltaire’s more

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<sup>178</sup> See Gerard A. Barker, ‘The Complacent Paragon: Exemplary Characterization in Richardson’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Summer, 1969), pp.503-519:507 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/450029>, accessed 20/11/2010.

<sup>179</sup> See Angus Ross, *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* by Samuel Richardson (London: Penguin, 1985), p.15.

<sup>180</sup> See Tom Keymer, p.64.

<sup>181</sup> Quoted in Ross, p.15.

infamous remonstrations was that 'it is cruel for a man like me to read nine volumes in which you find nothing at all.'<sup>182</sup>

In *Clarissa*, Richardson was replicating a difficult situation pertinent to his time when women were beginning to gain more freedom. Clarissa understands that it was in her parents' power to prevent a marriage to which they objected but she disputes their endeavours to intimidate her without her compliance. Clarissa's circumstances are comparable to that of real life Dorothy Osborne, who wrote more than seventy-seven letters to her would-be husband between 1652-1654, with Dorothy emerging as more submissive than the fictional Clarissa a century later.<sup>183</sup> Landed families at that time had to contend with conflicting demands. Daughters had an obligation to obey their father, who were entitled to demand deference. Conversely, a daughter should be permitted to decide her own fate and not have her father torment her.<sup>184</sup> Patrick Delany writes in 1744:

The Duty of children to Parents, hath justly obtained the first place; because all our other duties to mankind begin and are founded here. It is from a right deference to the authority and institutions of parents, that we learn all the offices of a social and rational creature, in our whole commerce with mankind.<sup>185</sup>

Although *Clarissa* is a work of fiction, the truth of contemporary circumstances can be confirmed by women such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who had eloped so that she

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<sup>182</sup>Quoted in Melinda Alliker Rabb, 'Overplotting, and Cor-respondence in *Clarissa*', *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. II, No. 3, (Autumn, 1981), pp. 61-71: 61, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3194380>, accessed: 19/08/2008. Francis Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review* (1804) writes: 'With Richardson, we slip, invisible, into the domestic privacy of his characters ... In this art Richardson is undoubtedly without an equal, and, if we except De Foe, without a competitor, we believe, in the whole history of literature.' Quoted in Watt, p. 175.

<sup>183</sup> See Frank Bradbrook, 'Samuel Richardson', *From Dryden to Richardson, A Guide to English Literature*, Vol 4, Boris Ford, ed. (London: Cassell, 1962), p.295. Sir William Temple (1628-1699) was born in London. At the age of sixteen he entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He left without taking a degree, travelled abroad and in France (1648), where he met Dorothy Osborne, her father, and her brother. A courtship began but the Osbornes as ardent royalists opposed the match. The letters Osborne to Temple form one of the most famous restoration correspondences, the two later married in 1654. George Sherburne and Donald F. Bond, *Literary History of England The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century*, Albert C. Baugh, ed. (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 808, n.4.

<sup>184</sup> See Angus Ross, p.19.

<sup>185</sup> Patrick Delaney, *Fifteen Sermons upon Social Duties* (1744), quoted in Tom Keymer, p.99.



did not have to marry the man chosen for her by her father. Wortley Montagu said that the novel make her weep ‘in a most scandalous manner’ and ‘touch’d me as being very ressembling [*sic*] to my Maiden Days.’<sup>186</sup> Mrs. Mary Delany, who had married her first husband under parental pressure, also empathised with the heroine:

I never had so great a Mixture of Pain and Pleasure in the Reading of any Book in my Life. I was almost broken-hearted at some Passages, and raised above this World in others ... it is impossible to think it a Fiction.<sup>187</sup>

Having read the novel, Catherine Talbot wrote to Elizabeth Carter: ‘One can scarce persuade oneself that they are not real characters, and living people,’ declaring its appearing as ostensibly true to life.<sup>188</sup>

*The Fair Penitent* by Nicholas Rowe was an adaptation of a previous tragedy *The Fatal Dowry*, by Philip Massinger and Nathan Field. First published in 1632, Rowe’s version premiered on stage in 1702. Richardson took the character of the male lead, Lothario, and modelled Lovelace on him. It is a play in which the female lead, Calista, is seduced by her husband’s friend, Lothario. Johnson in his *Life of Rowe* compares the two:

it was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation, to make virtuous resentment overpower all the benevolence which wit, elegance, and courage naturally excite; and to lose at last the hero in the villain.<sup>189</sup>

Richardson, in a letter from Belford to Lovelace where Belford alludes to ‘Belton’s admired author, Nick Rowe’ and refers to *The Fair Penitent*, arguing that Calista’s character is made up of deceit and disguise whereas Clarissa is ‘virtuous, noble, wise, pious, unhappily ensnared by the vows and oaths of a vile rake.’<sup>190</sup> Among her other

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<sup>186</sup> Quoted in Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations, The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.66.

<sup>187</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 66.

<sup>188</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 66.

<sup>189</sup> Quoted in Frank Bradbrook, p. 295.

<sup>190</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady*, Angus Ross, ed. ([1747-8] London: Penguin, 1985), pp. 1025-1026.

qualities, Clarissa had possessed 'delicacy' which in the eighteenth century was considered one of the finest attributes in a female. Lovelace remarks to her: 'I admire your delicacy, madam ... although I suffer by it ...'<sup>191</sup> William Alexander in 1779 describes this trait:

Of all the virtues which adorn the female character, and enable the sex to steal imperceptibly into the heart, none are more conspicuous than that unaffected simplicity and shyness of manners which we distinguish by the name of delicacy ... delicacy is the sentinel that is placed over female virtue, and that sentinel once overcome, chastity is more than half conquered ... delicacy is a virtue planted by the hand of nature in the female mind.<sup>192</sup>

Following the publication of *Clarissa*, Richardson explains his motives:

Women to be generally thought a trifling Part of the Creation – May those who think so, never be blest with the Possession, or Conversation, of a good, a virtuous, a sensible Woman! – You must see that the Tendency of all I have written is to exalt the Sex.<sup>193</sup>

In his correspondence Richardson consistently asserts that women are ultimately subject to their husbands and fathers, yet within his story this issue is never resolved. Clarissa is right to disobey her father by refusing to marry the 'odious Solmes', yet the blame she accepts herself is represented as appropriate by the author. Parents would reasonably make the decisions for their children when they were young, the sons could be permitted to make their choices as adults but for girls the husband would take over the role of decision-maker after marriage. In Richard Allestree's *The Whole Duty of Man*, the popular seventeenth and eighteenth-century devotional manual describes the wife's position: The wife 'owes obedience ... In all things which do not cross some command of God's, this precept is of force, and will serve to condemn the peevish stubbornness of

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<sup>191</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 458.

<sup>192</sup> Quoted in Robert A. Erickson, *Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), p. 107.

<sup>193</sup> Richardson writing to Lady Bradshaigh, 15 Dec. 1748, quoted in Erickson, p. 105.

many lives.’<sup>194</sup> In *Christian Directions*, reissued in 1733 and again in 1742, Thomas Gouge writes:

The main duty of the wife’s part is subjection ... The subjection of the wife to the husband implieth two things. 1. That she acknowledge a superiority in her husband. 2. That she put in practice such duties as do issue and flow from the acknowledgement of that superiority. The former is not only a duty, but the ground of all other duties whatsoever.<sup>195</sup>

The children did not have any independence, as Richard Allestree writes:

of all the acts of disobedience, that of marrying against the consent of the parent, is one of the highest. Children are so much the goods, the possessions of their parent, that they cannot without a kind of theft, give away themselves without the allowance of those that have the right in them.<sup>196</sup>

Richardson would most likely have read many of these manuals and many like him would have agreed with them; his correspondence is replete with declarations of the obligations of young women to abide by their parents’ decisions regarding marriage and also of a wife’s submission to her spouse. Writing to Lady Bradshaigh he states: ‘I am sorry to say it, but I have too often observed, that fear, as well as love, is necessary, on the lady’s part, to make wedlock happy; and it will generally do it, if the man sets out with asserting his power and her dependence.’<sup>197</sup> Richardson’s viewpoint, perhaps the prevalent position in the eighteenth century, was that it was equally wrong for parents to enforce an unwanted marriage on children. Parents in the eighteenth century were generally regarded as having the right to oppose a marriage but not impose one. Gouge is in agreement with Richardson’s view when he asserts that a child who disobeys

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<sup>194</sup> Quoted in Cynthia Griffin Wolff, *Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character* (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1972), p. 75.

<sup>195</sup> Quoted in Wolff, p. 76. Thomas Gouge, *Christian Directions* (London, 1742). Gouge (1609-1689), was a Presbyterian Pastor associated with Puritanism. See Wolff, p. 26.

<sup>196</sup> Quoted Wolff, p. 76.

<sup>197</sup> Quoted in Wolff, p. 76. Richard Allestree (1619-1681), Royalist churchman and Provost of Eton College, author of *The Whole Duty of Man* (London: 1676). See Wolff, p. 243. n. 3.

parents regarding marriage cannot anticipate approval: ‘yea they have rather cause to fear the curse of God upon them, and their posterity.’<sup>198</sup>

The economic historian, Professor H.J. Habakkuk, wrote in 1950 that the early eighteenth century saw ‘an increasing subordination of marriage to the increase of landed wealth, at the expense of other motives for marriage. Political power was becoming more dependent on the possession of landed wealth’ than was the case in the past when land had been granted by royal command.<sup>199</sup> This accumulative marriage was what Richardson was articulating in *Clarissa*. Some years after it was published Philip Yorke, First Earl of Hardwicke, was responsible for the new *Hardwicke Marriage Act* in 1753 that made it compulsory for all marriages to be solemnised in the Church of England Parish Church and registered by the parson.<sup>200</sup> Martin Madan (1726-1790), barrister, clergyman and writer known for his controversial views on marriage, condemned the Marriage Act and advocated polygamy as the solution to social evils.<sup>201</sup> ‘Engrossing’ was the eighteenth-century term for the very important amassing of property in which women’s succession rights were inevitably becoming inconsequential.<sup>202</sup> Naomi Tadmor has noted that daughters were not as valuable as wives because wives can enlarge the wealth of the family by enhancing the size of the property whereas daughters reduce the size if they are fortunate enough to have inherited a share. Habakkuk asserts that ‘the marriage settlement of the second Lord

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<sup>198</sup> Wolff, p. 79.

<sup>199</sup> Quoted in Christopher Hill, ‘Clarissa Harlowe and Her Times’, *Samuel Richardson, A Collection of Critical Essays*, John Carroll, ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 102; H.J. Habakkuk, ‘Marriage Settlements in the 18<sup>th</sup> century’, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 1950).

<sup>200</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin, 1979), p. 32.

<sup>201</sup> Oscar Sherwin, ‘Madan’s Cure-All’, *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (July, 1963), pp. 427-443: 427-428, <http://jstor.org/stable/3485010>, accessed 14/08/2009.

<sup>202</sup> Quoted in Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations, The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 49.

Gower did not contain powers to provide for younger children or make a jointure in the case of a second marriage, a not uncommon omission in the first half of the century.<sup>203</sup>

The Harlowe family wealth had been previously enhanced by prudent marriage, the Harlowe family wanted aggrandizement and the planning within the family was done with that in mind where the outcome would eventually be a peerage for James Harlowe Junior. At the outset, Clarissa is an eighteenth-century country girl who is imaginative, clever, talented and beguiling. She has mixed feelings of fear and compassion about her dour father, she is wise to and tolerant of her ineffective uncles and does not seem to have any respect for her brother. Most of the people she is closest to are female — her dearest friend Anna Howe, good Mrs. Norton, her beloved nurse and her surrogate mother, Hannah, her maid, and of course her mamma; She has a trusting relationship with her women friends and is suspicious of men and of marriage.<sup>204</sup> Clarissa's sister Arabella mistakenly believes that she is being wooed by Lovelace, she remarks how a 'gentleman in courtship should show a reverence to his mistress;' Clarissa's disparagement of marriage is clear when she states: 'So indeed we all do, I believe: and with reason, since, if I may judge from what I have seen in many families, there is little enough of it shown afterwards.'<sup>205</sup> Since Clarissa is already very prosperous, becoming a wife and achieving more wealth are immaterial to her.<sup>206</sup>

Richardson's novels are frequently regarded as concepts of the new discernment of the 'domestic woman as sentimental icon'.<sup>207</sup> The Harlowe men view Clarissa as a commercial entity to be used in exchange for wealth and land thus ensuring enhancement. Clarissa is the object of envy and of private and monetary

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<sup>203</sup> See Perry, pp. 49, 50.

<sup>204</sup> See Erickson, p. 105.

<sup>205</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 43.

<sup>206</sup> See Melinda Alliker Rabb, p. 61.

<sup>207</sup> Quoted in Laura Fasick, *Vessels of Meaning, Women's Bodies, Gender Norms, and Class Bias from Richardson to Lawrence* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1997), p. 20.

resentment and eventually of energetic harassment and cruelty.<sup>208</sup> Although her father, James Harlowe, was married to a member of the aristocracy as Mrs. Harlowe's father was a viscount, the family with their ambitions of enlargement are greedy and uncouth. The focus on affluence by the men undermined mothers and maternal relations. Women were causes of the enlargement of wealth but were not the recipients.<sup>209</sup> This attitude towards the position of daughters is blatant when Clarissa's brother James states 'that daughters were but encumbrances and drawbacks upon a family ... That a man who has sons brings up chickens for his own table ... whereas daughters are chickens brought up for the tables of other men.'<sup>210</sup> Clarissa's grandfather explains in his will his reasons for his decisions. There were two uncles, neither of whom intended to marry whose wealth had been augmented. One 'reaps from his new-found mines' while the other profits from his 'East India traffic and successful voyages,' thus representing the passage of the new prosperity and the old. Clarissa at one stage remarks: 'never was there a family more united in its different branches than ours. Our uncles consider us as their own children, and declare that it is for our sakes they live single.'<sup>211</sup> Clarissa's paternal uncles appear to have more influence within the family than her mother's half-sister Mrs. Hervey.<sup>212</sup>

Both Clarissa and Arabella would have been provided with a settlement and as the first-born and only son, James could accumulate the land and wealth of his grandfather's, father's and uncles' estates and also a vast estate from his godmother; he is laying out a map for himself for his future acquisitions of property. James considers his male relatives as custodians of his fortune and deems his sisters a liability; he

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<sup>208</sup> See Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 309.

<sup>209</sup> See Perry, pp. 72-73.

<sup>210</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 77.

<sup>211</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 56.

<sup>212</sup> Perry, p. 65.

believes the estates would be lessened if he had to give his sisters a dowry by raising a mortgage on the land. Clarissa describes how he repeatedly states ‘That his grandfather and uncles were his stewards; that no man ever had better.’<sup>213</sup> This all changes when the grandfather’s will is read leaving his Dairy House to Clarissa:

because my dearest and beloved grand-daughter Clarissa Harlowe has been from infancy a matchless young creature in her duty to me ... These, I say, are the reasons which move me to dispose of the above-described estate in the precious child’s favour, who is the delight of my old age; and I verily think has contributed, by her amiable duty, and kind regards, to prolong my life’.<sup>214</sup>

Clarissa’s inheritance was in contravention of the usual conventions of inheritance, particularly with eighteenth-century primogeniture where the eldest son inherits the estate leaving the other siblings with settlements.<sup>215</sup> Richardson justifies Clarissa’s grandfather’s non-compliance with convention in his footnote:

Her grandfather, in order to ‘invite her to him as often as her other friends would spare her, indulged her in erecting and fitting-up a dairy-house in her own taste. When finished, it was so much admired for its elegant simplicity and convenience that the whole seat, before of old time from its situation called *The Grove*, was generally known by the name of *The Dairy-house*. Her grandfather, particularly, was fond of having it so called.’<sup>216</sup>

What is implied but not actually stated is that the grandfather, in choosing to give preference to Clarissa, does not have affection for James and does not trust him. Because of the descriptions that Clarissa provides about how James disrespects his father, mother and uncles, it can be assumed that neither did he treat his grandfather with much reverence. The Harlowes are furious; within the bourgeois family this was a huge disappointment, the son and heir would have a reduced amount of land, which was a convenient way of hiding evidence of trade. Bloodlines were vital in France whereas

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<sup>213</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 77.

<sup>214</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 53.

<sup>215</sup> See Tom Keymer, p. 49

<sup>216</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 41.

land was vital in England as land ennobled the middle classes. When the parents take to their respective beds with illness, Clarissa is sympathetic and nurses her mother who ‘would have no other nurse but me’ and also her father, who ‘is not naturally an ill-tempered man; and in his person and air and in his conversation too, when not under the torture of a gouty paroxysm, everybody distinguishes the gentleman born and educated.’<sup>217</sup> James and Arabella are together so much that she believes they are plotting against her; she complains about her brother:

But my brother! What excuse can be made for his haughty and morose temper? He is really, my dear, I am sorry to have occasion to say it, an ill-tempered young man, and treats my mamma sometimes — indeed he is not dutiful.<sup>218</sup>

Mark Kinkead-Weekes asserts in 1973 that Clarissa’s history would be clearer if the reader knew about her life earlier in regard to her parents’ marriage, as Mr. Harlowe is practically an invisible character and the brother and sister are in control; also it would be interesting to know the dynamics between the siblings prior to Solmes’s proposal.

Lovelace’s uncle, Lord M., is willing to negotiate marriage with the bourgeois Harlowe family, as his family want him to marry and have children. Lovelace is first introduced to Clarissa’s less appealing sister Arabella, assuming he is going to be presented to the beautiful and immensely wealthy Clarissa he has heard much about. Lovelace extricates himself from any arrangement with Arabella by cunningly using her own bad temper and contrary personality to have her discontinue any relationship. He contrives to meet with Clarissa at Anna Howe’s which the family goaded by James Junior take exception to. Furious at the thought of Clarissa entering into an aristocratic marriage with Lovelace and increasing his wealth by bringing her inheritance with her, he persuades his father to marry Clarissa off to Roger Solmes, an unattractive parsimonious bachelor on the proviso that if there are no children from the relationship

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<sup>217</sup> *Clarissa*, pp, 54-55.

<sup>218</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 55.



that the Harlowe estate will be enlarged with the Solmes land. Anthony Kearney maintains that in a sense Clarissa's brother is to blame for the rape.<sup>219</sup> Solmes in *Clarissa* (1747-8) and Mr. Foxchance in Anne Dawe's *The Younger Sister* (1770) are instances of unsophisticated and unsuitable suitors promoted by their rapacious families.<sup>220</sup>

Inflamed by retribution to this bourgeois family who demeaned him, Lovelace decides to make Clarissa his conquest by convincing her to live with him as his mistress where he will have no legal commitments. Richardson in *Clarissa's* tale unsympathetically displays all the distasteful qualities of eighteenth century whiggism, the avariciousness of the rising middle class; this includes resentment and disdain for those both above and below them. When Clarissa writes her letter to Anna Howe she calls him: 'This is Mr Solmes; *rich* Solmes, you know they call him. But this has not met with the attention of one single soul.'<sup>221</sup> It seems that despite his wealth Mr. Solmes cannot attract anyone to marry him. Having received a number of letters from Clarissa, Anna Howe is aghast:

What odd heads some people have! – Miss Clarissa Harlowe to be sacrificed in marriage to Mr. Roger Solmes! Astonishing! *I must not*, you say, *give my advice in favour of this man!* – You now half convince me, my dear, that you are allied to the family that could think of so preposterous a match, or you could never have had the least notion of my advising in his favour.<sup>222</sup>

Richardson's didactic tone is apparent in Anna Howe's rant against greed:

I think that you might have known, that AVARICE and ENVY are two passions that are not to be satisfied, the one by *giving*, the other by the envied person's continuing to *deserve* and *excel* – Fuel, fuel both, all the world over, to flames insatiate and devouring.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> See Kearney, p. 10.

<sup>220</sup> See Perry, p. 53, n. 41.

<sup>221</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 56.

<sup>222</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 67.

<sup>223</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 67. Original capitals.

Richardson uses Anna Howe to articulate his criticism of the changes in bourgeois society and their coveting of acquisitions. She writes to Clarissa:

You are all too rich to be happy, child. For must not each of you by the constitutions of your family marry to be *still* richer? People who know in what their *main* excellence consists are not to be blamed (are they?) for cultivating and improving what they think most valuable? Is true happiness any part of your family-view? — So far from it, that none of your family but yourself could be happy were they not rich. So let them fret on, grumble and grudge, and accumulate; and wondering what ails them that they have not happiness when they have riches, think the cause is want of more; and so go on heaping up till Death, as greedy an accumulator as themselves, gathers them into his garner!<sup>224</sup>

Anna Howe is a responsive analyser of Clarissa's letters; her reactions allow Richardson to include in the novel unrelenting and unambiguous questions within the text.<sup>225</sup> Richardson was writing about Clarissa as an exemplary paragon and many readers disputed a specific authoritative comprehension of the text. Sarah Fielding in her *Remarks on Clarissa* (1749) gives an alternative view:

The Objections now arose so fast, it was impossible to guess where they would end. *Clarissa* herself was a Prude — a Coquet — all the Contradictions mentioned some Time ago in a printed Paper, with the Addition of many more, were laid to her Charge. She was an undutiful daughter — too strict in her Principles of Obedience to such Parents — too fond of a Rake and a Libertine — her Heart was as impenetrable [sic] and unsusceptible of Affection, as the hardest Marble.<sup>226</sup>

Within a wide 1740s readership, there were conflicting voices with the dictatorial reader endorsing the Harlowe perspective and the philanderers on Lovelace's side. Sarah Fielding perceived the censure of Clarissa as 'the Reproaches cast on her in her lifetime:'

She has been called perverse and obstinate by many of her Readers; *James Harlowe* called her so before them. Some say

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<sup>224</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 68.

<sup>225</sup> See Keymer, p.44

<sup>226</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 57. Sarah Fielding, *Remarks on Clarissa, addressed to the author. Occasioned by some critical Conversation on the Character and Conduct of that work.* (London: J. Robinson in Ludgate Street, M.DCC.XLIX [1749]. 57 pp. p.13. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 09/09/2011.

she was romantic; so said *Bella*; disobedient; all the *Harlowes* agree in that; a Prude; so said *Sally Martin*; had a Mind incapable of Love; Mr. *Lovelace's* Accusation ... I verily think I have not heard *Clarissa* condemned for any one Fault, but the Author has made some of the Harlowes, or some of Mrs. *Sinclair's* Family accuse her of it before.<sup>227</sup>

Clarissa's physical feelings towards Solmes is very apparent in her description of him, he is so disgusting that it permits her express herself forthrightly:

... there was the odious Solmes sitting asquat between my mamma and sister, with *so much* assurance in his looks! — But you know ... He took the removed chair and drew it so near mine, squatting in it with his ugly weight, that he pressed upon my hoop — I was so offended ... that I removed to another chair ... It gave my brother and sister too much advantage.<sup>228</sup>

As heir to the estate, both James's sisters would be a responsibility for him, the bequest of their grandfather's would reduce the size of her brother's inheritance and as Clarissa wrote to Anna, would have 'lopped off one branch of my brother's expectation.'<sup>229</sup> The dairy-house was only part of the large estate that Clarissa had inherited from her grandfather, and would have given her an independence she would not otherwise have enjoyed. While she is still in her father's house she writes to Anna Howe: 'I am now afraid of being thought to have a wish to enjoy independence to which [my grandfather's] will has entitled me.'<sup>230</sup> Clarissa reminds Anna that the Harlowes forget: 'are not all our estates stewardships, my dear.'<sup>231</sup> Richardson is suggesting that mortality qualifies every definition of property.

The business of producing milk was traditionally one of the most significant economically viable businesses that employed women and were managed by them; hardworking and resourceful women could have a good income selling the various dairy products. At the time *Clarissa* was written, dairying was still a feasible income for

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<sup>227</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 57. Sarah Fielding, *Remarks on Clarissa*, p. 41.

<sup>228</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 87.

<sup>229</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 77.

<sup>230</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 56.

<sup>231</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 104.

women, but the rise of capitalism and enlargement of the industry meant that dairying was ceasing to be a dependable income. Clarissa's poultry-yard, another female occupation, is significant for Clarissa as this was a safe place for her to hide her letters to Anna Howe; these enterprises of dairying and poultry keeping are aligned with milk and eggs, both of which have female connotations of nurturing and fertility.<sup>232</sup> Milk is also the main factor in facilitating the rape by which Lovelace expects to ignite Clarissa's sexual desire for him. Mrs. Sinclair gave Clarissa tea which was laced with a sleep inducing drug. As Clarissa remarks to Anna Howe: 'I thought, transiently, that the tea, the last dish particularly, had an odd taste. They, on my palating it, observed that the milk was *London milk*; far short in goodness of what they were accustomed to from their own dairies.'<sup>233</sup> Sarah Scott was a Bluestocking who wrote *A Description of Millenium Hall* in 1762, she was from a wealthy family and was well educated; her father, like many in his time took more of an interest in his sons than his daughters.<sup>234</sup> Millenium Hall was a sanctuary for women whether married or single who were abused in some way, they were all victims of patriarchy. One example is Miss Melvyn, an only child, 'whose education was her mother's great care; and she had the pleasure of seeing in her an uncommon capacity, with every virtue the fondest parent could wish.'<sup>235</sup> Following the death of her mother, her father remarried and her stepmother treated her badly. This group of women lived together harmoniously and safely, they worked and produced together in the gardens and the dairy. With the money saved by being frugal, these women strive to educate orphaned gentlewomen, provide school for needy

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<sup>232</sup> See Perry, pp. 69-70. Hannah Barker in 'Women and Work' states: 'A new scientific discourse that stressed female irrationality and subservience to traditional practices led to claims that farmers' wives, who had traditionally managed dairy work, were unable to introduce proper scientific methods and, as a result, could not produce consistent or reliable products.' *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850, An Introduction*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 130.

<sup>233</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1009.

<sup>234</sup> Sarah Scott, *Millenium Hall*, Gary Kelly, ed. ([1762] Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2004).

<sup>235</sup> Scott, p. 84.

children and support their larger community by supplying medical help for the ill and assist in increasing employment in the area.<sup>236</sup> Although this was not a convent, it was similar to what Richardson had suggested when Sir Charles Grandison wanted to establish a Protestant Nunnery, a concept that had it been available would have been a refuge for Clarissa. Sarah Scott, like many women of the age, was a reader and admirer of Richardson, she may have written her novel in order to provide her own context for a happy ending for women not unlike Clarissa.

The more the family advocate for Clarissa to marry Solmes the more she is attracted into Lovelace's trap. Having been jilted and left heartbroken by a woman, Lovelace sets out to take his revenge on all women. He has already duped and devastated Miss Betterton, daughter of a wealthy mercantile family that 'aimed at a new line of gentry' and he intends to have a finer victory for his class against the Harlowe family, and he derides them as a house 'sprung up from a dunghill, within every elderly person's remembrance.'<sup>237</sup> He is a libertine and controls a number of his libertine friends, the closest being Belford. In the eighteenth century a libertine or rake is a nonconformist, more interested in contravening societal standards in favour of his own pleasure. He is a representation of male desire that defies and rejects respectable norms of self-denial and is usually known for deflowering virgins. Lovelace is a bright and clever cad and although we are intended to consider his behaviour and treatment of women despicable, Richardson appears to put the culpability on contemporary society for his failings. If marriages at that time were just a 'property marriage' and not love, the outcome of this materialist attitude is that society of that period educates women to ensnare wealthy men as husbands. Richardson locates Lovelace steadfastly within his

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<sup>236</sup> Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 355.

<sup>237</sup> Ian Watt, 'Richardson as Novelist: *Clarissa*', *Samuel Richardson Modern Critical Views*, Harold Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), p. 8.

social environment by having him enunciate some unusual far-reaching social and political views. Lovelace's intentions are most obvious and honest when he shares his thoughts with Belford in his quest for Clarissa:

Then what a triumph would it be to the *Harlowe Pride*, were I now to marry this lady? — A family beneath my own! — no one in it worthy of an alliance with, but her! — my own estate not contemptible! — living within the bounds of it, to avoid dependence upon *their* betters, and obliged to no man living! — my expectations still so much *more* considerable — my person, my talents — not to be despised, surely — yet rejected by them with scorn — obliged to carry on an underhand address to their daughter when two of the most considerable families in the kingdom have made overtures, which I have declined, part for her sake, partly because I will never marry if she be not the person.<sup>238</sup>

The Harlowes aspire to 'raise the family' through an enforced marriage with the revolting *nouveau riche* Solmes. Until Clarissa is mistreated by Lovelace, the family were open to a union within either family. Unlike Solmes who is denigrated all of the time, Lovelace has good traits, he is a protector of his tenants, does not have a yearning for avariciousness, and is suitably disdainful of the Harlowe family.<sup>239</sup> Richardson intentionally has to make Lovelace likeable as someone with no positive qualities is actually incapable of exercising the most evil policies, otherwise why would Clarissa be so taken in by him?

In the seventeen-twenties, Richardson had a friendship with Philip, Duke of Wharton, one of the most outrageous rakes of the age. Richardson would have been aware of a number of historic seventeenth and eighteenth-century philanderers when writing *Clarissa* and probably would have used a conflation of many. Christopher Hill suggests that Wharton may have been Richardson's former benefactor that he used an as archetype for both Mr. B. and Lovelace.<sup>240</sup> Lady Mary Wortley Montagu also tells us

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<sup>238</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 426.

<sup>239</sup> See Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 418.

<sup>240</sup> See Hill, pp. 109-110.

that Wharton was one of Richardson's probable paradigms. The first version of the Hellfire Club was founded in 1719 by the Duke of Wharton and George Lee, The Earl of Lichfield. They met initially at the 'Greyhound Tavern' in London and changed to another tavern called the 'George and Vulture'. Not only were they for drinking, carousing and entertaining loose women, they also had the extra ingredient of Black Masses and Satanic rites.<sup>241</sup> Wharton's uncontrolled sex life, his breach of Protestant respectability and his squandering of wealth made him iconic both by contemporary and later libertines, and in literature. Sir Frances Dashwood, a rake, politician and Chancellor of the Exchequer, later followed Wharton's example by setting up a Hellfire Club in the 1740s; contemporary poet Paul Whitehead dedicated poems to him. It was assumed at that time that Edward Young used Wharton as the model for the infidel Lorenzo in *Night Thoughts*.<sup>242</sup> Richardson's use of the name 'Robert' may align him with Robert Walpole, who was widely mocked by authors such as Henry Fielding as the most corrupt version of the so called 'great man' and the first holder of the office of Prime Minister from 1720-1742.<sup>243</sup> Lovelace as a rake is quite an abstemious character; he does not drink or gamble and considering that a libertine's mantra is to have a multitude of sexual partners, he does not seem to follow the code, as he spends most of his time writing letters and contriving to have his way with Clarissa — power is Lovelace's vice. Lovelace is a schemer to Clarissa's resistance; she is naïve, inexperienced and hopeless at withstanding his intrigues.<sup>244</sup> Wharton became a Jacobite exile, notably, Lovelace becomes an exile also, referred to as 'Chevalier' — a term used to describe Charles James Stuart — 'The Young Pretender'.

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<sup>241</sup> For details of the Hellfire Clubs, see [www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/users/08/ajb/tmve.Hellfire\\_Club](http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/users/08/ajb/tmve.Hellfire_Club), accessed 15/03/2009.

<sup>242</sup> Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 215

<sup>243</sup> Doody, 'Samuel Richardson: Fiction and Knowledge', p.107.

<sup>244</sup> Melinda Alliker Rabb, p. 64

Lovelace blames his over-indulgent mother for his way of life and wickedness.<sup>245</sup> He writes to Belford with regret: ‘Why, why, did my mother bring me up to bear no control? Why was I so educated as to my very tutors it was a request that I should not know what contradiction or disappointment was? — Ought she not to have known what cruelty there was in her kindness?’<sup>246</sup> He also uses a similar excuse and tricks the Hampstead landlord into allowing him seek out Clarissa by falsely declaring that she is “Mother-spoilt, landlord! — Mother-spoilt that’s the thing! — But, sighing, I must make the best of it.”<sup>247</sup> When Mrs. Harlowe tries to put in a good word for her daughter, Clarissa’s father scolds his wife when he spitefully asserts: ‘What encouragement for duty is this? — Have I not loved her as well as ever you did, and *why* am I changed? Would to the Lord, your sex knew how to distinguish! But the fond Mother ever made a hardened child!’<sup>248</sup> He accuses Mrs. Harlowe of being liable for the indulgence that gives confidence to a child that contests a father’s resolve.<sup>249</sup> Given the character of the people who assert the dangers of ‘fond’ mothers, Richardson is undoubtedly declaring that fond mothers are not really the problem.

Lovelace writes to Belford defending himself and ranting about women who warn their uncorrupted young ladies against the dishonesty and trickery of men:

Do not the mothers, the aunts, the grandmothers, the governesses of the pretty innocents, always, from their very cradles to riper years, preach to them the deceitfulness of man? — That they are not to regard their oaths, vows, promises? — What a parcel of fibbers would all these reverend matrons be, if there were not now and then a pretty credulous rogue taken in for a justification of their preachments, and to serve as a beacon lighted up for the benefit of the rest? Do we not then see, that an honest prowling fellow is a necessary evil on many accounts?

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<sup>245</sup> See Bowers, p. 159.

<sup>246</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1431.

<sup>247</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 765.

<sup>248</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 191.

<sup>249</sup> See Michèle Cohen, ‘Mothers of sons, mothers of daughters: The Ambiguous Figure of the Mother in Eighteenth-Century Educational Discourse’, *History, Politics and Policy-Making in Education: a Festschrift for Richard Aldrich*, David Crook and Gary McCulloch, eds. (London: Institute of Education Press, 2007), p.14.



... At worst, I am entirely within my worthy friend Mandeville's rule, *that private vices are public benefits*.<sup>250</sup>

Charlotte Lennox in *The Female Quixote* (1752) includes towards the end of the text a section praising *Clarissa*:

An admirable [Richardson] Writer of our own Time, has found the Way to convey the most solid Instructions, the noblest Sentiments, and the most exalted Piety, in the pleasing Dress of a [*Clarissa*] Novel, and, to use the Words of the greatest [Johnson] Genius in the present Age, "Has taught the Passions to move at the Command of Virtue."<sup>251</sup>

Lennox discusses *Clarissa* as more authoritative than the contemporary heroic romances that Arabella tries to emulate. The doctor prescribes *Clarissa* as a remedy for Arabella's unfortunate grasp of her previous reading material which leaves her unable to judge people and make rational decisions.<sup>252</sup> Keymer states that Johnson praises Lennox for recommending *Clarissa* to the reader as the sort 'of protected literary experience through which to learn.'<sup>253</sup> The grave reverend who preaches Arabella into sanity is so Johnsonian that some editors such as Margaret Dalziel and Keymer have suspected the authorship of these chapters to Johnson himself.<sup>254</sup>

Following the publication of *Clarissa*, Henry Fielding, having read the rape scene of the heroine, wrote to Richardson and is unexpectedly emotional in his mixture of praise and flattery.<sup>255</sup> He admired *Clarissa* and states 'Shall I tell you? Can I tell you what I think of the latter part of your Volume? ... I am shocked; my Terrors are raised, and I have the utmost Apprehensions for the poor betrayed Creature.'<sup>256</sup> *Clarissa* obviously had a persuasive influence on Fielding and his former use of the comic

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<sup>250</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 847. Original italics.

<sup>251</sup> Charlotte Lennox, *The Female Quixote or The Adventures of Arabella*, Margaret Dalziel, ed. ([1752] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 377.

<sup>252</sup> See Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 116-117.

<sup>253</sup> See Keymer, p. 77.

<sup>254</sup> See Margaret Dalziel, *The Female Quixote*, pp. 414-415.

<sup>255</sup> See Claude Rawson, 'Henry Fielding', *The Cambridge Guide to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 202), p. 146.

<sup>256</sup> Quoted in Rawson, p. 146.

storyline was not appropriate for *Amelia* (1751), his last novel.<sup>257</sup> *Amelia* is about marriage and motherhood, the tale of a tense and traumatic marriage. The flaw in the marriage is the husband's vanity, naivete and lack of ability to judge people and situations. Amelia's character is based on Fielding's first wife of ten years, Charlotte Cradock, who died in his arms. Fielding's focus in *Amelia* is on the couple's finer points of domestic life and the evils in society, using Richardson's new social realism, evidenced by his use of a single female name such as *Pamela* or *Clarissa*. Johnson regarded Amelia as a 'more perfect' heroine than Richardson's Clarissa with the condemnation of Clarissa because 'there is always something which she prefers to truth.'<sup>258</sup> Captain Booth is genuinely in love with his wife and despite his many defects Amelia is loyal to the end. Amelia is patience personified; she continually stands by her husband, who gambles and squanders their money and is also adulterous; he is guilty of the abuse of his children by neglect. While her loyalty is admirable, Amelia's maternal instinct is seriously inadequate. She constantly talks about her love for her children yet she assists Captain Booth in paying his gambling debts which are debts of honour while their children are left to go hungry. A twenty-first century moral consensus would be that the ultimate duty of a mother is to protect her children and in this case the only way for Amelia to look after them was to discard her husband.<sup>259</sup> Amelia puts her marital obligations before her maternal duty so she, like her husband, might be regarded as negligent and could be considered an unfit mother. Because motherhood was increasingly being seen as more emotional and caring, a wife's sexuality was deemed as conflicting with her responsibility as a mother. Within *Amelia*, Mrs. James states that

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<sup>257</sup> See Rawson, p. 146.

<sup>258</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 53.

<sup>259</sup> See Henry Fielding, *Amelia*, 2 vols. David Blewett, ed. ([1751] London: Penguin, 1987), pp. x, xi.

childlessness is ‘the only circumstance which makes matrimony comfortable.’<sup>260</sup> Amelia, like Clarissa was also the victim of greed because of a will; her estranged sister had her mother’s will forged so that she could benefit. Only later in the novel is Amelia alerted to this by the solicitor and the matter is resolved. Whereas it is widely assumed that eighteenth-century heroines were depicted as exemplary wives and mothers, insufficient critical attention has been paid to the tension between these two roles.

Clarissa’s suggestion that submissiveness of wife to husband may have emanated from individual egotism along with God’s law rather than the innate weakness of women ‘the men were the framers of the Matrimonial Office, and made obedience a part of the woman’s vow.’<sup>261</sup> Anna Howe calls this ‘that little piddling part of the marriage-vow which some Prerogative-monger foisted into the office, to make That a *duty*, which he knew was not a *right*.’<sup>262</sup> Richardson constantly warns about the dangers of marrying a reformed rake; his stated moral purpose for *Clarissa* was ‘to caution parents against the undue exertion of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage: and children against preferring a man of pleasure to a man of probity, upon that dangerous but too commonly received notion, that a *reformed rake makes the best husband*.’<sup>263</sup> This phrase appears more than once in the novel and clearly serves as a warning to the reader that this novel is unlikely to end the same way as *Pamela*. In contrast, at the end of *Amelia* Fielding has Captain Booth have a conversion with the assistance of Dr. Harrison and by reading Dr Barrow’s sermons he is suggesting that it may be possible to make a good husband out of a reformed rake.

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<sup>260</sup> Henry Fielding, *Amelia*, 2 vols. ([1751] London: Dent, 1930), vol. II, p. 143, quoted in Perry, *Novels Relations*, p. 227.

<sup>261</sup> Quoted in Katharine M. Rogers, ‘Sensitive Feminism vs. Conventional Sympathy: Richardson and Fielding on Women’, *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Spring, 1976), pp. 256-270:257, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1345466>, accessed 21/08/2008.

<sup>262</sup> Quoted in Rogers, p. 257.

<sup>263</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 36.

Richardson incorporates numerous motherly characters within the text which include biological, surrogate and tyrannical mothers. Charlotte Harlowe is an ideal mother according to principles outlined in conduct books during the eighteenth century. She has a loving and tender relationship with her children; she instructs them by 'example', which is the ideal guide according to conduct books.<sup>264</sup> She practises 'a sweet art ... of conquering by seeming to yield.'<sup>265</sup> Clarissa describes her as 'a gentle and sensible mind, which has from the beginning, on all occasions, sacrificed its own inward satisfaction to outward peace.'<sup>266</sup> Clarissa describes herself as a 'second daughter whom everybody complimented (such was their partial favour to me) as being the still more immediate likeness of herself.'<sup>267</sup> All Mrs. Harlowe's desirable qualities turn out to be detrimental to Clarissa.<sup>268</sup> As a mother she offers no consistent strategy of power, initially she is tender and then changes her approach.

Considering that Mrs. Harlowe had excellent compassion and determination, the complete submissiveness of Clarissa's mother is depicted as a limitation rather than an advantage and is exposed as being self-defeating. Instead of gently cajoling her husband with mild persuasions, she fails to have any authority whatsoever; her acquiescence is morally dubious for in her passivity towards her husband she neglects her responsibility towards her daughter.<sup>269</sup> Within Sarah Fielding's '*Remarks on Clarissa*', all the characters unanimously blame Mrs. Harlowe for her lack of support for her daughter. Mr. Dobson states:

By her Meekness, and Submission to her Husband, and her hitherto maternal Care of her Family; and yet, when she joins with violent overbearing Spirits, to oppress and persecute such a Daughter as Clarissa.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1162.

<sup>265</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1162.

<sup>266</sup> *Clarissa*, p.1162.

<sup>267</sup> *Clarissa*, p.1162.

<sup>268</sup> See Bowers, pp. 196-197.

<sup>269</sup> See Rogers, p. 265.

<sup>270</sup> Sarah Fielding, p. 9.

Although Mrs. Harlowe may follow the guidelines of conduct literature, her motherhood, however, demonstrates defectiveness and malice as she misuses the authority she has assumed as mother. The accountability for much of the heroine's misfortunes rests on her mother; it was she who 'connived at' the early communications with Lovelace, thus allowing him into Clarissa's life. Mrs. Harlowe, who by her own abdication of responsibility finds her own puppet status revealed by Clarissa's requests, makes indirect warnings about downgrading her daughter to the status that she has so submissively agreed to herself: 'I am loath to interrupt *you*, Clary, though you could more than once break in upon me — You are young and unbroken — But with all this ostentation of your duty, I desire you to show a little more deference to me when I am speaking.'<sup>271</sup> Mrs. Harlowe's terminology of 'unbroken' is the language normally used for a young horse whose will has to be conquered and taught to obey.

Even though Mrs. Harlowe colluded with Clarissa with the early letter writing to Lovelace, she does not take any responsibility and berates Clarissa:

that just when the time arrived which should crown all their wishes, she should stand in the way of her own happiness, and her parents comfort, and ... give suspicions to her anxious friends, that would become the property of a vile rake and libertine, who ... had actually embued his hands in her brother's blood.<sup>272</sup>

She also defends herself in another letter to Clarissa: 'Say not all the blame and all the punishment is yours. I am as much blamed and as much punished as you are; yet am more innocent.' She demands: 'I charge you, let not this letter be found. Burn it. There is too much of the *mother* in it, to a daughter so unaccountably obstinate.'<sup>273</sup> Mrs. Harlowe is constantly playing the irreproachable victim. She is deficient in the natural unconditional love the twenty-first century assumes is experienced by a mother, and her

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<sup>271</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 95.

<sup>272</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 109.

<sup>273</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 125.

maternal love contracts in proportion to what she perceives as her daughter's non-compliance.

Charlotte Harlowe's treachery and supposedly partial stance is apparent in the betrayal that facilitates her maternal power; as a previously loving mother she is now an arbitrary parent and does not provide a coherent role. Later in the novel, in a naïve retrospective recall, Clarissa describes to Anna Howe the epitome of righteous motherly influence:

Here was my MOTHER, one of the most prudent persons of her Sex, married into a family, not perhaps so happily tempered as herself; but every one of which she had the address, for a great while, absolutely to govern as she pleased by her directing wisdom, at the same time that they know not but her prescriptions were the dictates of their own hearts ... Think, my dear, what must be the pride and the pleasure of such a mother.<sup>274</sup>

When Colonel Morden is informed that it is a friend who is doing the bedside vigil with Clarissa 'who is as careful of her as if she were her mother' he is derisory when he states: 'and more careful too ... or she is not careful at all!'<sup>275</sup> Clarissa pleads for her mother's help when her family try to make her marry Solmes but her mother rebuffs her by complying with the family's plans. Believing she will be forced to marry, Clarissa recklessly agrees to escape with Lovelace. Following her death her family claim that it was a ploy and they would never have enforced their threat. However, because Clarissa was unaware of this, she became trapped between her aggressive family and her aggressor. Clarissa's father's curse has a profound and devastating impact on her; she asks for her mother's last blessing when she is dying as it is most important for her.

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<sup>274</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1162. Original capitals.

<sup>275</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1350.

Although her mother is deeply compassionate, she is compelled to refuse Clarissa out of loyalty to her husband and son.<sup>276</sup>

Clarissa loves her former wet nurse and surrogate mother, Mrs. Norton, and her maternal tenderness for Clarissa is the most therapeutic relationship; Clarissa refers to her as ‘my dear Mamma Norton’ and Norton constantly talks of her motherly tenderness towards Clarissa.<sup>277</sup> Sarah Fielding refers to Clarissa as having ‘principles imbibed from her Infancy from the good and pious *Mrs. Norton*, and which were afterwards strengthened by her conversation with Doctor *Lewin*, renders it very natural for her to be early and steadily religious.’<sup>278</sup> When Mrs. Norton, begs Clarissa’s mother to intercede on her daughter’s behalf, Mrs. Harlowe asks to be pitied. In her letter to Anna Howe, Mrs. Norton writes ‘there can be at present no success expected from any application in her favour. Her poor mother is to be pitied ...’<sup>279</sup> Anna Howe replies in anger:

*You pity her mother! – so don’t I! – I pity nobody that puts it out of their power to show maternal love and humanity, in order to patch up for themselves a precarious and sorry quiet, which every blast of wind shall disturb!*<sup>280</sup>

Mrs. Harlowe was very devious in the scene Clarissa describes of her conversation with her mother who sneakily pretends to confuse her daughter’s silence with acquiescence:

I see, my dear, said she, that you are convinced. Now, my good child, now, my Clary, do I love you! It shall not be known that you have argued with me at all ... All your scruples you see, have met with an indulgence truly maternal from me ... I advise as a friend, you see, rather than command as a mother – so adieu, my love.<sup>281</sup>

Clarissa is horrified at her mother’s behaviour: ‘Oh, my dear mamma, said I, forgive! –

But surely you cannot believe I can ever think of having that man!’ This revealed the

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<sup>276</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters, Novels and the Politics of Family Romance: Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2003), p.173, n. 30.

<sup>277</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1200.

<sup>278</sup> Sarah Fielding, p. 33.

<sup>279</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 582.

<sup>280</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 583. Original italics.

<sup>281</sup> *Clarissa*, pp. 96-97.

true nature of her mother's supposed sensitivity, Clarissa asks Anna Howe: 'Did not this seem to border upon cruelty, my dear, in so indulgent a Mother?'<sup>282</sup> Clarissa's mother's love is conditional; it is doubtful that she even knew what a mother's love really is. Where she is not actually involved with Clarissa's repression she is guilty by her passivity. According to Belford Mrs. Harlowe, 'lived about two years and an half after the much-lamented death of her excellent daughter.'<sup>283</sup> Mrs. Norton is kinder and more loving to Clarissa than Mrs. Harlowe; her biological mother is less of a mother than her nursing mother, whose nurturing presence proves that milk is thicker than blood.

Anna Howe's mother is well-read on financial matters and the subject of inheritance and is the sole parent to her daughter. Anna as a feisty young woman challenges her mother and her parenting is fairly ineffectual. She defies her mother by continuing her correspondence with Clarissa and she complains that Mrs. Howe 'is grown so much into *mother*, that she has forgotten she ever was a *daughter*.'<sup>284</sup> Clarissa in reply tells Anna that she should respect her mother. Mrs. Howe's adeptness at finance is counter balanced by her powerlessness to control her daughter; she attempts to be tyrannical but is not proficient at it as Anna is more than a match for her. Cheryl Nixon maintains that Richardson's ambiguous treatment of Mrs. Howe, allowing her financial but not emotional control, indicates the mid-eighteenth century disquiet regarding maternal legal protectors.<sup>285</sup> She is proposed to by Antony Harlowe, who makes her denunciation of Anna a condition of her acceptance.<sup>286</sup> She rejects his offer by saying that 'one would not chuse, you know, Sir, to enter into any affair, that, one knows, one must renounce a Daughter for, or she a Mother — Except indeed one's heart were *much*

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<sup>282</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 97.

<sup>283</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1489.

<sup>284</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 245.

<sup>285</sup> See Perry, p. 343; Cheryl Nixon, *Fictional Families: Guardianship in Eighteenth-Century Law and Literature* (Cambridge, M.A: Harvard University (1995), p. 298.

<sup>286</sup> See Bowers, p. 214.



in it; which, I bless God, mine is not.<sup>287</sup> Mrs. Howe's lack of power highlights the particular difficulties which were included in contemporary conduct literature concerning widows' power over their children. According to Richard Steele in *Ladies Library*, a widow had to 'supply the Place of both *Parents* ... she should put on the Affections of both, and to the Tenderness of a Mother, add the Care and Conduct of a *Father*.'<sup>288</sup> Steele also acknowledges the obedience owed by the children to their widowed mothers depending on their circumstances: 'When the *Mother* is the only *Parent*, then her Authority increases, and she is then solely to be regarded. Indeed the *Civil Laws* do generally free the *Sons* at such an Age, supposing them the Masters of the Family ... The *Daughters*, 'tis true, are kept longer in Subjection ... There cannot be any exact Rules in such Cases.'<sup>289</sup>

Within the novel Mrs. Sinclair acts as another surrogate mother for the protagonist and as a variation of maternal possibility. Mrs. Sinclair is a horrific extension of Mrs. Jewkes, Pamela's keeper; she is described with the same realism as Mrs. Jewkes; she has a mannish voice and is a brothel keeper.<sup>290</sup> She was as well born as Mrs. Harlowe but having been seduced, her reputation was ruined. Clarissa's misery is calculated by the sordidness of her environs, these surroundings of which the terrible ugliness of Mrs. Sinclair is a vital part. She is extremely aggressive and menacing and the cruel implement of a malicious and authoritative man. With the complicity of Mrs. Sinclair, Lovelace makes several attempts to physically assault Clarissa; this began with several innocuous attempts at sexual tussles to more barefaced attacks. When Clarissa is tricked into coming back from Hampstead, Lovelace abandons all previous subtle ways to seduce her and conspires with Mrs. Sinclair to drug and rape her. In an act of

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<sup>287</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 631.

<sup>288</sup> Quoted in Bowers, p. 214.

<sup>289</sup> Quoted in Bowers, p.214.

<sup>290</sup> Bradbrook, p. 297.

retribution, Richardson gives Mrs. Sinclair a terrible death. Belford is unsympathetic, to say the least, when describing her death scene:<sup>291</sup>

Her misfortune had not at all sunk, but rather, as I thought increased her flesh: rage and violence perhaps swelling her muscular features ... her matted grizzly hair, made irreverent by her wickedness ... her livid lips parched, and working violently; her broad chin in convulsive motion; her wide mouth ... with the violence of her gaspings.<sup>292</sup>

This was in marked contrast to the peaceful and serene death of Clarissa:

And thus died Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, in the blossom of her youth and beauty: and who, her tender years considered, has not left behind her her superior in extensive knowledge, and watchful prudence; nor hardly her equal for unblemished virtue, exemplary piety, sweetness of manners, discreet generosity, and true Christian charity.<sup>293</sup>

Sarah Chapone, days after her husband's death, wrote to Richardson: 'Clarissa's Death took such a possession of his mind, that he frequently spoke of it to me afterwards ... and I thought had a happy influence on his own Conduct when soon after, he came into the like trying Circumstances.'<sup>294</sup> Edward Young asserted that the novel could prepare readers for their own and their relatives' death 'with safety and comfort.'<sup>295</sup> Terry Eagleton states that 'Clarissa's death is indeed intended as a 'great social good,' tragic though it remains, and there is certainly both pleasure and privilege in being allowed to participate in it.'<sup>296</sup> Clarissa in a posthumous letter to her father describes 'the last unhappy months' using the language of breastfeeding when she is talking about going to her father in Heaven 'I look upon now as so many mercies dispensed to wean me betimes from a world that presented it to me with prospects too alluring.'<sup>297</sup> Weaning

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<sup>291</sup> See A.M. Kearney, *Samuel Richardson, Profiles in Literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 62.

<sup>292</sup> Richardson, *Clarissa*, p. 1378.

<sup>293</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1363. Original capitals.

<sup>294</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 204.

<sup>295</sup> Quoted in Keymer, p. 204

<sup>296</sup> Quoted in Terry Eagleton, *The Rape of Clarissa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. 74.

<sup>297</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1372.

being the process of gradually taking a child away from the breast, she then goes on to say they she will see them in Heaven.<sup>298</sup> Whether she is aware of it or not, Clarissa is effectively feminising and maternalising Deity and worshipping a Great Mother. Many of Richardson's correspondents begged him to have a different finale, nobody wanted Clarissa to die. Richardson in essence gave birth to Clarissa and then he was the ultimate bad mother as he killed her, arguably, over her religious principles.

Abbé Prévost, Richardson's French translator, considered it necessary to suppress or adapt anything which he considered indelicate to French taste. Therefore he deemed it appropriate to omit sections such as the death scenes of Belton and Mrs. Sinclair and Anna's expression of grief over her friend's corpse.<sup>299</sup>

Mrs. Norton was unable to attend to Clarissa in her hour of need as both she and her son were ill. Clarissa writes to her while she is dying:<sup>300</sup>

I shall be happy, I *know* I shall! — I have charming forebodings of happiness already! — 'Tell all my dear friends, for their comfort that I shall! — Who would not bear the punishments I have borne, to have the prospects and assurances I rejoice in!<sup>301</sup>

At Clarissa's funeral, Mrs. Harlowe 'told Mrs. Norton, that the two mothers of the sweetest child in the world ought not, on this occasion, to be separated'.<sup>302</sup> Mrs. Norton 'passed the small remainder of her life as happily as she wished, in her beloved foster-daughter's dairy-house.'<sup>303</sup> Mrs. Lovick was the kindly mother who kept a vigil at Clarissa's death-bed. Belford describes the scene:

Mrs. Lovick close by her in another chair, with her left arm round her neck, supporting it, as it were; for, it seems the lady had bid her do so, saying she had been a mother to her, and she would delight herself in thinking she was in her mamma's arms;

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<sup>298</sup> See Erickson, p. 109.

<sup>299</sup> Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson* (New York and London: Macmillan, 1902), pp. 40, 135.

<sup>300</sup> See Barker, p. 511.

<sup>301</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1338. Original italics.

<sup>302</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1407.

<sup>303</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1491.

for she found herself drowsy; perhaps, she said, for the last time she should ever be so.<sup>304</sup>

Following his rape of Clarissa, Lovelace fantasises about her. He visualises his eventual subjugation of her, not by forcing her to have sex but rather by making a mother of her.

He writes to Belford:

It would be the pride of my life to prove, in this charming frost-piece, the triumph of nature over principle, and to have a young Lovelace by such an angel: and then, for its sake, I am confident she will live, and will legitimate it.<sup>305</sup>

He also imagines Clarissa breastfeeding two babies: ‘the pleasure of seeing a twin Lovelace at each charming breast, drawing from it his first sustenance.’<sup>306</sup> There is a contrast between Lovelace’s fantasy of a nursing maternal Clarissa and Mr. B.’s refusal to permit Pamela to breastfeed. Mr. B. is jealous of his own child as he considers Pamela’s breasts as his own sexualised possessions. However, Lovelace, even though he is a rake, is not primarily interested in sex but in power, and hence is flattered by the idea of reproducing the image of himself.

Twins would be Lovelace’s triumph against the Harlowe Family. Lovelace is sure his transgression will be redeemed if Clarissa is pregnant; he refers to this as ‘the charming, charming consequence.’<sup>307</sup> Tassie Gwilliam asserts that in the eighteenth century it was presumed that conception only occurred with female orgasm, therefore if Clarissa was pregnant it would have indicated that she got pleasure from the rape: the Harlowe family and Lovelace are watchful for verification of this.<sup>308</sup> By regarding Clarissa as an angel or a saint, Lovelace still retains his misconceptions about women;

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<sup>304</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1363.

<sup>305</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 1147.

<sup>306</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 706.

<sup>307</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 916.

<sup>308</sup> See Tassie Gwilliam, *Samuel Richardson’s Fictions of Gender* (California: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 83.

he does not accept that a woman could die from rape and in his mind she becomes mystical or beyond human understanding.<sup>309</sup>

Meanwhile, Belford does not want Clarissa to be pregnant and endeavours to determine the issue by seeing her as all mind by imagining he could release her from her body:

She is, in my eye, all mind: and were she to meet with a man all mind likewise, why should the charming qualities she is mistress of, be endangered? Why should such an angel be plunged so low as into the vulgar office of domestic life? Were she mine, I should hardly wish to see her a mother unless there were a kind of moral certainty that minds like hers could be propagated. For why, in short, should not the work of bodies be left to mere bodies?<sup>310</sup>

With all the absent mothers in eighteenth-century fiction, Richardson deliberately chose to have a neglectful mother who, like *Amelia*, chose marital obligation over maternal obligation, thus highlighting the danger of abdication from motherly duty.

If Clarissa had entertained her family's mercenary plan and accepted the marriage proposal with the odious Solmes or had accepted Lovelace's eventual assumption of marriage, she would have been expected to bear children. It is notable that the role of mother is one paradigmatic female virtuous role that Clarissa never gets to play. Mrs Howe is blessed with two grandchildren by her daughter Anna and Anna's loving husband Mr Hickman; the son is named after his father and the daughter is named after her beloved friend, Clarissa. In contrast, neither of Clarissa's siblings became parents, thus depriving Mrs. Harlowe of grand-motherhood — all due to the cruel behaviour meted out to her exemplary daughter.

My understanding of the novel is that Clarissa is to be the sacrificial lamb to her arrogant and avaricious brother, James. This is accomplished with the collusion of

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<sup>309</sup> See Madeleine Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism: Rhetoric and Gender in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 85.

<sup>310</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 555. See Kahn, p.139.

her parents, her brother and her sister. Clarissa, from what we read throughout the novel, has been a devoted daughter, granddaughter, sister and niece. She has also been a considerate friend to Anna Howe and a gracious foster daughter to Mrs. Norton. Much of the trauma that Clarissa has to endure could have been prevented if her mother had intervened. Charlotte Harlowe is Richardson's representation of maternal failure; the loss of the affection between mother and daughter was distressing for Clarissa. Richardson portrayed Clarissa's advancement into realization and eventual acceptance of her situation through an environment inhabited by other characters whose importance entails their proficiency in helping or obstructing that process. The outcome is that other characters are used primarily as persuasive figures whose qualities only matter because of their influence on the main character.

My analysis suggests that Richardson unambiguously asserts that it is unacceptable for a young woman to be compelled to marry a man that she finds unsuitable and where she becomes his 'absolute and dependent property'. Mrs. Harlowe is constantly blaming Clarissa for her behaviour and appears not to bestow any guilt upon herself. Because Richardson consistently describes Clarissa's father as a tyrant, it seems that Mrs. Harlowe is being bullied into submission by her husband and son. Nonetheless, it is difficult to be sympathetic to this indisputably culpable mother as she persecutes Clarissa, who by doing nothing actually assists in her daughter's abuse. She is the perpetuator of domestic tyranny by her compliance and reticence.

### 3.3

### *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*

*The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-4) was the novel that Richardson really did not want to write. Stressed by the quarrels that had followed the publication of *Clarissa* in 1748 and shattered by the challenge of corrective amendments, the author was not in the frame of mind to write another novel. In a letter to Mr. Defreval of Paris in January 1751, he complains of the amount of correspondence connected with the novel and of his nervous infirmities, which are not improving:<sup>1</sup>

*Clarissa*, has almost killed me. You know how my business engages me. You know by what snatches of time I write, that I may not neglect that, and that I may preserve that independency which is the comfort of my life.<sup>2</sup>

Grandison, the sentimental, emotional and moral hero, was to challenge society. These confrontations included challenges to rakish behaviour with young and old, religious and matrimonial conflicts, and much distress and anguish, all communicated through letters in which the reader sympathizes and connects with the feelings of the main protagonist. Each episodic event has an edifying purpose dictated by a moral feminine perspective associated with feelings and sensitivity.<sup>3</sup> Sir Charles has to contend with a number of difficult situations: he resists and prevents duelling but always from an ethical perspective. He is a character who refuses to draw his sword except in defence of others; he is responsible for the belittlement of the other males within the novel as well as the essence of desirability for the females.<sup>4</sup> Richardson also writes to Defreval 'But I am teased by a dozen ladies of note and virtue, to give them a good man, as they say I

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson* (London: Macmillan, 1902), p. 128. Mr. J. B. Defreval was the author of the first commendatory letter in the first edition of *Pamela*, which bear the initials 'J.B.D.F.'

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson* (London: MacMillan, 1902), p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> See Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c. 1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850, An Introduction*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 15-16.

<sup>4</sup> See Tassie Gwilliam, *Samuel Richardson's Fiction of Gender* (California: Stanford University Press, 1993), p.128.

have been partial to their sex, and unkind to my own.’<sup>5</sup> This was Richardson’s endeavour to portray a contrast to the libertine Lovelace and an embodiment of the definitive gentleman. Bonnie Latimer maintains that libertinism is not a compromise within the text; Sir Charles is a type of anti-rake and orchestrates the marriage of Miss Mansfield to a wanton indulgent person he would normally criticize and warns:

The woman who chooses a Rake, said [Sir Charles], does not consider, that all the sprightly airs for which she preferred him to a better man, either vanish in matrimony, or are shewn to others, to her mortal disquiet. ... If he reform (and yet bad habits are very difficult to shake off) he will probably ... be an unsocial companion ... If not, what has she chosen? ... A Rake despises matrimony.<sup>6</sup>

Sir Charles is deferential to Miss Mansfield’s mother as he outlines his proposal. While Miss Mansfield remains silent, he looks to her mother for an answer:

‘[Sir Charles] But that I may not be employed in a doubtful cause, let me be commissioned to tell my Lord, that you are disengaged; and that you wholly resign yourself to your mother’s advice.  
She [Miss Mansfield] bowed her head.  
And that you, madam, to Lady Mansfield, are not averse to enter into treaty upon this important subject.  
Averse, Sir! Said the mother, bowing, and gratefully smiling.’<sup>7</sup>

Dorothy Van Ghent writes in 1961 that *Sir Charles Grandison* is a moral remedy for those drawn to the aristocratic libertine, as the hero is a complete contrast to the vile Lovelace.<sup>8</sup> *Clarissa* had been published in 1747-48 and Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones* was published the following year in 1749. *Tom Jones* received much acclaim and was particularly popular among women and it is likely that *Grandison* would not have been written at all had it not been for Fielding’s novel. Richardson’s health had improved and it was within Richardson’s character that he should think himself more accomplished

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Gwilliam, p. 189, n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See Bonnie Latimer, ‘Apprehensions of Controul [sic]: The Familial Politics of Marriage, Choice and Consent in *Sir Charles Grandison*’, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 32, No. 1 (March, 2009), p. 4; Samuel Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, Jocelyn Harris, ed. ([1753-54] London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 2, 429.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Latimer, p. 6. ‘Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*’.

<sup>8</sup> See Dorothy Van Ghent, *The English Novel: Form and Function* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), p.58.



and better able to produce a superior paradigm.<sup>9</sup> Because the lead male characters in his former novel were rakes, Richardson's friends were persuading him to write a novel about the *good man*. *Grandison* is a response to Fielding's *Tom Jones* that had ridiculed the morality of Richardson's *Pamela*.

By portraying Sir Charles as the epitome of a gentleman, Richardson was depicting a contrasting type to both Lovelace and Tom Jones whose successes are communal rather than intellectual. Sir Charles is the focus of a number of relatives, dependents and friends and is admired by a horde of deferential women.<sup>10</sup> Because of its excess of morality, *Sir Charles Grandison* had been associated with the conduct book tradition. A.D. McKillop refers to *Grandison* as a 'courtesy-book' linking it as suitable for the court and a 'conduct-book' for a wider audience.<sup>11</sup> At the end of 1749, when Lady Bradshaigh is still writing to Richardson under the pseudonym Mrs. Belfour, she encourages him to present his perspective of a good man and fine gentleman.<sup>12</sup> Having been visited by a Mrs. Donnellan and Miss Sutton the question arose again: 'both very intimate with one Clarissa Harlowe: and both extremely earnest with him to give them a *good man*.' Mrs. Donnellan later writes back about the same topic: 'I fancy, if you would draw a fine man, as you have a woman, the young ladies would become your correspondents more readily.'<sup>13</sup>

It is possible that Richardson chose the name Grandison from a work that he had helped to print, the English translation of Giannone's *History of Naples* (1729-31), dedicated to the Earl of Grandison and his son, Viscount Falkland: 'I have at hand the noble Historian, who, in his Catalogue of Heroes (great as any *Greece* or *Rome* ever

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<sup>9</sup> See Dobson, p.140.

<sup>10</sup> See A.D. McKillop, 'On *Sir Charles Grandison*', *Samuel Richardson: Twentieth Century Views*, John Carroll, ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969), pp. 124-125.

<sup>11</sup> See Sylvia Kasey Marks, *Sir Charles Grandison, The Compleat Conduct Book* (Lewisbury: Bucknell University Press, 1986), p.14.

<sup>12</sup> See Dobson, p. 142.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 142.

produc'd) has not two more beautiful Characters, than those of *Falkland* and *Grandison*.<sup>14</sup> Although Richardson's *Grandison* is a baronet and not a peer, he seems to have elevated him through his conduct as a good man.<sup>15</sup>

A.D. McKillop maintains that *Grandison* was written with more consideration for the advice of Richardson's friends and consultants than his two previous novels and to some degree replicates their points of view; an account of his work in progress is sent by Dr. Thomas Birch to Phillip Yorke, later Lord Hardwicke, in September 1750:

Mr. Richardson, the Printer, is employing himself in a Work, for which the Men will be as much oblig'd to him, as the Ladies have hitherto been, having, as he own'd to me some days ago, resum'd the Subject, which you heard him mention at your own House, of the virtuous & generous Gentleman. He complains to me of the Difficulty of enlivening it with proper Incidents: But we may safely trust to his Invention, which is inexhaustible upon all Occasions. He has desir'd me to give him an Hour or two's attention on the read of his Plan.<sup>16</sup>

Samuel Johnson's phenomenal memory allowed him to comprehend a whole volume at one reading, so that he could articulate what Richardson had done.

In March 1754, he wrote that he recognised Richardson's technique, which was 'a trick of laying yourself open to objections, in the first part of your work, and crushing them in subsequent parts. A great deal that I had to say before I read the conversation in the latter part is now taken from me.'<sup>17</sup> Writing to John Dunscombe in December 1751, Richardson admits he is having difficulty with his novel: 'I have lost my thread and know not where to find it.'<sup>18</sup> He is still in a quandary two months later when in February 1752 he writes to Lady Bradshaigh: 'Entanglement, and extrication, and re-entanglement, have succeeded each other, as the day the night; and now the few friends

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<sup>14</sup> Quoted in McKillop, p. 124.

<sup>15</sup> See McKillop, p. 124

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in McKillop, p. 126

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Harris, *Grandison*. p. xii.

<sup>18</sup> John Duncombe, Cambridge graduate and friend of Richardson who later wrote *The Femeinead* (1753). See Dobson, 125, quoted in Harris, p. xii.

who have seen what I have written, doubt not but I am stuck fast.’<sup>19</sup> When Richardson began to write the novel, he showed it to Colley Cibber, who was known for his libertine behaviour. When he first read the manuscript of Harriet’s abduction in May, 1750, Cibber wrote:<sup>20</sup>

What piteous, d----d, disgraceful, pickle have you plunged her in? For God’s sake send me the sequel ... Take care! — If you have betrayed her into any shocking company, you will be as accountable for it, as if you were yourself the monster that took delight in her calamity.<sup>21</sup>

Richardson’s idealistic attempt to create the perfect man who was chaste was proving difficult, as he related bitterly the following remarks from Cibber, who derided him:

[Richardson] undertook to draw [the good man], and to whom, at setting out, he gave a mistress, in order to shew the virtue of the hero in parting with her, when he had fixed upon a particular lady, to whom he made honourable addresses [...] A male-virgin said he — ha, ha, ha, hah! when I made my objections to the mistress, and she was another man’s wife too, but ill used by her husband; and he laughed me quite out of countenance.<sup>22</sup>

Lady Bradshaigh, who read the first few letters, was cautioned by Richardson not to expect a hero:

But who is the good man that you think you see at a little distance? — In truth he has not peeped out yet. He must not appear till, as at a royal cavalcade, the drums, trumpets, fifes and tabrets, and many a fine fellow, have preceeded him, and set the spectators agog, as I may call it. Then must he be seen to enter with an eclat; while the mob shall be ready to cry out huzza, boys!<sup>23</sup>

Sir Charles does not actually appear in the novel until the reader has become acquainted with Harriet Byron, who initially is portrayed as a clever, spirited young woman but who exhibits less self-control as the novel progresses because of her yearning for the

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<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Harris, *Grandison*, p. ix.

<sup>20</sup> Colley Cibber (1671-1757), English actor-manager, playwright, Poet Laureate and friend of Richardson.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Harris, *Grandison*, p.viii.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Jocelyn Harris, *Samuel Richardson* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.140.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Harris, *Grandison*, p. viii.

seemingly inaccessible hero.<sup>24</sup> To begin with, Harriet has an intellectual conversation with the pedant Mr. Walden, an Oxford don, where they have a debate about female education and also a discussion about the study of the ancients and the moderns. Walden is patronizing and remarks: ‘You have thrown out some extraordinary things for a *lady*, and especially for so young a lady. From *you* we expect the opinions of your worthy Grandfather, as well as your own notions.’<sup>25</sup> Harriet is well able to uphold her argument in her letter to Lucy and even pokes fun at Walden’s pomposity; she even has him replicate Lord Chesterfield’s famous misogynist assertion that ‘women are but children of a larger growth’ calling women ‘if they are brought up to know their own weakness, and that they are but domestic animals of a superior order. Even ignorance ... is pretty in a woman.’<sup>26</sup> Sir Charles’s initially turns up when he is rescuing the abducted heroine from the clutches of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.<sup>27</sup> Tassie Gwilliam asserts that Richardson is paving the way for Sir Charles’s arrival by including a number of uninspiring and insipid suitors: ‘Preparing the way for the hero involves the representation of some inadequate examples of masculinity; these men allow the heroine to define her relation to men while still free of love’s transforming (or humiliating) effects.’<sup>28</sup>

The Hardwicke Act of 1753 was brought in to prevent unlawful or forced marriages, the type of marriage that Sir Hargrave had planned for Harriet; it would also have protected Clarissa from both her family and Lovelace. The famous Fleet Marriages were called after a muddy stream that flowed into the Thames, where many young women were duped into marriage by accepting the word of drunks pretending to be priests. This new marriage law was designed to clarify the legality of marriage, as

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<sup>24</sup> See Gwilliam, pp. 113-114.

<sup>25</sup> *Grandison*, pp. 1: 52.

<sup>26</sup> See Gwilliam, pp. 117,119.

<sup>27</sup> See Harris, *Sir Charles Grandison*, p.viii

<sup>28</sup> See Gwilliam, p.114.

suspicious marriages were more flexible without paperwork.<sup>29</sup> Richardson through his literature may have influenced this new act, certainly Richardson had a connection with Hardwicke's eldest son Philip Yorke. In 1750, he went to see Yorke at his London home and discussed his plans for *Grandison*; in addition, his *Clarissa* papers contain an amiable letter from Yorke thanking him for an advance copy of his last volume.<sup>30</sup> *Grandison* is the last significant novel in which Fleet marriage is relevant. (Following the Marriage Act, Gretna Green, in southern Scotland became a popular venue for runaway and under-age brides).<sup>31</sup>

*Grandison* is the literary successor to *Clarissa*, not just because it compensates for the tensions and sadness of the previous novel but also because Sir Charles himself is the son of a reprobate and an excellent mother. When Richardson wrote *Grandison*, he began by positioning his characters into a wider, less restricted and more varied environment such as the inclusion of non-English characters, thus discarding the constricted locations of *Clarissa*'s surroundings.<sup>32</sup> Even though there is less of a plot in *Sir Charles Grandison* than there is in *Clarissa*, there is a far greater inventory of characters and locations, from the domestic to the more exotic Italian landscapes.<sup>33</sup> The anonymous author of *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela* (1754), makes this point: I have perused your late work, *Grandison*, carefully, and I hope impartially, with this view, and for my heart, I cannot so much as perceive the least shadow of either plot, fable or action.<sup>34</sup> Dobson states that in '*Grandison*,

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<sup>29</sup> See Jenny Uglow, *Hogarth, A Life and a World* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997), p. 364.

<sup>30</sup> See Tom Keymer, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.103, n.63.

<sup>31</sup> The Act eliminated one plot device but created another, Gretna Green is a useful plot device for subsequent generations of novelists, including Jane Austen.

<sup>32</sup> See Cynthia Griffin Wolff, *Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character* (Connecticut: Archon Book, 1972), p.178.

<sup>33</sup> See Dobson, p. 147.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela*, Enquiring, Whether they have a Tendency to corrupt or improve the Public Taste and Morals. In a Letter to the Author: By a Lover

although the manner is perfected, and the method matured, the movement of the story for the most part advances no more than a rocking-horse.’<sup>35</sup>

Richardson’s intention was to create an idyllic manifestation of moral worth; the hero was to be a flawless individual whose goodness and benevolence was for the universal goodwill. *Grandison* shows how a good mother can compensate for a rake of a father by bringing up a paragon of a son. Sir Charles is Richardson’s endeavour to present a masculine equivalent of his courageous female protagonists. An essential dissimilarity between Sir Charles and Richardson’s female characters is that he does not have to undergo the same anguish as the heroines. Within the novels, distress is inevitably aligned with female morality while Sir Charles’s righteousness is Godlike and makes him resistant to the trauma of human weakness. Richardson admires female virtue, which he presents as either persecuted or subordinated to the male protagonists.<sup>36</sup>

Late eighteenth-century American periodicals are very important as an indication of public taste regarding the environment which produced early fiction.<sup>37</sup> Richardson’s influence was apparent in both subject matter and style in American fiction, which was popular during the eighteenth century. Although there were some reservations in which Richardson was invariably open to the accusation of being dissolute and exploitive, he was for the most part embraced as one of the most important English novelists. A contributor to the *American Magazine* (1798), writes in fulsome praise when he compares Richardson’s press to an altar from which ‘hallow’d incense’ sweetened the atmosphere and whole ‘Virgin-Sheets no prostitution stains’.<sup>38</sup>

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of Virtue (London: Printed for J. Dowse, opposite Fountain Court in the Strand, 1754), p.12. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 17/09/2011.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 94

<sup>36</sup> See Laura Fasick, *Vessels of Meaning: Women’s Bodies, Gender Norms, and Class Bias from Richardson to Lawrence* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1997), pp. 47- 48.

<sup>37</sup> See Herbert R. Brown, ‘Richardson and Sterne in the Massachusetts Magazine’, *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 1 (Jan., 1932), pp. 65-82, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/359491>, accessed 24/10/2008.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Brown, p. 66.

Judith Sargent Murray fondly remembers how her grandfather who ‘... indulged, perhaps to excess, an invincible aversion to novels ... Yet the Holy Bible and Clarissa Harlowe, were the books in which he accustomed his daughters to read alternately ...’<sup>39</sup>

A writer in *The Gleaner* (1798), is referenced favourably when he states that ‘Clarissa Harlowe is the first human production not extant. He hesitates not to place it, for literary excellence, above the Iliad of Homer, or any other work, ancient or modern, the sacred oracles excepted.’<sup>40</sup> Dr. Enos Hitchcock, in *Memoirs of the Bloomsgrave Family* (1790), is more balanced in approbation when he writes:

Even this great master in the science of human nature, has laid open scenes, which it would have been safer to have kept concealed; and has excited sentiments, which it would have been more advantageous to early virtue not to have admitted ... Among all writings which unite sentiment with character, and present images of life, Richardson’s, perhaps, may be placed at the head of the list.<sup>41</sup>

Richardson’s novels were the most frequently proposed by the *New England Quarterly*; a concerned father, John Bennett, who was worried about his daughter’s reading material had been advised that one novel in six months was adequate; he exempted Richardson from his restriction on novels and romances. He asserts: ‘If, in short, I wished a girl to be everything that was *great*, I would have her continually study his Clarissa. If I was ambitious to make her everything that was *lovely*, she should spend *her days and nights* in contemplating his Byron.’<sup>42</sup> Another advocate who compliments ‘the incomparable pen of that inimitable writer’ discovered in *Sir Charles Grandison* that ‘Richardson exhibits the character, proper to a brother, in the most vivid and glowing hues ...’<sup>43</sup> The problem is that many readers have never taken to this new man as he is not realistic enough. Cynthia Griffin Wolff in 1972 asserted that ‘The man is

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<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Brown, p. 67. Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820), Massachusetts, writer and daughter of a merchant shipowner.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Brown, p. 68.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Brown, p. 68.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Brown, p. 75.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Brown, p.75.

too good, too judicious, too much the model of propriety and tact to be either likeable or believable.<sup>44</sup> Sir Charles's actual predicament was that he had to pick one of two beautiful women who adored him; the exotic, passionate and Catholic Italian, Clementina, or, the intelligent Protestant English rose, Harriet.<sup>45</sup> Richardson within *Grandison* suppresses the forewarning to women of male treachery that is apparent within his other novels as he proffers Sir Charles as the wonderful example of masculinity and the greatest prize for women.<sup>46</sup> 'Do we feel a certain disappointment when we meet the man whom all ladies love, and in whom every gentleman confesses a superior nature?' asks Leslie Stephen.<sup>47</sup> In 1883, Stephen, Richardson's nineteenth-century editor described the character of Sir Charles:

He [Sir Charles] is one of those solemn beings who can't shave themselves without implicitly asserting a great moral principle. He finds sermons in his horses' tails; he could give an excellent reason for the quantity of lace on his coat, which was due, it seems, to a sentiment of filial reverence; and he could not fix his hour for dinner without an eye to the reformation of society. In short, he was a prig of the first water: self-conscious to the last degree: and so crammed with little moral aphorisms that they drop out of his mouth whenever he opens his lips. And then, his religion is in admirable keeping. It is intimately connected with the excellence of his deportment; and is, in fact, merely the application of the laws of good society to the loftiest sphere of human duty ... As he carries his solemnity into the pettiest trifles of life, so he considers religious duties to be simply the most important part of social etiquette. He would shrink from blasphemy even more than from keeping on his hat in the presence of ladies; but the respect which he owes in one case is of the same order with that due in the other: it is only a degree more important.<sup>48</sup>

While Stephen is writing in the nineteenth century and Wolff is writing in the twentieth century, *Sir Charles Grandison* was very popular in late eighteenth century, writers as important as William Cowper and Jane Austen were entranced by it.<sup>49</sup> Cowper was so

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<sup>44</sup> See Griffin Wolff, p.174

<sup>45</sup> See Griffin Wolff, p.174

<sup>46</sup> See Gwilliam, p.116

<sup>47</sup> Leslie Stephen (1832-1904), editor of *Dictionary of National Biography* (1882-1891)

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Griffin Wolff, p.176.

<sup>49</sup> See Kasey Marks, p. 16.



impressed he even wrote a poem dedicated to the novel called, *An Ode, on reading Mr.*

*Richardson's The History of Sir Charles Grandison:*

Say, ye apostate and profane,  
Wretches, who blush not to disdain  
Allegiance to your God, --  
Did e'er your idly wasted love  
Of virtue for her sake remove  
And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,  
Know, the devout, and they alone,  
Are equal to the task:  
The labours of the illustrious course  
Far other than unaided force  
Of human vigour ask,

To arm against reputed ill  
The patient heart too brave to feel  
The tortures of despair:  
Nor safer yet high-crested pride,  
When wealth flows in with every tide  
To gain admittance there.

To rescue from the tyrant's sword  
The oppress'd; unseen and unimplored,  
To cheer the face of woe;  
From lawless insult to defend  
An orphans's right – a fallen friend,  
And a forgiven foe;

These, these distinguish from the crowd,  
And these alone, the great and good,  
The guardians of mankind;  
Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,  
O with what matchless speed they leave  
The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth  
Virtues like these derive their birth?  
Derived from Heaven alone  
Full on that favour'd breast shine  
Where faith and resignation join  
To call the blessing down.

Such is that heart:--but while the muse  
Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,  
Her feeble spirits faint;  
She cannot reach, and would not wrong,  
The subject for an angel's song,

The hero, and the saint!<sup>50</sup>

Richardson's flair was in writing about good women and he had problems writing about a good man. He writes to Lady Bradshaigh in March, 1751:

I own that a good woman is my favourite character ... I can do twenty agreeable things for her, one of which would appear in a striking light in a man. Softness of heart, gentleness of manners, tears, beauty, will allow of pathetic scenes in the story of one, which cannot have place in that of the other. Philanthropy, humanity is all he can properly rise to.<sup>51</sup>

The frequent complaint about the eponymous hero was his overwhelming tediousness and the liveliness within the novel was due to the female characters.<sup>52</sup> According to Carroll: 'The flaw in the novel is, of course, the unflawed hero, who is so unfailingly reasonable and charitable, so secure in his own virtue, that he never really has to struggle with the world.'<sup>53</sup> Grandison comes across as unassertive and ineffectual, who does not even have to decide between Harriet and Clementina. The Italian lover surrenders him to Harriet as his righteousness would be a threat to her religion.<sup>54</sup>

In *Critical Remarks On Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela* (1754), the author writes: 'In Grandison, you have endeavoured to give an example of universal goodness and benevolence. But I am afraid you have strained and stretched that character too far; you have furnished him with too great a variety of accomplishments, some of them destructive ... "The man is everything" as Lucy or Harriet say; 'which no man ever was or will be.'<sup>55</sup>

The novel begins favourably with Harriet Byron, a young unsophisticated woman, being exposed to high society – a topic that Frances Burney was drawn to and

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<sup>50</sup> Quoted in [www.poetrycat.com/william-cowper/an-ode-on-reading-Richardson's History of Sir Charles Grandison](http://www.poetrycat.com/william-cowper/an-ode-on-reading-Richardson's-History-of-Sir-Charles-Grandison).

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Gwilliam, p. 111.

<sup>52</sup> See Gwilliam, p.111.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in John Carroll, *Samuel Richardson, A Collection of Critical Essays* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969), p.18.

<sup>54</sup> See Carroll, p.18.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela*, p. 18.

used several times later in the century. Eliza Haywood's *Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) has a similar theme, and is closer in date to *Grandison*. '[Harriet] was but eight years old when her Mother died. She also was an admirable woman. Her death was brought on by grief for the death of her husband; which happened but six months before — a rare instance!'<sup>56</sup> Harriet lives with her Aunt and Grandmother, Mrs. Shirley. She was the delight of her Grandfather, a man of universal learning, and has been educated by him from age seven until his death when she was aged fourteen. Harriet has been given permission to choose her own husband by her Aunt, Grandmother and godfather, the only rule being that 'the approbation of Harriet must first be gained.'<sup>57</sup> Harriet is being permitted by her grandmother to attend the season in London and remains in constant contact with her. Richardson is complimentary about the astute grandmother, Mrs. Shirley, with her observation on women and men. He writes to Lady Bradshaigh in February, 1754:

Indeed, my good Lady B, one too generally finds, in the Writings of even ingenious men, that they take up their Characters of Women too easily, and either on general opinions, or particular acquaintances ... A tolerable knowledge of men will lead us to a tolerable knowledge of women. Mrs. Shirley has said well, where she says that the two Sexes are too much considered as different species. He or she who aims to understand nature, and soars not above Simplicity, is most likely to understand the human heart best in either Sex; especially if he can make allowance for different modes of education, constitution, and situation.<sup>58</sup>

It seems that as Richardson got older he began to adopt the views of his own creation, Mrs. Shirley, that men and women were constantly in sexual conflict and battling for authority.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> *Grandison*, p. (1:11).

<sup>57</sup> *Grandison*, p. (1:11).

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Robert A. Erickson, *Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), pp. 124-125.

Harriet meets Lady Betty Williams, whom she finds agreeable but whose fifteen year old daughter is abroad for her education. Harriet is disapproving of Lady Betty when she remarks: ‘What influence can a mother expect to have over a daughter from whom she so voluntarily estranges herself? And from whose example the daughter can receive only hearsay benefits?’<sup>60</sup> Because her own mother is dead, Harriet continuously comments on other mothers within the novel; when writing about Miss Clements she states:

... is happy, as well as your Harriet, in an aunt, that loves her. She has a mother living, who is too great a self lover, to regard any-body else as she ought. She lives as far off as York, and was so unnatural a parent to this good child, that her aunt was not easy till she got her from her. Mrs. Wimburn looks upon her as her daughter, and intends to leave her all she is worth.<sup>61</sup>

Another daughter who is ill-treated by her mother is Emily; Sir Charles describes her unhappy circumstances to Harriet:

My ward Emily Jervois is an amiable girl. Her Father was a good man; but not happy in his nuptials. He bequeathed to my care, on his death-bed, at Florence, this his only child. My Sister loves her. I love her for her own sake, as well as for her Father's. She has a great fortune: And I have had the happiness to recover large sums, which her Father gave over for lost. He was an Italian merchants; and driven out of England by the unhappy temper of his Wife. I have had some trouble with her; and, if she be living, expect more.<sup>62</sup>

Harriet seeks to acquire family within the many families she meets; she has been adopted by the Grandison sisters, and after a few meetings with Sir Rowland Meredith she accepts him as her father:

Let me look upon you as my father ... But, O my father! (already will I call you father!) Urge not your daughter to an impossibility! ... I courtesied, as a daughter might do, parting with her real father: and withdrew.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Grandison*, p. (1:22).

<sup>61</sup> *Grandison*, p. (1:102).

<sup>62</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:226).

<sup>63</sup> *Grandison*, p. (1: 90-91).

After meeting Lady D., Harriet provides herself with a substitute mother and pronounces: ‘In every matronly lady I have met with a *mother*: In many young ladies, as those before us, *sisters*: In their brother, a *protector*: If your Ladyship has not heard on what occasion, I shall be ready to acquaint you with it.’<sup>64</sup> Harriet is to be drawn to any person that is kind to her, because of the death of her parents when she was so young she appears to need to give a parental title to the people she is attracted to.

Sir Thomas Grandison, father of Sir Charles, was a spendthrift and a libertine. He also had a fine poetical vein, which he cultivated; Harriet had often heard her grandfather say that to be a poet requires passionate creativity which often runs away with judgement. Lady Grandison brought a fortune to the marriage which her husband squandered and he also had a succession of mistresses. Harriet is aware of his negative qualities through the hints dropped by his daughters: ‘for it was beautiful to observe with what hesitation and reluctancy they mentioned any of his failings, with what pleasure his good qualities; heightening the one, and extenuating the other.’<sup>65</sup> Harriet is conceited in remembrance of her own ‘faultless father.’

Sir Charles and his sisters describe their mother as an ‘excellent mother’ who is virtuous and suffers moral torments in life but is always assiduously loyal to her husband. Sir Charles’s mother’s death was a result of becoming ill from worrying about the injuries her husband received from a duel; this has a profound effect on him, hence his antipathy towards duelling. It is hinted that it was not just the duelling that was at fault but rather his loose living had accelerated her death.<sup>66</sup> Unlike Pamela, Lady Grandison manages to be a dutiful wife and a nurturing mother even though it cost her her life. Perhaps if she had been a less compliant wife she may have been an even better mother. Sir Charles’s mother’s fate underscores the disastrous results of marrying a

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<sup>64</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:277).

<sup>65</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 311).

<sup>66</sup> See Latimer, p. 4

rake; Richardson uses her as an example of the fate of young women who are beguiled by the charms of a libertine. Richardson warns:

Rakish men make not either good husbands, or good fathers; nor yet good brothers. — But, no wonders! The narrow-hearted creatures centre all their delight in themselves. — Finely do women choose, who, taken in by their specious airs, vows, protestations, become the abject properties of such wretches! Yet, a reformed rake, they say, makes the best husband — Against general experience this is said — But by whom? By the vulgar and inconsiderate only, surely!<sup>67</sup>

His admonition foreshadows those of later authors such as Jane West, who cautions about rakishness in her novel *The Advantages of Education, or the History of Maria Williams* (1792). In this novel, the heroine's mother is a model mother whose aspiration is to raise a daughter whose background would preclude her from being hoodwinked into marriage by an unseemly character. Mrs. Williams herself had been the victim of such a marriage and tries to teach her daughter how to avoid her error of judgement.<sup>68</sup>

Having discovered the treachery of her suitor, Henry Neville, Maria exclaims:

Never shall affluence and felicity court me to his nuptials. Nay, did he entreat my pardon, and in the most solemn manner attest his penitence, I would abjure and hate him!" Mrs. Williams ... applauded her resolution, and strengthened it by observing that marriage with a man whom we ceased to esteem, was a horrid act of solemn perjury.<sup>69</sup>

West also wrote about the wife who choose to ignore her husband's bad conduct but it did not negate the pain and suffering that she endured through his adultery.<sup>70</sup> Jennifer C.

Kelsey quotes West:

I am the mother of his children, the faithful repository of his secrets, the partner of his sorrows. I have soothed his anxieties, composed his ruffled temper and watched in sickness ... words cannot express how much this agonised heart preferred his interest and happiness to my own.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:342)

<sup>68</sup> See Robert Palfrey Utter and Gwendolyn Bridges Needham, *Pamela's Daughters* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), p.57.

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Utter and Needham, p.57.

<sup>70</sup> See Utter, p. 57.

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in Jennifer C. Kelsey, *A Voice of Discontent: A Woman's Journey Through the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Matador, 2004) p. 82

West's statement within her novel could also apply to Sir Charles' mother who had to tolerate her husband's bad behaviour. Throughout the novel, Lady Grandison has been described as an extraordinary woman ensuring the deceased Lady Grandison is all the more spiritually pervasive in her physical absence. Richardson relates the Grandison family history in which Sir Thomas's reprehensible behaviour is articulated. He explains how their libertine father withholds finance for his daughters' dowries so that he may have more money for philandering: 'Why should I divide my fortune with novices.'<sup>72</sup> Sir Charles's mother explains on her deathbed to her daughters:

I am afraid there will be but slender provision made for my dear girls. Your papa has the notion riveted in him, which is common to men of antient families, that daughters are but incumbrances, and that the son is to be everything. He loves his girls: He loves you dearly: But he has often declared, that, were he to have entire all the fortune that descended to him from his father, he would not give to his daughters, marry whom they would, more than 5,000*l.* apiece. Your brother loves you: He loved me. It will be *his* power, should he survive your father, to be a good friend to you. — Love your brother [sic].<sup>73</sup>

Sir Thomas employs the same language as does James Harlowe in *Clarissa*; they both refer to the daughters of the family as encumbrances. Within the novel Sir Charles's moral behaviour is constantly perceived as an exercise of duty. This obligation of familial responsibility and obedience is important, although he has every reason to blame his father for his appalling behaviour he still continues to obey him.<sup>74</sup> Following his wife's death, Sir Thomas continued his debauched living and indulged himself with aplomb in his daughters' share of his fortune without qualms. The tragedy in *Grandison* is attributed to the wife of Sir Thomas whose goodness and morality is resting in Heaven. Her daughters must remain with a father whose oppression comes from his rancour for their youthfulness and the way they make his own promiscuousness look

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<sup>72</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:326).

<sup>73</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:326). Original italics.

<sup>74</sup> See Wolff, p.180.

foolish. Sir Thomas is a man who does not wish to grow old or even to grow up. As he tells Lord L., who is seeking Caroline's hand in marriage, he does not wish to be reminded of his age by the early marriages of his daughters: 'A man's children trading upon his heels and *shouldering* him with their shoulders: In short, my Lord, I have an aversion to be called a grandfather, before I am a *grey* father.'<sup>75</sup> Sir Charles's mother was constantly being hospitable and giving charitable donations in her husband's name in his absence, declaring: 'I am but Sir Thomas's almoner: I know I shall please Sir Thomas by doing this: Sir Thomas would have done thus: Perhaps he would have been more bountiful had he been present.'<sup>76</sup> 'Lady Grandison's goodness was founded in principle: not in tameness or servility.'<sup>77</sup> She only had second-hand knowledge of her husband's travels and when he appears after long absences she states: 'seeing you now safe and well, compensates me for all the anxieties you have me given in the past six tedious months — Can I say they were not anxious ones?' She then berates him only slightly: 'But I pity you, Sir, for the pleasure you have lost by so long an absence: Let me lead you to the nursery; or let the dear prattlers come down to receive their father's blessing.'<sup>78</sup> Sir Thomas behaves like a child and has nothing of the father in him. Lady Grandison, because she is dead, is all mother — her entire presence now consists of her successfully reared offspring.

Richardson uses Lady Grandison as a contrast to the unfit or absent mothers who were wide ranging within eighteenth-century novels. Susan Greenfield reports that Jane Austen, as an admirer of Richardson, parodied them in a number of her novels.'<sup>79</sup> Austen's nephew, James E. Austen-Leigh, states in his memoir: 'Every circumstance narrated in Sir Charles Grandison, all that was ever said or done in the cedar parlour,

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<sup>75</sup> *Grandison* p. (11:326). Original italics.

<sup>76</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 312).

<sup>77</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 313)

<sup>78</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 313).

<sup>79</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003), p. 13.



was familiar to her; and the wedding days of Lady [Grandison] and Lady G. were as well remembered as if they had been living friends.’<sup>80</sup> In *Northanger Abbey*, Austen includes the character of Isabella, a manipulative and self-serving young woman on a quest to attain a wealthy husband, who is not well-read and who has second-hand opinions. Isabella had not read *Sir Charles Grandison* but claims that it was ‘an amazing horrid book’ because her friend ‘Miss Andrews could not get through the first volume.’<sup>81</sup> Because the protagonist, Catherine Morland, based most of her opinions on gothic novels, Austen is suggesting that ‘plot’ is less important than sentiment, the like of gothic novelists like Ann Radcliffe offer a diminished order of experience compared to Richardson, privileging plot over sentiment. Austen wrote a dramatic production for her family called *Sir Charles Grandison or The Happy Man*; in the story she accentuated Charlotte’s witty repartee and her unwillingness to have a husband and highlights details of Sir Hargrave’s abduction of Harriet. Since there are no Italian scenes within the play, the audience learns through a letter that Clementina may be influenced to marry the Count of Belvedere in time. Although this play is suggestive of the novel, the moral message that was Richardson’s intention is missing.<sup>82</sup>

Like Jane Austen, Catharine Macauley practically memorized the novel. While engraving designs for *Grandison*, William Blake admitted that Richardson had won his heart.<sup>83</sup> Later in the century, William Hazlitt deemed *Grandison* and *Don Quixote* as the leading novels in European fiction. In the nineteenth century, having read *Grandison*, George Eliot declared that she would be ‘sorry to be the heathen that did not like that book.’<sup>84</sup> Denis Diderot wrote with enthusiasm about the novel, but most French readers

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<sup>80</sup> See Harris, *Grandison*, p. xxiii

<sup>81</sup> Anita Levy, ‘Reproductive Urges’, *Inventing Maternity: Politics, Science, and Literature, 1650-1865*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), p.207.

<sup>82</sup> Marks, p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> See Harris, *Grandison*, p. xv.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Harris, *Grandison*, p. xv.

would only have known *Grandison* in Prévost's version, which was condensed and much of the original morality omitted. Diderot is effusive in his praise of Richardson: 'un évangile apporté sur la terre pour séparer l'époux de l'épouse, le père du fils, la fille de la mère, le frère de la soeur; et son travail rentrait ainsi dans la condition des être les plus parfaits de la nature. Tout sortis d'une main toute-puissante et d'une intelligence infiniment sage, il n'y en a aucun qui ne pèche par quelque endroit. Un bien présent être dans l'avenir la source d'un grand mal: un mal, la source d'un grand bien.'<sup>85</sup>

Harriet describes how, in a conversation with Sir Charles's sisters about their mother, all the women cry:

She was, as you have already been told, the most excellent of women. I was delighted to see how her daughters bear testimony to her goodness, and to their own worth, by their tears. It was impossible, in the character of so good a woman, not to think of my own mamma; and I could not help, on the remembrance, joining my tears with theirs. Miss Jervois also wept, not only from tenderness of nature, and sympathy, but, as she owned, from regret, that she had not the same reason to rejoice in a living mother, as we had to remember affectionately the departed.<sup>86</sup>

Harriet and the Grandison sisters have an attachment by their shared compassion in the loss of a mother.

When Lord L. is trying to court Caroline, her father disapproves of the alliance due to lack of money. He has over-spent and intends to make a marriage bargain of his daughters when they are older and leave all to his son. He is being very difficult, the girls are very distressed and Miss Grandison cries:

O my dear mamma! How much do we miss you! — Were you to have become angel when we were infants, should we have

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<sup>85</sup> 'An evangelist brought to the world, to separate husband from wife, father from son, daughter from mother and brother from sister; and his work returned in the condition of the most perfect beings of nature. All out of one hand omnipotent and infinitely wise intelligence, there is no sin in that somewhere. This may be a good in the future source of great evil, evil, the source of much good.' Denis Diderot, 'Éloge de Richardson,' *Oeuvres Complètes*, André Billy, ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1951), p.1066, quoted in Leah Price, 'Sir Charles Grandison and the Executor's Hand', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (April, 1996), pp. 331-342: 335.

<sup>86</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:310-311).

missed you as we do now? — O my mamma! This, this, is the time that girls most want a mother!<sup>87</sup>

In her letter to Lucy, Harriet writes: ‘See, my dear, what a man a rakish father is! — O my good Lady Grandison, how might your choice have punished your children!’<sup>88</sup>

Because Lady Grandison was such an admirable mother, it would be assumed by her children that she would be able to persuade their father to do right by them. In writing to Lucy, Harriet describes a bad mother who was colluding with Mr. Filmer, the dishonest steward of the Irish estate, who brought over a pretty teenage girl to ensnare Sir Thomas:

[whose] parents had no virtue, and had not made it a part of the young women’s education; but had, on the contrary, brought her up with a notion that her beauty would make her a fortune; and she knew it was all the fortune they had to give her.<sup>89</sup>

Harriet reports to Lucy:

Mr. Filmer had been to meet, and conduct to London, Mrs. O’Brien, the mother of the girl, who came over to see the sale of the poor victim’s honour completed [could you have thought, Lucy, there was such a mother in the world?].<sup>90</sup>

The exemplary Sir Charles came to an agreement with the family and ‘he represented to the mother the wickedness she had come over to act, in such strong terms, that she fell into a fit.’<sup>91</sup> Providing Miss O’Brien and her mother would make a solemn promise never to refer to the affair with his father, he agreed that he would acquire a husband for her and would pay her 1000*l* on her wedding day. Having returned from Ireland, he heard that ‘Miss O’Brien was ill of the smallpox. He was not, for her own sake, sorry for it. She suffer’d in her face, but still was pretty and genteel: And she is now the honest and happy wife of a tradesman near Golden-square; who is fond of her.’<sup>92</sup> Sir

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<sup>87</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:343).

<sup>88</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11:331).

<sup>89</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 353).

<sup>90</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 355).

<sup>91</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 377).

<sup>92</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 377).

Charles's view of Miss O'Brien's fate of having her looks affected from smallpox was similar to that of Mr. B's mother, who wished that Pamela's beauty was diminished by the same disease. Mrs. O'Brien's flawed Irish femininity is corrected under English control; O'Brien is infantilised by Charles Grandison, he mothers her into being a mother.

Having been placed with a respectable widow-gentlewoman and her three daughters, Sir Charles's charge, Emily, is unsure of her safety: 'what protection can women give me, were my unhappy mother to be troublesome, and resolve to *have me*, as she is continually threatening.'<sup>93</sup> Harriet relates an account of Emily's past when she informs Lucy that Emily has asked her to mediate for her so that she can live at the Grandison home:

Miss Jervois's history is briefly this: She had one of the best of fathers: Her mother is one of the worst of women. A termagant, a swearer, a drinker, unchaste — Poor Mrs. Jervois! — I have told you, that he (a meek man) was obliged to abandon his country, to avoid her. Yet she wants to have her daughter under her own tuition — Terrible! — Sir Charles has had trouble with her. He expects to have more — Poor Miss Jervois!<sup>94</sup>

It appears that the only reason Emily's mother wants her daughter under her control is because of the great fortune her father has left her. Sir Charles is constantly uneasy about Emily's mother and tells of his concerns in his letter to Dr. Bartlett. He relates the incident of Mrs. Jervois's raucous visit to him where he describes her as wicked. In her letter to Lucy, Harriet conveys the emotional scene in which Sir Charles gives Emily her mother's letter. When Harriet and Emily withdraw to the next room, Emily reads it and is very affected by it:

I knew not then all the unhappy woman's wickedness: I knew not but the husband might be in some fault. — What could I say? I could not think of giving comfort to a daughter at the expence of even a *bad* mother.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 381).

<sup>94</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 385).

<sup>95</sup> *Grandison*, p. (111: 72).

Mr. Edward Beauchamp, Sir Charles's close friend, is estranged from his parents. Sir Charles decides to ameliorate this situation by visiting his friend's father, Sir Harry Beauchamp, and his stepmother. Lady Beauchamp is an embittered woman whose love was rejected by Edward and who subsequently marries Sir Harry to obtain retribution; she now encourages his father to keep his son in exile on a parsimonious allowance. When Sir Charles first meets Lady Beauchamp she is very feisty and speaking of her stepson she states: 'The young man hates me: I hate him: And ever will.'<sup>96</sup> Sir Charles is very diplomatic and also skilful at redirecting the feelings of others; Lady Beauchamp is cajoled by him and capitulates and thus induced by him to use her wifely influence to persuade her husband to permit his son to come home and have his annuity raised from £200 to £600. The hero believes he has won her over as this approach has appealed to Lady Beauchamp's better nature but in reality he has coerced her into compliance. He states: 'I was agreeably surprised at this emanation (shall I call it?) of goodness. She is really not a bad woman, but a perverse one: In short, one of those surprising turns.'<sup>97</sup> Mrs. Beauchamp is less complimentary of him when she asks: 'Pray, Sir, are good men always officious men? Cannot they perform the obligation of friendship, without discomposing families.'<sup>98</sup>

Mrs. Oldham, Sir Thomas's mistress, had been delving into his fortune for years; following his death she was dismissed from his house by Sir Charles's cousin Everard and received no sympathy from either Lady Caroline or Lady Charlotte. Mrs. Oldham has been the woman who took their place with their father after their mother's death and reaped the financial benefits of which they were deprived. As one of Sir Thomas's mistresses, she was also the main reason for Sir Charles being in exile for

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<sup>96</sup> *Grandison*, p. (IV: 275).

<sup>97</sup> *Grandison*, p. (IV: 283).

<sup>98</sup> *Grandison*, p. (IV: 273), quoted in Price, p. 335.

eight years. Sir Charles, in dealing with the situation, requests that his sisters ‘have enlarged minds: They are daughters of the most charitable, the most forgiving, of women.’<sup>99</sup> He reminds his sisters that Mrs. Oldham is the mother of their two stepbrothers but also of a third child. Since Sir Thomas dies without leaving a will, by law Mrs. Oldham is not entitled to anything.<sup>100</sup> Sir Charles decides to ignore this and to provide her with a settlement, stating: ‘Shall we do nothing but legal justice? — The law was not made for a man of conscience.’<sup>101</sup> Because Mrs. Oldham is a mother, Sir Charles treats her with deference and ensures she receives a settlement that she would have obtained had she been married to his father. Mrs. Oldham’s maternity is conferred through Sir Charles’s benignly feminized upbringing.

According to Sylvia Kasey Marks, Clementina’s mother is a loving and devoted parent but she does not have the strength or authority to oppose her more powerful relatives. Sir Charles constantly assures them that they are free from obligation to him; he even appeases the General’s antagonism when he promises that he will not accept any decision unless it is with the approval of all Clementina’s family.<sup>102</sup> He suggests to her mother that he travel to Florence and Naples to absent himself from Clementina so it can be ascertained whether her recuperation is because of him. He does not want to take advantage of the Marchioness as she begins to be favourable towards him believing the signs of recovery in her daughter are due to him. He commends her for her aristocratic background but more so for her kindness of heart, considerate temperament and discretion.<sup>103</sup> Sir Charles is willing to deprive himself of his own happiness for the sake of others. The main difficulty with Sir Charles’s and

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<sup>99</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 366).

<sup>100</sup> *Grandison*, p. (11: 272).

<sup>101</sup> Quoted in Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 318.

<sup>102</sup> See Kasey Marks, p. 88.

<sup>103</sup> See Kasey Marks, p. 88.

Clementina's relationship is the difference in their religious beliefs. As devout Catholics, Clementina's family do not want her to marry a Protestant. Sir Charles continually tries to agree to a compromise but one of the main stumbling blocks is the question of which religion the anticipated children will be brought up in. He will agree to his sons being brought up Protestants and his daughters being brought up in their mother's Catholic religion.<sup>104</sup>

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft states:

Every daughter ought to be of the same religion as her mother, and every wife to be of the same religion of her husband: for, though such religion should be false, that docility which induces the mother and daughter to submit to the order of nature, takes away, in the sight of God, the criminality of their error.<sup>105</sup>

One could question that if Sir Charles was so altruistic, could he have prevented Clementina's psychotic episodes by agreeing to allow all his children to be reared as Catholics? Secondly, because of her religious conviction, was Clementina afraid that if she agreed to allow her sons to be brought up in an alternate religion, would she be condemning them to eternal damnation, thus being a bad mother? Charles does not believe that Catholics are necessarily damned although Clementina's family believe that Protestants inevitably are; therefore it would make sense for Charles to concede everything on this point. Sir Charles can put himself in everyone's circumstances and he is so magnanimous that he beguiles everyone, although amongst readers he has not been a universally popular character.<sup>106</sup> The problem was that many readers have never taken to this new man and he was not realistic enough.

Sir Charles is devout and observes a Protestant code of practice, he has an unspoken tenet that he would not travel on the Sabbath day apart from when he was

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<sup>104</sup> See Kasey Marks, p. 89.

<sup>105</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Miriam Brody, ed. ([1792] London: Penguin, 2002), p.110.

<sup>106</sup> See Bradbrook, p. 300.

doing charitable work or it was essential. He says Grace at his own table when there is no clergyman available and in church he enlightens others by his encouraging godliness. Bradbrook writes that it is Richardson's accomplishment within this novel to have 'dramatized the ethical and social principles of *The Tatler* and of *The Spectator* so that they could be used by later novelists, such as Fanny Burney and Jane Austen.'<sup>107</sup>

Critically, Sir Charles refuses to fight duels; he rejects challenges from Sir Hargrave, the General and Count Belvedere. His decision to both rescue and marry Harriet does not bring about a single duel, notwithstanding the intimidation from many libertine devotees. He never accepts duels, and in each situation where a duel was attempted, no fight actually takes place — there are mock duels offered in their place. Sir Charles manages to overcome his attackers by manipulation. He was not brave enough to say he would not duel. He perhaps may look less of a man if he admits this but perhaps he would be more respected for standing by his beliefs.<sup>108</sup> Writing to Richardson, Mrs. Donnellan tries to help him with the duelling situation by suggesting that Sir Charles's combat days were done before the reader makes his acquaintance, hence he would not be seen as cowardly and would be exempt from taunts.<sup>109</sup> She recommends that 'he must have more of Miss Howe than of Clarissa', a reaction that substantiates the derisory notion that Sir Charles is one of the 'author's chief feminine characters.' Mrs. Delany writes that 'nothing is more difficult than to make him brave, and avoid duelling, that reigning curse.'<sup>110</sup>

The development of breastfeeding within Richardson's novels from *Pamela Part II* to *Sir Charles Grandison* is noteworthy; Richardson progresses from writing about Pamela, a mother who wants to breastfeed but will not disobey her husband, to

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<sup>107</sup> Quoted in Bradbrook, p. 301.

<sup>108</sup> See Kasey Marks, p. 28.

<sup>109</sup> See Dobson, p. 143.

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Dobson, p. 143.



Charlotte, a mother who breastfeeds without her husband's permission. Pamela's one lapse in maternal virtue is that she does not breastfeed her own children. This failure is important as it reveals Richardson's emphasis on the importance of wifely subordination to the husband.<sup>111</sup> This opinion was an echo of Archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson, in the late seventeenth century, who regarded maternal breastfeeding among the natural responsibilities 'of a more necessary and indispensable obligation than any positive precept of revealed religion.'<sup>112</sup> Breastfeeding women were supposed to desist from sexual intercourse; on the other hand, husbands were anxious that this practice would obstruct their sex lives. The needs of the child became second place to the conjugal needs of the father, Archbishop Tillotson had capitulated and endorsed the maxim that 'the interposition of the father's authority' was enough of an 'excuse' from what he had previously called mother's 'natural duty'.<sup>113</sup> Motherhood requires paterfamilial sanction to be permitted to function.

There was a wave of publicity in the early eighteenth century supporting maternal breastfeeding; this was strongly reiterated by a scathing critique in *The Spectator* in 1711.<sup>114</sup> The essence of the article was that if the wife could persuade her husband to part with the money, she could send her child to be nursed feigning illness. Steele's attitude in his discussion of maternity and breastfeeding was disparaging, he believed that it was a mother's duty to nurse her offspring but his reasons for the unsuitability of handing their babies over to wet nurses was class-based rather than for health reasons.<sup>115</sup> Stone states that the apathy and disregard of many parents was

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<sup>111</sup> See Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood, British Writing and Culture 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.169.

<sup>112</sup> Quoted in Fasick, 'The Edible Woman: Eating and Breast-Feeding in the Novels of Samuel Richardson', *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 58, no. 1 (Jan., 1993), pp. 17-31:18, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3201098>, accessed 31/08/2008.

<sup>113</sup> See Fasick, p. 18.

<sup>114</sup> See Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 270.

<sup>115</sup> See Stone, p. 271.

responsible for the high infant mortality rate. Many affluent parents sent their children to wet nurses for a year to eighteen months even though they were aware of the carelessness of some nurses which resulted in high death rates. Many of these underprivileged women had to abandon their children for hours while they went out to work, this meant their own babies, wrapped in swaddling clothes, were left lying in their own excrement.<sup>116</sup> With the exception of the Countess of Lincoln in *The Countess of Lincolnes Nurserie [sic]* in 1622, few appeared to publicize the impact on the family of this class-related practice in which the natural child of the wet nurse might have to go hungry.<sup>117</sup> She wrote: ‘Bee not accessory to that disorder of causing *a poorer woman to banish her owne infant, for the entertaining of a richer womans child.*’<sup>118</sup>

Maternal feeding by the mother was known to be preferable as wet nursing was high risk for the infant.<sup>119</sup> It was assumed that sexual stimulation in a lactating mother would ruin her milk or if she was to become pregnant, her milk would dry up and the baby would die. Moralists and religious men, bearing in mind their anxieties for marriage, adultery and the prevention of unnatural practices, were compelled to decide between condoning sexual activities by a nursing mother, or the very real possibility of adultery by a sex-starved husband, chose to advise them to resume sexual relations despite the risk.<sup>120</sup>

Felicity A. Nussbaum maintains that in the mid-eighteenth century, prostitutes in London numbered approximately three thousand; they openly paraded the streets and

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<sup>116</sup> See Stone, pp. 64-65.

<sup>117</sup> Elizabeth Clinton, Countess of Lincoln, *The Countess of Lincolnes Nurserie* (Oxford: 1622). See Ruth Perry, ‘Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Oct., 1991), pp. 205-234: 221, n. 53, <http://www.jstor/stable/3704034>, accessed: 22/08/2008

<sup>118</sup> Quoted in Ruth Perry, pp. 205-234: 221, n. 53. Later in the eighteenth century, this concern can also be found in Michael Underwood’s treatise. In urging women to try nursing their own children before looking for a wet nurse to undertake that office, he refers to ‘the sacrifice that poor women take in going out to suckle other people’s children, the sad consequences of which are often felt by their own.’ (p.174).

<sup>119</sup> See Stone, p. 176.

<sup>120</sup> See Stone, p.177.

displayed their public sexuality both to the middle-class mother and the uncorrupted maiden who was supposed to be protected from it.<sup>121</sup> As a graphic documenter of contemporary times, Hogarth chooses a prostitute as the protagonist of his first graphic series *A Harlot's Progress* (1732). Many ladies who had lost their virtue had no alternative but to turn to prostitution to survive; Richardson's Mrs. Jewkes and Mrs. Sinclair would not have had much choice but to engage in prostitution. Pamela and Clarissa would presumably always prefer death by starvation to prostitution. The great London bawds were always called 'Mrs' or 'Mother', each was in charge of their own district that included Covent Garden, Soho and Bloomsbury, with Mother Needham being the most famous, as she was linked to the Court because of her high class clientele.<sup>122</sup>

All Crimes are judg'd like fornication;  
While rich we are honest no doubt.  
Fine ladies can keep reputation  
Poor lasses alone are found out.  
If justice had piercing eyes,  
Like ourselves to look within,  
She's find power and wealth a disguise  
That shelter the worst of our kin.<sup>123</sup>

Kate Hackabout was an infamous harlot in the eighteenth century who had a propensity for arguing, fighting and swearing, both to passers-by and to the other prostitutes who ventured to ply their trade in her district. Hogarth used her as an example in his series of plates *A Harlot's Progress*, which consisted of short dramatic scenes focusing on the heroine. The first plate shows a young woman being enticed by a syphilitic bawd; the next five are self-explanatory: Plate 2, '*The Quarrel with her Jew Protector*', Plate 3, '*Apprehended by a Magistrate*', Plate 4, '*Scene in Bridewell*', Plate 5, '*She expires*,

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<sup>121</sup> See Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones, Maternity, Sexuality and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 99.

<sup>122</sup> See Uglow, p. 195.

<sup>123</sup> Quoted in Uglow, p.191. John Gay's opera, *Polly* (1729).

while the Doctors are quarrelling, and Plate 6, 'The Funeral'. Hogarth has recorded the inevitable outcome for many of the harlots at that time.<sup>124</sup>

Nussbaum argues that eighteenth-century men may have rationalized their need to engage prostitutes because they had to do without their wives' sexual attention while the women were breastfeeding.<sup>125</sup> Perry declares that in eighteenth-century England a woman who breastfeeds her children essentially postpones other sexual feelings and desire until her child is weaned; it was a choice between mothering and sexualizing.<sup>126</sup> This is clearly an oversimplification as many mothers used the time of lactating as a method of contraception. In his *Advice to Mothers* in 1769, William Buchan warns: 'Let not husbands be deceived; let them not expect attachment from wives, who, in neglecting to suckle their children, rend asunder the strongest ties in nature.'<sup>127</sup> Hugh Smith in 1767 is more encouraging to women stating: 'a chaste, and tender wife, with a little one at her breast, is certainly, to her husband, the most exquisitely enchanting object on earth.'<sup>128</sup>

In Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman*, Maria describes how her mother did not nurse her or her sister but breastfed her eldest and over-indulged son 'for my mother only suckled my eldest brother, which might be the cause of her extraordinary partiality.'<sup>129</sup> The inference is that the superior son was maternally nursed and the daughters were put out to wet nurses. Within the novel Maria describes how her brother Robert 'was two years older, and might truly be termed the idol of his parents, and the torment of the rest of the family. Such indeed is the force of prejudice, that what

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<sup>124</sup> See Uglow, pp. 200-208.

<sup>125</sup> See Felicity A. Nussbaum, p. 99.

<sup>126</sup> Ruth Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast', pp. 205-234: 229.

<sup>127</sup> Quoted in Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast'. p. 228.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast'. pp. 229-230.

<sup>129</sup> See Mary Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* ([1798] New York: Dover Publications, (2005), p. 55.

was ‘called spirit and wit in him, was cruelly repressed as forwardness in me.’<sup>130</sup> This may have been autobiographical: Lyndall Gordon tells how Mrs. Wollstonecraft, who was regularly beaten by her husband, doted on her eldest son, Ned. Wollstonecraft’s mother was a harsh disciplinarian and was particularly cruel to her eldest daughter.<sup>131</sup>

Wollstonecraft’s extraordinary biography led to advanced ideas on motherhood, families, child-rearing, breastfeeding, swaddling and education. She was an advocate for women’s right, a teacher, writer, traveller, and also a mother.<sup>132</sup> She constantly advocated breastfeeding by the mother and seemed to be of the opinion that a woman’s claim to citizenship was contingent on her motivation to ‘mother’. She wrote in 1792 that although she who is faithful to her husband, but ‘neither suckles nor educates her children, scarcely deserves the name of a wife, and has no right to that of a citizen.’ She also asserts that ‘affections must grow out of the habitual exercise of a mutual sympathy; and what sympathy does a mother exercise who sends her babe to a nurse, and only takes it from a nurse to send it to a school?’<sup>133</sup>

Wollstonecraft was strongly influenced by, but disliked Richardson. She agreed with him, however, where breastfeeding was concerned and promotes maternal breastfeeding in almost all her major works. She describes the health of her own breastfed daughter Fanny Imlay due to ‘the natural manner of nursing her.’<sup>134</sup> Following the birth of Fanny, Mary writes to her friend Ruth Barlow describing the birth at the end of the letter she writes: ‘I feel great pleasure at being a mother — and the constant tenderness of my most affectionate companion makes me regard a fresh tie as a blessing.’<sup>135</sup> While she was expecting her second child she began writing *Letters on the*

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<sup>130</sup> See Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, p. 51.

<sup>131</sup> See Lyndall Gordon, *Mary Wollstonecraft, A New Genus* (London: Little, Brown, 2005), pp. 6-7.

<sup>132</sup> See Gordon, p. 4.

<sup>133</sup> See Wollstonecraft, *Vindication*, pp. 182, 189.

<sup>134</sup> See Greenfield, pp. 84-85.

<sup>135</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 230.

*Management of Infants*, which consisted of seven letters offering advice on childbirth, infants' diet and clothing. She also prepared '*Lessons*' for Fanny, giving advice which would be understood by a young child, as death in childbirth was still a real danger in the eighteenth century, it was not that unusual for pregnant mothers to prepare conduct letters for their young children. Wollstonecraft's *Lessons* are said to be 'one of the most graceful expressions in English prose of the physical tenderness of a mother's love.'<sup>136</sup> The first of these letters was on pregnancy and childbirth, her later letters offered advice on the care of infants. Given that Wollstonecraft did actually die shortly after childbirth, it was a loving and affectionate gesture by her for her children to have this legacy of letters when she was gone. She was also very innovative in her outlook on childbirth and childcare; she rejected the notion of the new mother remaining in bed a month after a birth and advocated that they should get up the following day as she had done after her firstborn.<sup>137</sup> Because of her strong views on childbirth, many of Wollstonecraft's enemies regarded her death as the 'just' consequence of trusting a female midwife in preference to a male obstetrician (man-midwife).

Within *Maria*, there are two different perspectives on wet nurses. Jemima is scathing about hers when she describes the wet nurse: 'The day my mother died, the ninth after my birth, I was consigned to the care of the cheapest nurse my father could find; who suckled her own child at the same time, and lodged as many more as she could get, in two cellar-like apartments.'<sup>138</sup> She also describes the treatment meted out to her by her stepmother, who had a younger child: 'I was brought to her house; but not to a home — for a home I never knew. Of this child, a daughter, she was extravagantly fond; and it was a part of my employment, to assist to spoil her, by humouring all her

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<sup>136</sup> See Gordon, pp. 353-354.

<sup>137</sup> See Gordon, p. 353.

<sup>138</sup> See *Maria*, pp. 28, 29.

whims, and bearing all her caprices.’<sup>139</sup> In contrast, Maria did not bond with her mother but was very close to her wet nurse: ‘I had a great affection for my nurse, Old Mary, for whom I used often to work, to spare her eyes.’ And she goes on to illustrate her experiences in attempting to help out her wet nurse and her wet nurse’s sister.<sup>140</sup>

The figure of the wet nurse seemingly wields immense power for good or ill. Within *Clarissa*, the heroine has a close bond with good Mrs. Norton, her wet-nurse, as did the heroine in Fielding’s *Amelia*; both of these women were kinder to their foster children than their natural mothers. Clarissa seemed not to have any contact with her foster brother but Amelia’s plays a large part in protecting her throughout the novel. When he wants to serve under Booth’s command and his mother acquiesces, Booth states: ‘You will easily believe I had some little partiality to one whose milk Amelia had sucked ... I treated him with all the tenderness which can be used to one in that station.’<sup>141</sup>

One of the most influential treatises on breastfeeding was written by Doctor William Cadogan in 1748, a few years prior to the publication of *Grandison*.<sup>142</sup> Cadogan’s criticism was not against wet nurses because of class difference, he was criticizing mothers who did not breastfeed because of the vanity of their sexual appeal. He argues that ninety per cent of children died who were fed by wet nurses with an inadequate or tainted supply of milk or reared on pap. Cadogan also alleged (as did Rousseau later) that poor children were healthier than the rich because they were

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<sup>139</sup> See *Maria*, p. 29.

<sup>140</sup> See *Maria*, p. 55.

<sup>141</sup> See Henry Fielding, *Amelia*, David Blewett, ed. ([1751] London: Penguin Classics, 1987), pp. 101-102. This bond between milk siblings is still evident today; within some twenty-first century cultures, although they are not related by blood, children breastfed by the same woman are considered to be related and the milk brothers and sisters are not permitted to marry. Tanya M. Cassidy and Abdullah El-Tom, ‘Comparing Sharing and Banking Milk’, *Giving Breastmilk, Body Ethics and Contemporary Breastfeeding Practice*, Rhonda Shaw and Alison Bartlett, eds. (Toronto: Demeter Press, 2010), p.112.

<sup>142</sup> See Stone, p. 272.

breastfed by their own mothers.<sup>143</sup> He urged women to ‘prevail upon herself to give up a little of the Beauty of her Breast to feed her Offspring’ and appealed to men of sense to have their children at home and encouraged them to have their children breastfed. He dispels the myths associated with breastfeeding and assured his readers that it would reduce infant mortality.<sup>144</sup>

Valerie Fildes notes in 1986 that in an earlier era most literature about breastfeeding was directed at the medical profession whereas after 1750 such literature was chiefly addressed at mothers. Putting the child early to the mother’s breast helped reduce ‘milk fever’, an infection caused by blocked milk ducts, which was often the cause of death.<sup>145</sup> Bloch argued in 1978 that children received more specific and meticulous attention over the course of the eighteenth century and writers began to dwell on the fundamental importance of appropriate maternal care during infancy.<sup>146</sup>

In 1752, the year before *Sir Charles Grandison* was published, the Reverend Ebenezer Parkman in his diary on August 21<sup>st</sup>, describes himself when he was seriously ill: ‘I am so wasted, that there appears to me Danger of consuming away.’<sup>147</sup> The illness grew worse and his neighbours kept a vigil at his bed. On August 24<sup>th</sup>, he was so bad that the local Deacon prayed the night over him. The following day, on August 25<sup>th</sup>, his wife Hannah sent their year old child away to be weaned so she could give her husband special care.<sup>148</sup> We learn from his diary written on the 26<sup>th</sup>: ‘My wife tends me o’night

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<sup>143</sup> See Stone, p.272.

<sup>144</sup> Perry, p. 223.

<sup>145</sup> See Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 39.

<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Ruth Bloch, ‘American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1785-1815’, *Feminist Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (June, 1978), pp.101-126: 109, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3177453>, accessed 19/08/2008.

<sup>147</sup> Marylynn Salmon, ‘The Cultural Significance of Breastfeeding and infant Care in Early Modern England and America’, *Journal of Social History*, vol. 28, no.2 (Winter, 1994), pp. 247-269: 247, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/378897>, accessed 19/08/2008.

<sup>148</sup> See Salmon, p. 247.



and supply's me with Breast milk.'<sup>149</sup> Ebenezer, who replaced his son at his wife's breast, recovered from his illness and went on to live for another thirty years.<sup>150</sup> Nicholas Culpeper explained in his *Directory for Midwives* (1660): 'Milk digests soon, it being concocted by the Nurse; and thats [*sic*] the Reason, many in a Consumption (whose digestion is weak) are cured by sucking a Womans Breast.'<sup>151</sup> In this cultural setting, the power of breast milk is seen as a life-sustaining fluid; the appearance was linked to semen as it contained life-giving substance: 'While semen was necessary to create life, breast milk was necessary to sustain it.'<sup>152</sup>

In 1772, Irish polymath Arthur Murphy wrote a play entitled *The Grecian Daughter*. A tragedy based on the classical story of Valerius about the filial piety of his daughter, it was performed at Drury Lane Theatre in February of that year. It was arguably the most popular tragedy at that time and was given good reviews. The play depicts the King in prison, who was refused food or drink by his captors; he was dying when his teenage daughter came to visit. In order to save her father's life, his daughter breastfed him and he survived — it could qualify as one of the most bizarre incidences from eighteenth-century drama. The play's success is evidence of the public's fascination with breast milk. Rousseau had written *Émile* ten years earlier and it was subsequently translated into English, Murphy would have been aware of Rousseau's advocacy of breast milk. It is a complete reversal and bizarrely natural; instead of a mother breastfeeding her child, it is the child breastfeeding its parent as the milk is a transferable commodity. The key scene proceeds as follows:

*Philotas*: O! I can hold no more; at such sight  
Ev'n the hard heard of tyranny would melt  
To infant softness. Arcas, go, behold  
The pious fraud of charity and love; see

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<sup>149</sup> Quoted in Salmon, p. 247.

<sup>150</sup> See Salmon, p. 247.

<sup>151</sup> See Salmon, p. 249.

<sup>152</sup> Quoted in Salmon, p.251.

Th' expedient sharp necessity has taught her;  
Thy heart will burn, will melt, will yearn to view  
A child like her.

*Arcas:* Ha! Say what mystery  
Wakes these emotions?

*Philotas* Wonder-working virtue!  
The father fostered at his daughter's breast! –  
O! Filial piety! The milk design'd  
For her own offspring on the parent's lip  
Allays the parching fever.

*Arcas* That device  
Has she then form'd, eluding all our care,  
To minister relief?

*Philotas* On the bare earth  
Evander lies; and as his languid pow'rs  
Imbibe with eager thirst the kind refreshment,  
And his look speak unutterable thanks  
Euphrasia views him with the tenderest glance,  
Ev'n as a mother doating on her child,  
And, ever and anon, amidst the smiles  
Of pure delight, of exquisite sensation,  
A silent tear steals down: the tear of virtue,  
That sweetens grief to rapture. All her laws  
Inverted quite, great Nature triumphs still.<sup>153</sup>

King Evander had been left to die but the guards, seeing the determination of the daughter to save her father, were overcome with emotion and then decided to release him.<sup>154</sup>

Richardson's promotion of breastfeeding in each of his novels is another link with his fiction and conduct book instructions. In *Sir Charles Grandison*, for the third time within his novels Richardson's breastfeeding theme is reintroduced. When Charlotte delivers her baby, Harriet, writing to her grandmother, describes the scene of anxiety and honest joy and remarks that her motherhood will change her: 'she will be matronized now. The *mother* must make her a *wife*.'<sup>155</sup> Charlotte proves her superiority as a mother by breastfeeding her child. Charlotte, unlike Pamela, makes her decision to nurse her own baby without consulting her husband, therefore ignoring her husband's

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<sup>153</sup> See Arthur Murphy, *The Grecian Daughter, A Tragedy, Marked with the Variations in the Manager's Book at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane* (London: Printing for W. Lowndes, No. 76, Fleet Street; and S. Bladon, No. 13, Pater-noster Row, M.DCC, XCVI), pp. 24, 25, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 20/10/2011.

<sup>154</sup> See Murphy, p. 27.

<sup>155</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VII: 388).

influence. In her letter to Harriet she writes that Lord G. did not know that she was breastfeeding '(for I intended that he should know nothing of the matter, nor that I would be so condescending); surprises me ... In an act that confessant the mother, the *whole* mother! — Little Harriet at my breast.'<sup>156</sup> Charlotte describes the scene where she is breastfeeding and her husband walks in. Lord G. is enthralled by the sight of his nursing wife. Charlotte writes:

Never was a man in a greater rapture. For Lady Gertrude had taught him to wish that a mother would *be* a mother: He threw himself at my feet, clasping me and the little varlet together in his arms. Brute! Said I, will you smother my Harriet — I was half-ashamed of my tenderness — Dear-est, dear-est, dear-est Lady G. — shaking his head, between every *dear* and *est*, every muscle of his face working; how you transport me! — Never, never, never, saw I so delightful a sight! Let me see you clasp the precious gift, our Harriet's Harriet too, to that lovely bosom — The wretch (trembling however) pulled aside my handkerchief. I try'd to scold; but was forced to press the little thing to me, to supply the place of the handkerchief — Do you think, I could not have killed him? — To be sure, I was not half angry enough. I knew not what I did, you may well think — for I bowed my face on the smiling infant, who crowed to the pressure of my lip.<sup>157</sup>

Lord G.'s reaction was the kind that Doctor Cadogan expected from 'a man of sense; Lord G. is a good man, the antithesis to the arrogant Lord B. and to the licentious Lovelace, who just fantasizes about breastfeeding. Marital pressure is being exerted in exactly the opposite terms to Mr. B. and Pamela in *Pamela Part II*. In many ways Lord G. is a successor to Anna Howe's Hickman; Charlotte's breastfeeding would be successful as she had a supportive and encouraging husband, which is important. However, Perry remarks that in *Grandison*; breastfeeding brings the lively woman to heel...'<sup>158</sup> This seems a derogatory statement and a depressing perspective on what might be considered a charming scene of a loving father, nursing mother and child. The witty and lively Charlotte is domesticated by her motherhood and her victorious entry is

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<sup>156</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VII: 402).

<sup>157</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VII: 403).

<sup>158</sup> Quoted in Perry, p. 230.

with her overjoyed husband's endorsement and support. To Lord G. the performance of this process of breastfeeding denotes Charlotte as a loving and feminine woman.<sup>159</sup> She is secure in her position as a wife and mother and unlike Pamela, does not have to cope with class difference or to contend with spousal opposition to her natural role. Charlotte confidently remarks: 'The infant is the cement between us; and we will for the future be every day more worthy of that, and of each other.'<sup>160</sup> Throughout the novel, Charlotte constantly has affectionate terms for her baby such as her 'little marmoset' and clearly adores her child. This innate maternal love is evident in her description of her time with her sister when she states: 'Lady L. and I were together, indulging ourselves and our little nurseries, who were crowing at each other.'<sup>161</sup> Charlotte is an amusing character; according to Dobson 'she is sprightly and vivacious, there is no doubt. But she is also undeniably ill-mannered, and her rudeness is as incapable of pardon as the villainy of Lovelace.'<sup>162</sup> Dobson's censure seems extreme to a twenty-first century readership. Before the novel reaches its conclusion Charlotte must be steered towards femininity; by becoming the ideal mother, she is also becoming the perfect wife and woman.<sup>163</sup>

Richardson's attitude to the habit of swaddling babies is obvious when, referring to her newborn nephew, Charlotte writes to her sister, Lady L.:

Has my godson-elect done crying yet? What a duce has *he* to cry at? Unswaddled, unpinioned, unswathed, legs and arms at full liberty: But they say crying does good to the brats — opens their pipes — and-so-forth — But tell him, that if he does not learn to laugh, as well cry, he shall not be related to Charlotte.'<sup>164</sup>

Within this novel we can assume Sir Charles's mother breastfed as she was considered a most outstanding mother and presumably Charlotte was following her mother's counsel

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<sup>159</sup> Laura Fasick, 'The Edible Woman', pp.17-31.

<sup>160</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VII: 404).

<sup>161</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VII: 440)

<sup>162</sup> Dobson, p.158.

<sup>163</sup> Fasick, *Vessels of Meaning*, p. 29.

<sup>164</sup> *Grandison*, p. (VI: 209).

on rearing children; it can also be realistically supposed that the perfect Harriet would breastfeed her children. In this novel Richardson offers a positive perspective on maternal breastfeeding and rejects the practice of swaddling.

Shortly after the publication of *Sir Charles Grandison*, Richardson received a letter from one who signed himself BF, ‘a young Man, acknowledging reformation in a prison from Libertine and extravagant courses, on reading the contrast between Sir Charles’s Rewarded piety and goodness, and Sir Hargrave’s Depair and miserable Exit.

BF writes:

I’m now determin’d during my stay in confinement, & when in the world to make virtue and honour to be the standard and Governour of all my actions & as real happiness must infallibly be the consequence, I shall always esteem you as the source of every Good that my hereafter accrue to [me].<sup>165</sup>

Even though all he seemed to do was for the benefit of others, the character of Grandison was denigrated because he seemed disingenuous. He was devoted to his mother, he did not fight duels or sew his wild oats, and was a male virgin, all of which were sneered at. He was a “mother’s boy” and not ashamed to say so, which this provokes the larger social question as to why “mother’s boy” has long been and remains a term of abuse.

As my reading indicates, the main focus on a good mother within *Sir Charles Grandison* is on Lady Grandison who is alluded to often within the text, in comparison, all the other mothers pale in significance. There is a litany of bad mothers who behave unsuitably and Sir Charles as the ‘good man’ is constantly ameliorating the situations that they have caused and also attempting to reform them. Although this thesis is centred on bad mothers, there is also a strong comment by Richardson on religion as it is predominant within the novel. Sir Charles’s mentor, Dr. Bartlett, is a clergyman and they are in continual contact. Richardson does not make overt political statements but

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raises the issue of religion between the young lovers, Sir Charles and Clementina, as it would involve the marriage of an Anglican and a Catholic which is a bone of contention. It particularly causes great unrest within the Italian family; Clementina's parents are upset and the General, Clementina's uncle, is so angry that he challenges Sir Charles to a duel. The religious riots of 1714 and 1745 created great unrest among Catholics. Richardson brings this matter to the fore with his discussion on the devastating effect of the problem of religion and what religion the future children of Clementina and Charles would adhere to. Clementina's melancholia is brought on her concerns about her religion and that she may have to raise her son in an alternate religion. With the introduction of Harriet, Richardson was able to delay the inevitability of her marriage while allowing Sir Charles to extricate himself from the situation. Sir Charles still appears altruistic as it was Clementina who set him free as she felt because of the circumstances she could not marry him.

While Richardson refers to breastfeeding in the previous two novels, within *Grandison* he takes the opportunity of using the character of Lady G. as a platform to eulogize breastfeeding. By describing the nurturing mother and her husband's delight in the act of breastfeeding, Richardson is presenting a positive perspective on this practice.

## CHAPTER FOUR

*Jean Jacques Rousseau and Utopian and Dystopian Mothers.*

‘We know nothing of childhood and with our mistaken notions the further we advance the further we go astray’.  
Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *Émile*.

The most interesting aspect of Richardson's influence on Rousseau is that both authors explored the theme of forbidden love and both placed great importance on maternal breastfeeding. The new appetite for restoration of feeling and sentiment and the desire for reality within fiction increased the popularity of Richardson's novels in France. B at de Muralt, Swiss author of the *Lettres sur Les Anglais et Les Francais* (1724), informs his fellow citizens that 'the English mind is superior to that of their cousins in France.'<sup>1</sup> His was not a guidebook but a large scale scrutiny into the English national character. Muralt had an ulterior motive: as a Swiss patriot, he was keen on warning his people against the debilitating influence of France. The similarities to direct quotations of the *Lettres* in the writings of Rousseau and Voltaire evidences their profound influence on them.<sup>2</sup> This energetic literary inquisitiveness is apparent by the translation of many of the contemporary English writings that are now considered classic. Benjamin W. Wells, American Professor of Modern Languages, claimed in the nineteenth century that Richardson was chosen by the French, not just because of his style but because it was the 'most cosmopolitan'.<sup>3</sup> This led the way for the Abb  Pr vost to translate the works of his fellow novelist Richardson, beginning with *Pamela*, in order to satisfy the voracious appetite for sentimentality of his contemporary countrymen and women. Because of his reputation, Pr vost's name drew an attention to Richardson that was not rendered to other English writers. Pr vost states that no work of his own had given him such delight as *Clarissa*, and indeed none of his own work

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Benjamin W. Wells, *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 11, No. 8 (Dec., 1896), pp. 225-232: 226, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2919329>, accessed 12/11/2009. Translator, literary critic and editor of Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tales

<sup>2</sup> See J.M.S. Tompkins, Review of *Lettres sur les Anglois et les Franois et sur les Voyages* by B.L. de Muralt: Charles Gould, ed. *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 12, no. 46 (April, 1936), pp.228-230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/510189>, accessed 11/12/2009.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Wells, p.228.



brought him as much renown as his translations of Richardson. No English writer was more widely read in France during the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Although Rousseau in *The Confessions* states: ‘I have never liked England or the English,’ his admiration for Richardson and emulation of his style is conspicuous in his celebrated novel, *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*, one of the most important French novels in the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Richardson’s influence also extended to Germany, most particularly in the plays of Lessing and the novels of Goethe. Wells notes the influence of Richardson on his French contemporaries and on *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*, in particular, ‘by which the jealous Rousseau first won universal applause and handed down the spirit of Richardson interpenetrated with his own.’<sup>6</sup> Wells also suggests that Rousseau’s autobiographical confessions were prompted by his jealousy, as his insolence was ignited by the approbation that greeted *Pamela* and *Clarissa*.<sup>7</sup>

Jacqueline Pearson writes that to all intents and purposes what was considered the most dangerous text during this period’s *index librorum prohibitorum* was Rousseau’s *Julie*, ‘the book that all mothers prohibited and all daughters longed to read.’<sup>8</sup> Richardson’s influence on this most important novel of sentiment written during the Enlightenment is evident by the use of the epistolary form and tone of the lay confessional to which it blended in so easily. He was persuaded by Richardson’s use of contemporary bourgeois personifications instead of the earlier gothic, romantic and

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<sup>4</sup> See Wells, p. 228. Wells sets up opposition between French and English novels when he wrote that within his novels Richardson conveyed the deep-seated Protestant religious attitude ‘that “steadiness of mind” as *Clarissa* calls it,’ which French readers enjoyed as a wonderful respite from the whimsicality of Marivaux’s *Marianne* or Prévost’s *Manon*. This was incorrect as the French were already working on the sentimental novel and in fact the French readers responded to it warmly.

<sup>5</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, Derek Matravers, ed. ([1767] London: Wordsworth Classics, 1996), p. 570; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*, Judith H. McDowell, ed. ([1761] Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Wells, p. 225.

<sup>7</sup> See Wells, p. 229.

<sup>8</sup> See Jacqueline Pearson, *Women’s Reading in Britain 1750-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 73.

heroic fiction, which included chivalrous or burlesque heroes.<sup>9</sup> The influence of *Pamela* and *Pamela II*, as well as all of *Clarissa*, are apparent within Rousseau's first novel.<sup>10</sup> By employing Richardson's letter-form, Rousseau tells the story of the heroine Julie, who falls in love with her tutor, Saint-Preux, in which we learn the innermost thoughts of the main characters.<sup>11</sup>

The influence of Richardson's *Clarissa* is more apparent in *Julie* than in any of his other novels. Rousseau admired it so much that in the *Lettre à d'Alembert* (1758), he writes that 'no one, in any language, has ever written a novel that equals or even approaches *Clarissa*.'<sup>12</sup> It was also honoured in an effusive eulogy by Rousseau's then close friend, Diderot: 'O Richardson, Richardson, — a man unique in my eyes, you shall be my reading at all times!' If Diderot is compelled by the need to sell his books, he will retain Richardson 'on the same shelf as Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles; and I shall read you all in turn.'<sup>13</sup> One of Diderot's motives for writing this eulogy was to make clear that the French translations of Richardson's works were limited, particularly *Clarissa*, by the Abbé Prévost, who had abridged them, omitting important scenes. The similarity in the subject matter and its management is particularly noticeable. *Clarissa* suppresses her love for Lovelace when he has shown himself undeserving of her, as Julie, Rousseau's heroine, overcomes her love for her tutor when she acquiesces to her father's wishes and marries his friend. Both characters correspond with their forbidden 'lovers' secretly and hide the letters from their families. Love does not bring either of

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<sup>9</sup> Benjamin Wells, p. 230.

<sup>10</sup> See Margaret Anne Doody, 'Samuel Richardson: Fiction and Knowledge', *The Cambridge Companion to The Eighteenth Century Novel*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1996), p. 105.

<sup>11</sup> See Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment, c.1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. (Routledge: London and New York, 2005), p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> See Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, ([1957] Pimlico: London, 2000), p. 219.

<sup>13</sup> See Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), p. 307, quoted in Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson*, (London: Macmillan, 1902), p. 202.

the characters any happiness. Both novels lead, albeit through different routes, to the same destructive end of the main protagonists. Within the two novels, the letters of the French Claire and the English Miss Howe play similar parts as confidantes to the heroines.

Julie is Rousseau's alternative version of Clarissa, although there are very many similarities, Rousseau alters the dynamics in the relationships. Both protagonists undergo ethical ordeals from both the family and the lover. Although she is unaware of it at the time, the lesser trial in Richardson is executed by the family, thus the greater ordeal is usurped by Lovelace. Clarissa believes the deadline that the family have given her to marry the vile but wealthy Mr. Solmes. She then informs Lovelace of this plan and he dupes her into running away with him. Afterwards in her letter to Anna Howe, she writes: 'I could tear my hair, on reconsidering what you write [as to the probability that the dreaded Wednesday was just a threat] to think that I should be thus tricked by this man.'<sup>14</sup>

Rousseau, while keeping this configuration, makes a number of adjustments. Saint-Preux rather than Julie goes through the ordeals; Julie by sending her lover away has him endure his first trial, which is excruciating to him. Believing Julie to be dying with smallpox, Saint-Preux comes back to visit her, where he also is infected. Both survive but her lover is exiled again by her father, who refuses to capitulate on his choice of partner. Saint-Preux has to respond to Julie's letter asking him to release her from her vow not to marry without his consent.<sup>15</sup> It is Lovelace and Julie rather than Clarissa and Saint-Preux that are the instigators of the ordeals. Many incidents occur in *Julie* that emulate *Clarissa*, such as Lovelace's decision to give financial protection to

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<sup>14</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady*, Angus Ross, ed. ([1747-8] London: Penguin, 1985), p. 224.

<sup>15</sup> See Gregory L. Ulmer, 'Clarissa and la Nouvelle Héloïse', *Comparative Literature*, vol. 24, no.4 (Autumn, 1972), pp. 289-398: 291, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1769457>, accessed 13/11/2009.

Rosebud and Julie's decision to send her lover to help her former maid, Fanchon Regard.<sup>16</sup>

Rousseau is influenced by Richardson but he does not copy him; Judith H. McDowell states that Rousseau's tone is not quite as solemn or as moralistic as that of Richardson.<sup>17</sup> Richardson offers prurient spectacles to the reader whilst Rousseau avoids vivid intimate scenes between the lovers; he gives slightly different perspectives on relations within the novel. In *Clarissa* the most vivid description of intimacy is in Lovelace's letter to Belford when he describes how, having 'imprinted a kiss on her sweet lips,' he was encouraged at so gentle a repulse then with his other hand he 'drew aside the handkerchief that concealed the beauty of beauties, and pressed with burning lips the charmingest breast that ever my ravished eyes beheld.'<sup>18</sup> Conversely, within Rousseau's *Julie*, the author puts an incestuous perspective on the depiction in minute detail of the physical intimacy between Julie and her father and also the intimacy with her cousin, Claire. Tony Tanner suggests that 'nothing remotely comparable in physical contact is ever evoked as occurring between Julie and Saint-Preux.'<sup>19</sup> Julie's father, furious at her refusal to marry his friend Wolmar, is violent with her when he pulls her

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<sup>16</sup> When Lovelace is staying at an inn near Clarissa's home he is approached by the grandmother of Rosebud who realizes his charisma over women and begs him not to defile her: 'I charge thee, that thou do not ... crop my Rosebud' (p. 162). Lovelace's ego is cajoled by this recognition of his supremacy and consents to be the granddaughter's protector. When he hears that a young carpenter and Rosebud are in love he agrees 'to join a hundred pounds to Johnny's aunt's hundred pounds, to make one innocent couple happy' (p.163). Lovelace writing to Belford states: 'I make it my rule, whenever I have committed a very capital enormity, to do some good by way of atonement' (p. 163). This leads to Clarissa's misunderstanding of his true character. Julie's support for Fanchon Regard gives a variation of the Rosebud episode. While Julie's parents are away, she receives a letter from her former maid asking for help. The reason for the anguish is that Fanchon's lover, Claude Anet, enlisted to clear their debts and they cannot marry. Instead of manipulating the circumstances of her parents' absence, Julie decides to be altruistic and sends her lover on an assignment to intervene on behalf of the betrothed couple. This selflessness works to their advantage as the mother returns home without warning. Julie writes 'It is more advantageous to us than it seems, and if we should have tried to do through skill what we have done through charity, we should have not had more success' (p. 103). Both incidents distract attention from the real motives of Lovelace and Julie.

<sup>17</sup> See Judith H. McDowell, *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* by Jean Jacques Rousseau ([1761] Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> *Clarissa*, p. 705.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Nicole Fermon, 'Domesticating Women, Civilizing Men: Rousseau's Political Program', *The Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 35, No. 3 (August, 1993), pp. 431-442: 439, <http://www.jstor.org/stable.4121219>, accessed 16/10/2008.

onto his lap and she covers his face with kisses and bathes it with tears. Julie declares: 'For myself, as I told him, I should think myself only too happy to be beaten everyday for this reward, and there was no treatment so harsh that a single caress from him could not efface it from my heart.'<sup>20</sup> Tanner observes that this perplexity of yearning and authority indicates a chaos within western family formation, bringing a foreboding about the feelings and traditions that this novel attempts to honour.<sup>21</sup> Nicole Fermon maintains that as one of the biggest bestsellers of the eighteenth century, *Julie* was 'an important tool for understanding Rousseau's short term blueprint for the reform of contemporary society.'<sup>22</sup>

John Locke, who anticipated Rousseau by nearly a century, played a significant role from the 1670s onwards in all aspects of legal, philosophical, economic and social reform. In *The British Medical Journal*, M.V.C. Jeffreys writes that 'John Locke is entitled to be counted among the originators of child-centred education' and 'his writings influenced Rousseau.'<sup>23</sup> Indeed within *Émile*, while discussing childcare Rousseau is complimentary when he refers to him as 'that wise man, Locke.'<sup>24</sup> Richardson's novels reflect the contemporary growing interest in maternity.

While Richardson references Locke in *Pamela I* and *II*, there is a greater emphasis on Locke in *Pamela II*. When Pamela has to write a critique for Mrs. B. on Locke, she states: 'Mr. B. asks me how I relish Mr. Locke's *Treatise on Education*? Which he put into my hands some time since ... I answered, Very well; and I thought it

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Fermon, p. 439.

<sup>21</sup> See Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations, The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 93.

<sup>22</sup> See Fermon, p. 432.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in M.V.C. Jeffreys, 'John Locke', *The British Medical Journal*, vol. 4, No. 5963 (Oct., 1974), pp. 34-35: 35, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20470635>, accessed 16/12/2009.

<sup>24</sup> *Émile*, p. 25.

was an excellent piece in the main.’<sup>25</sup> Rousseau’s *Émile*, written in 1762 almost sixty years after Locke’s death, is also strongly influenced by Richardson, in particular by Richardson’s celebration of maternal breastfeeding. This text had a huge effect throughout eighteenth-century Europe. Although there was an abundance of texts containing proposals of child-rearing reform, there was no serious challenge to the conventional wisdom until *Émile*.<sup>26</sup> What began as a treatise on education was developed by Rousseau into a half-treatise-half-novel on child-rearing. By attracting attention to the needs of children, he brought awareness to a large group of people and persuaded them to become involved in bringing them up, creating different attitudes towards infant feeding, maternal presence, education of children and men’s increased interest and control over the more intimate aspects of child-rearing, especially among the more influential classes. Rousseau’s revolutionary ideas at that period, which included the care of children from childhood to adulthood, are still controversial to this day.<sup>27</sup>

The motif of breastfeeding is repeated many times within Richardson’s novels. His specific concern regarding the examination of maternal breastfeeding is evident from the footnote he wrote in the third edition of *Clarissa* three years after its initial publication. Richardson particularly refers to the argument in *Pamela II* ‘between Mr. B. and his Pamela, on the important subject of mothers being nurses to their own children.’<sup>28</sup> He first alluded to the topic of breastfeeding in *Pamela I* but within *Pamela II* it is referred to many times. Richardson is concurring with Locke’s view that children should be breastfed by the mother. Within *Clarissa*, there is less emphasis on

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<sup>25</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, vol. 2, M. Kinkead-Weekes, ed. ([1741] London: Everyman’s Library, 1969), p. 371.

<sup>26</sup> See Jimack, ed. *Émile*, p. xvi.

<sup>27</sup> See Jimack, p. xvii.

<sup>28</sup> See Ruth Perry, ‘Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, No.2 (Oct., 1991), p. 225, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3704034> accessed 22/8/2008.

breastfeeding; Richardson describes Lovelace's flight of the imagination of the deflowered Clarissa breastfeeding his imaginary twins. It would be assumed by readers that had she borne children, Clarissa would have been an exemplary mother and would have breastfed her children. Milk plays a vital role within *Clarissa* as the significance of her wet nurse, Mrs. Norton, as a 'true' mother must be underscored and also the dairy farm which is the cause of so much contention. Richardson is constantly extolling the virtues of breastfeeding but within *Pamela II*, he also vigorously condemns swaddling, Pamela refers to Locke's advice for child-rearing and is scathing when she writes her reaction and description of a swaddled child.<sup>29</sup> Later in this chapter I discuss the descriptions of swaddling.

In *Confessions*, Rousseau writes: 'Diderot has paid great compliments to Richardson upon the enormous variety of his situation and the numbers of characters introduced by him ... the romances of Richardson ... cannot, in this respect be compared to mine.'<sup>30</sup> He appears to be envious when in the endnote to *Julie*, Rousseau mounts a thinly veiled attack on his predecessor's mind:

I cannot conceive what pleasure one can take in imagining and describing the character of a scoundrel, in putting oneself in his place while representing him, in lending him the most imposing brilliance. I greatly pity the authors of so many tragedies full of horrors, who spend their lives in making people act and speak whom one cannot hear nor see without suffering. It seems to me that one ought to sigh to be condemned to such cruel work; those who make an amusement of it must be indeed devoured by zeal for public usefulness. As for me, I sincerely admire their talent and their fine wit, but I thank God for not having given them to me.<sup>31</sup>

Rousseau's philosophical texts are controversial and he is regarded as the spiritual father of everything from socialism to fascism. Contemporary readers and moralists of *The Social Contract* (1762) reacted to it in the same way as the later writings of Karl

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<sup>29</sup> *Pamela*, Part. II, p. 375.

<sup>30</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 535.

<sup>31</sup> See *Julie*, p. 409.

Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). He was treated as a celebrity among the rich and famous and appears to have had an endless number of wealthy people, including a surprising number of women, who were willing to support him financially and otherwise.<sup>32</sup> *The Confessions*, which he began writing in 1766, one of the great confessional journals of the modern period, was itself influenced by *Confessions of St. Augustine*, the first western autobiography written between AD 397 and AD 398, charting Augustine's wayward youth and subsequent conversion to Christianity.<sup>33</sup> Rousseau was continually examining himself and his excessive narcissism was similar to the traits found in Daniel Defoe's characters.<sup>34</sup> Rousseau was living in exile in England, which was a country he acknowledged that he hated 'and all the eloquence of Madame de Boufflers, far from overcoming my dislike, only seemed to increase it, without my knowing why.'<sup>35</sup> He was suspicious and apprehensive and had convinced himself that others were plotting to destroy his reputation while he was alive and also to diminish his status after death for future generations.<sup>36</sup> A part of the reason for writing his 'self-justifying autobiographical works' was to preserve his name for posterity.<sup>37</sup> Readers were perplexed when they read within his text seemingly frivolous and demeaning particulars such as being told to leave Mme Basile's house, enjoying the spanking by Mlle Lambercier and exposing himself in public. Rousseau uses this text to divest himself of culpability; by acknowledging his bad behaviour he is justifying it.<sup>38</sup> Rousseau almost suggests that shamelessness can efface guilt.

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<sup>32</sup> See *Confessions*, p.v .

<sup>33</sup> See *Confessions*, p. ix. Henry Chadwick, *Saint Augustine: Confessions*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>34</sup> See Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 75.

<sup>35</sup> *Confessions*, p. 570.

<sup>36</sup> *Confessions*, p.v.

<sup>37</sup> Jimack , p. xx.

<sup>38</sup> *Confessions*, p. v.



In *Confessions*, Rousseau writes that when his father returned from his post as watchmaker to the Sultan of Constantinople and his mother became pregnant: ‘I was the unhappy fruit of this return. Ten months later I was born, a weak and ailing child; I cost my mother her life, and my birth was the first of my misfortunes.’<sup>39</sup> In a somewhat upsetting anecdote in *Émile*, he relates the tale of a mother’s reply to her young son when he enquires where babies come from. The mother crudely replies with decisiveness: ‘My son, women pass them with pains that sometimes cost them their lives.’ Rousseau writes: ‘Let fools laugh and silly people be shocked; but let the wise inquire if it is possible to find a wiser answer and one which would better serve its purpose.’<sup>40</sup> This statement reflects the history of how the infant Jean-Jacques had cost the life of his mother as she had died of puerperal fever three days after his birth.<sup>41</sup> The loss of Suzanne Bernard Rousseau was to affect his whole life; he was inclined to see motherhood in an emotional and romantic fashion. This is apparent when in old age he wrote earnestly to a young man seeking his guidance: ‘A son who quarrels with his mother is always wrong ... The right of mothers is the most sacred I know, and in no circumstances can it be violated without crime.’<sup>42</sup>

Throughout his life Rousseau acquired many surrogate mothers. Isaac, his father, remained in the family home following the death of his wife, his young single sister, was also called Suzanne, moved in with her brother to help care for his two sons.

Rousseau describes their relationship:

I was always with my aunt, sitting or standing by her side, watching her at her embroidery or listening to her singing; and I was content. Her cheerfulness, her gentleness and her pleasant face have stamped so deep and lively an impression on my mind that I can still see her manner, look, and attitude ... This

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<sup>39</sup> *Confessions*, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> *Émile*, p. 215.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Leo Damrosch, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007), pp. 7, 221.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 8.

excellent woman's cheerfulness of soul banished dreaminess  
and melancholy from herself and all around her.<sup>43</sup>

Years later when he was well-known and she was an old woman, Rousseau's aunt sent a letter to him which was dictated by a friend, in which she described her 'maternal tenderness' for him, finishing the letter with the phrase: 'from your affectionate and tender friend and aunt.' This same friend, in another letter to Rousseau, wrote: 'We've talked about you as the dearest object of her affection.'<sup>44</sup> He describes how: 'One of my father's sisters, an amiable and virtuous young woman, took such care of me that she saved my life.' He tells how he wrote to her stating: 'Dear aunt, I forgive you for having preserved my life; and I deeply regret that, at the end of your days, I am unable to repay the tender care which you have lavished upon me at the beginning of my own.'<sup>45</sup> Aunt Suzanne became Madame Gonceru and in March 1767, he organized an income of one hundred *livres* income for her, which was always conscientiously paid no matter what troubles he was going through.<sup>46</sup>

Jacqueline Faramand, his nursemaid, was another replacement mother for Rousseau; she was kind to him and comforted him when necessary. He also wrote to her when he became well known to describe his affection for her, like his aunt he believed that she was responsible for his prolonged life. He rather bizarrely wrote: 'I often say to myself amidst my sufferings that if my good Jacqueline had not taken such pains to preserve me when I was little, I would not have suffered such great misfortunes after I grew up.'<sup>47</sup>

Having escaped from his apprenticeship and master he met an elderly priest named Benoît de Pontverre, who wined and dined him. This was not unusual for a priest

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<sup>43</sup> *Confessions*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> *Confessions*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>46</sup> *Confessions*, p. 6.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 13.

at that time as it was well known that Catholic priests outside Geneva treated prospective converts well.<sup>48</sup> Later, carrying a letter of introduction from M. de Pontverre, Rousseau set off to Annecy, where he met Madame de Warens, who arranged for him to travel to Turin to be educated for Catholicism. Approximately three years later, having endured much hardship, he returned to de Warens home. She was pleased to see him and said to him affectionately ‘Poor little one ... here you are again then? I knew you were too young for the journey. I am glad, at any rate, that it has not turned out so badly as I had feared.’<sup>49</sup> Rousseau was pleased when Mme de Warens said that he could reside with her; some time afterwards he heard her stating: ‘they can say what they like, but since providence has sent him back to me, I’m resolved not to abandon him.’<sup>50</sup> Rousseau had found another surrogate mother; she called him ‘Little One’ and he called her ‘Mamma’, having lost his mother and then Suzanne he craved another. ‘Mamma (Maman)’ was a general expression for the mistress of a household in the Savoie; as a youth, it would be inappropriate to call her by her first name and ‘Madame’ would be too formal.<sup>51</sup> He writes:

For me she was the tenderest of mothers, who never sought her own pleasure, but always what was best for me; and if sexuality entered at all into her attachment for me, it did not alter its character, but only tendered it more enchanting, and intoxicated me with the delight of having a young and pretty mamma whom it was delightful to me to caress — I say caress in the strictest sense of the word, for it never occurred to her to be sparing of kisses and the tenderest caresses of a mother, and it certainly never entered my mind to abuse them.<sup>52</sup>

Leo Damrosch writes that when Mme. de Warens began to be aware of his aptitude and improvement, Rousseau felt much more self-confident. A scholar of Rousseau alluded to this period as ‘the most fertile years when maternal wings incubated an unknown

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<sup>48</sup> See Damrosch, p. 45.

<sup>49</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 99.

<sup>50</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 100.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 70.

<sup>52</sup> *Confessions*, p. 102

genius.<sup>53</sup> During this time Rousseau wrote over two hundred lines of a poem called *The Orchard of Mme de Warens* (1739) which he had privately printed. It amalgamates much wounded egotism with admiration of Mme. de Warens who ‘I dare to call by the tender name of Mother.’ The poem begins with the tone of innocence: ‘Orchard dear to my heart, abode of innocence, honouring the finest days that heaven has granted me,’ and ends with him asserting his virtue: ‘The ills that overwhelm my body are but occasion to affirm my virtue.’<sup>54</sup> Damrosch claims that in between are insipid praises and righteous statements regarding gossip about de Warens’s relationship with her young dependent, who believed that her only genuine shortcoming was too much kindness.<sup>55</sup>

While Rousseau was content with having de Warens as a surrogate mother, it almost seemed incestuous when she made a surprising suggestion. In the autumn of 1732, she had organized to spend a whole day alone with Rousseau while walking in a garden outside the town. Rousseau realized that she was detailing the circumstances under which she would have sexual relations with him; she also suggested that he take time to think about it.<sup>56</sup> He was apprehensive as he states:

Having so long called her mamma, having enjoyed with her the intimacy of a son, I had become accustomed to look upon myself as one. I believe that this was really the cause of the little eagerness I felt to possess her, although she was so dear to me ... she was for me more than a sister, more than a mother, more than a friend, even more than a mistress; and for that very reason she was not mistress for me. In short, I loved her too well to desire to possess her; that is most clearly prominent in my ideas.<sup>57</sup>

Rousseau admits to absolutely dreading the day and attempts to infer that Mme. de Warens was being altruistic because she gave herself to him: ‘I admit to feeling melancholic and crying many times throughout,’ he sadly states: ‘I felt as if I had been

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<sup>53</sup> See Damrosch, p. 106.

<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 146.

<sup>55</sup> See Damrosch, p. 146.

<sup>56</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 189.

<sup>57</sup> *Confessions*, pp. 189-190.

guilty of incest'.<sup>58</sup> Rousseau was very much distressed by this change in their relationship; this was his substitute mother and he had her on a pedestal. Rousseau's epitome of the pure and decent woman did not include sexuality; he felt he was demeaning Mme. de Warens whom he considered akin to the Virgin Mary.<sup>59</sup> His fantasies salvaged his conscience as he imagined himself in bed with other women. He explains:

The need for love devoured me in the midst of gratification. I had a tender mother, a dear friend, but I needed a mistress; I imagined one in her place ... If I had believed I was holding Maman in my arms, my embraces would have been no less lively, but all of my desire would have been extinguished.<sup>60</sup>

Having initially taken the place of the mother he never knew, obviously it did not feel appropriate that de Warens should be his lover and Rousseau must have been conscious that it was improper, as he seemed uncomfortable.<sup>61</sup> Rousseau developed many different types of so defined illnesses, many most likely psychosomatic; it persuaded Mme. de Warens to be his Maman again. She took care of him and doted on him. Rousseau says: 'I became completely her work, completely her child, and more so than if she had been my real mother.'<sup>62</sup> She chose to act as his mother voluntarily though she was not obliged to; while she was nursing him he could enjoy the physical closeness without the additional anxiousness of sexual desire.<sup>63</sup> He was always adamant that her feelings for him were not erotic but that she had sex with him to safeguard him from debauchery with other women.<sup>64</sup> He defends her by saying: 'I repeat it: all her faults were due to her errors, none to her passions.'<sup>65</sup> This was what Rousseau was referring to earlier in *Confessions* what he stated: 'It will be objected that, in the end, we had relations of a

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<sup>58</sup> *Confessions*, p. 190.

<sup>59</sup> See Damrosch, p. 115.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 115.

<sup>61</sup> See Damrosch, p. 116.

<sup>62</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 123.

<sup>63</sup> See Damrosch, p. 123.

<sup>64</sup> See Damrosch, p. 114.

<sup>65</sup> *Confessions*, p. 190.

different character; I admit it, but I must wait a little — I cannot say all at once.’<sup>66</sup> When Mme. de Warens began being intimate with a new young man, she wanted to continue her physical relationship with Rousseau. He was horrified and declared:

No, mamma ... I love you too deeply to degrade you; the possession of you is too precious for me to be able to share it with another; the regrets which I felt when you first bestowed yourself upon me have increased with my affection: I cannot retain possession of you at the same price. I shall always worship you: remain worthy of it: I have still greater need to respect than to possess you ... I would rather die a thousand times than seek an enjoyment which degrades one whom I love.<sup>67</sup>

Rousseau goes on to say that ‘From that moment I only regarded this dear mamma with the eyes of a real son.’<sup>68</sup> Rousseau decided to withdraw all ‘hatred and envy’ he had for his replacement and to become better acquainted with him and take on the task of educating and mentoring this young man in a similar manner to Claude Anet, de Warens’s former lover, who had acted as Rousseau’s mentor. It is likely that Rousseau was condescending towards this interloper, as he considered Rousseau an irritant and treated him with disdain.<sup>69</sup>

In 1740, Rousseau agreed to become a tutor to the two young sons of a M. de Mably, in Lyon; he was not successful at this post and only remained there for about a year.<sup>70</sup> He writes:

Disgusted with a profession for which I was ill-adapted, and with a very troublesome situation, which had nothing agreeable for me, after a year’s trial, during which I had spared no pains, I resolved to leave my pupils, feeling convinced that I should never succeed in bringing them up properly.<sup>71</sup>

It was fortuitous because even though he was not suited for the position it encouraged Rousseau to consider education and subsequently to write an account of it, which he

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<sup>66</sup> *Confessions*, p. 102.

<sup>67</sup> *Confessions*, p. 190.

<sup>68</sup> *Confessions*, p. 190.

<sup>69</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 256.

<sup>70</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 261.

<sup>71</sup> *Confessions*, p. 261.

gave to M. de Mably.<sup>72</sup> He was influenced by Michel de Montaigne and John Locke while writing this educational treatise. Maurice Cranston writes that Rousseau's suggestions were not that radical and did not go much further than the writings of Locke, whose *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* was available in French translation, and Locke's French follower, Charles Rollin, the author of the well-known *Traité des Études* (1726-31), a summary of what was even then an improved and pioneering structure of education.<sup>73</sup> Rousseau had failed as a father and as a tutor, prior to composing *Émile*. Despite this, he still felt confident enough to comment on education with his early writings and proposals, which were expanded by Rousseau later in *Émile*, which he published in 1762, the same year as *The Social Contract*.<sup>74</sup>

James H. Warner states that *The Library* (1762) observed that *Émile* was 'awaited by the curious and learned ... with the utmost impatience.'<sup>75</sup> When writing to a correspondent in 1764 he remarks:

You are quite right to say that it is impossible to form an *Émile*, but I cannot believe that you take the book which bears this name for a true treatise on education. It is a rather philosophical work on the principle ... that *man is naturally good*.<sup>76</sup>

In the *Dialogues* later he explains that *Émile* is 'merely a treatise on the original goodness of man, intended to show how vice and error, alien to his constitution, are introduced into it from outside and imperceptibly distort it'.<sup>77</sup>

John Locke's treatise on education in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) was written almost seventy years before Rousseau wrote *Émile*. Locke explains: 'We have reason to conclude, that great Care is to be had of the forming Children's

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<sup>72</sup> See Jimack, p.xvii.

<sup>73</sup> See Maurice Cranston, *Jean-Jacques: The early life and work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1712-1754* (London: Penguin, 1983), p.148.

<sup>74</sup> Cranston, p.148.

<sup>75</sup> Quoted in James H. Warner, 'Emile in Eighteenth-Century England', *PMLA*, vol. 59. No.3 (Sept., 1944), pp. 773-791, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/459384>, accessed 12/11/2009.

<sup>76</sup> See Jimack, pp. xx.

<sup>77</sup> See Jimack, pp. xxi.

*Minds*, and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their Lives always after.’<sup>78</sup> For over a century, it was the most important philosophical work on education in England. It was translated into almost all of the major written European languages during the eighteenth century and nearly every European writer on education after Locke, including Rousseau, acknowledged its influence.<sup>79</sup> Locke’s theory of mind is often quoted as the influence on modern understanding of individuality and uniqueness, playing an important part in the work of later philosophers such as Hume, Rousseau and Kant. The Lockean concept of the *tabula rasa* prefigures Rousseau’s understanding of original or ‘natural’ goodness.

Rousseau says he is not concerned if men regard *Émile* as just a novel. However, it should, he believes, be the history of the species, and provides the important aspect to *Émile*.<sup>80</sup> Immanuel Kant maintained that it is ‘the work which attempts to reconcile nature with history, man’s selfish nature with the demands of civil society, hence, inclination with duty. Man requires a healing education which returns him to himself.’<sup>81</sup> In this book Rousseau considered that man had for the first time an insight into the main beliefs of human nature. Allan Bloom states that it is a book with an ideology which becomes more profound; he compares it to Plato’s *Republic* which it is supposed to compete with or outshine.<sup>82</sup> Although it was Rousseau’s estimation that it was his finest book, it is not acknowledged as such. Voltaire did not regard Rousseau as a noteworthy writer; he derided the *Discourse on Inequality*, *Julie* and *Émile*. He dismissed him with critical remarks: ‘The author of *Émile* is like a child who thinks he has done something impressive when he blows soap bubbles or makes ripples by

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<sup>78</sup> Quoted in Deborah Simonton, p. 34.

<sup>79</sup> See Simonton, ‘Women and Education’, c.1690-1800’, *Women’s History: Britain, 1700-1850*, Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. ((Routledge: London and New York, 2005), p. 35.

<sup>80</sup> See Allan Bloom, ‘The Education of Democratic Man: *Emile*’, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Harold Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1988), p.149.

<sup>81</sup> Quoted in Bloom, p. 149.

<sup>82</sup> See Bloom, p. 150.



spitting into a well.’<sup>83</sup> Kant was most prominent among those philosophers who admired Rousseau’s views; he argued that ‘its publication was an event comparable to the French Revolution.’<sup>84</sup> He is supposed to have been so besotted with the book that he abandoned his usual daily routine in order to continue reading it. In Kant’s essay *Perpetual Peace* and in *Metaphysic of Morals* there are parts that are practically copies of Rousseau’s writings.<sup>85</sup>

The German philosopher, Ernest Cassirer, one of the foremost interpreters of neo-Kantian thought in the twentieth century, asserts that the fundamental idea of *Émile* is based on a number of precepts: because the pupil is to be taught freedom of willpower and disposition, no physical barriers should be taken away. He is not to be protected from anguish, exertion or hardship, but is to be eagerly safeguarded from aggressive intimidation by others. He should become familiar with cravings and desires from a very young age and should be taught how to deal with these issues; he is also to be protected from the oppression of men.<sup>86</sup>

Mothers and nurses, no less than fathers and masters, regularly inflicted corporal punishment on children. Rousseau disagrees with this type of punishment; he advocates the avoidance of physical chastisement, yet he is far from being lenient with *Émile* as the outcome for *Émile*’s bad behaviour is mental rather than physical.<sup>87</sup> It affects the child’s self-regard, unless physical punishment includes allowing natural consequences of actions to follow which may result in it being the physically tougher form of punishment. He recommends that the sensitivity as well as the intelligence of the child be educated at an early age and those new methods for gratifying and

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<sup>83</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 389.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Bloom, p.150.

<sup>85</sup> See N.J.H. Dent, *A Rousseau Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> See Ernst Cassirer, ‘The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Harold Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1988), p. 23.

<sup>87</sup> Maurice Cranston, *The Noble Savage: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1754-1762* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 177.

reprimanding him must be cautiously thought out. He advocates particularly Spartan training as well as advising parents to understand their children and not overindulge them.<sup>88</sup>

Debates about child rearing continued in Europe throughout the century. In the 1760s, heavily influenced by Western literature and horrified by the huge infant mortality rate, Russians began investigating children and their environment. I.I. Betskoi had text books and pamphlets published containing the proposals of Locke and Rousseau that explained their ideas regarding the upbringing of children.<sup>89</sup>

In *Émile*, Rousseau argues that the child is unblemished when born and is afterwards contaminated by society. He strongly centred attention on those elements that were character building; he changed how education was perceived and how academic instruction and rearing should be observed within the social order.<sup>90</sup> In the Preface to *Émile* Rousseau explains his reasons for his treatise:

We know nothing of childhood; and with our mistaken notions the further we advance the further we go astray. The wisest writers devote themselves to what man ought to know, without asking what a child is capable of learning ... Begin thus by making a more careful study of your scholars, for it is clear that you know nothing about them; yet if you read this book with that end in view, I think you will find that it is not entirely useless ... Fathers and mothers, what you desire that you can do. May I count on your goodwill?<sup>91</sup>

Rousseau focuses awareness on the distinct needs of children. His ethos, that nature is good and culture bad, assumes that wisdom is largely a matter of ‘unlearning’— an idea which had a big influence on Romanticism. It took a hardy specimen of Spartan boyhood to survive Spartan schooling. Instead of just addressing mothers, he was encouraging fathers to have an interest in the rearing of children rather than the end-

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<sup>88</sup> See Cranston, p. 177.

<sup>89</sup> See Patrick P. Dunn, *The History of Childhood*, Lloyd De Mause, ed. (New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1995), p. 384. [Betskoi was a favourite of Catherine the Great]

<sup>90</sup> See Deborah Simonton, p. 35.

<sup>91</sup> *Émile*, pp. 1-3.

result, persuading large numbers that childhood was important and deserved the deliberation of intelligent adults.<sup>92</sup>

Contemporary views on women were that they would have a more constructive influence on society if they upheld the traditional roles of wives and mothers. This traditionally moral woman was praised by Rousseau in *Émile* when he asserts: ‘A virtuous woman is little lower than the angels.’<sup>93</sup> A recurrent topic in the influential *Spectator* was the glorification of the woman who tended to the needs of her family. Richard Steele wrote:

She is blameable or Praiseworthy according as her Carriage affects the House of her Father or her Husband. All she has to do in this World is contained within the Duties of a Daughter, a Sister, a Wife, and Mother.<sup>94</sup>

The veneration of motherhood and domestic life was also a popular theme for artists in the eighteenth century. Jean-Baptiste Grueze’s painting *The Beloved Mother* (1765) was an example of this genre prevalent at that time. It shows a contented looking mother surrounded by a gaggle of children, one of whom she had just breastfed. She gives an aura of satisfaction in her bright and orderly household. This painting was particularly admired by and written about by Diderot, who commented:

It preaches population and portrays with profound feeling the happiness and the inestimable rewards of domestic tranquillity. It says to all men of feeling and sensibility: Keep your family comfortable, give your wife children; give her as many children as you can; give them only to her and be assured of being happy at home.<sup>95</sup>

Rousseau extolled the traditional roles as wives and mothers, adamant that it was the most important instrument for social and moral improvement in a depraved period.

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<sup>92</sup> See Priscilla Robertson, *The History of Childhood*, Lloyd De Mause, ed. (New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1995). p. 407.

<sup>93</sup> Quoted in Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser, *A History of their Own* (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 121.

<sup>93</sup> Quoted in Anderson and Zinsser, p. 116.

<sup>94</sup> See Anderson and Zinsser, p. 117.

<sup>95</sup> See Anderson and Zinsser, p. 117.

However, as this thesis has demonstrated, these two roles sometimes conflicted. Modesty and chastity were very important for women and they were denounced for having sex outside marriage. Samuel Johnson remarks that upon female chastity ‘all the property of the world depends ... confusion of progeny constitutes the essence of the crime’ of adultery.<sup>96</sup> Rousseau compares marital infidelity to treason not just because a wife had sexual encounters but because she may be giving her husband children that are not his; consequently she is a bad mother:

The faithless wife is worse [than the faithless husband]; she destroys the family and breaks the bonds of nature; when she gives her husband children who are not his own, she is false both to him and society, thus her crime is not infidelity, but treason. To my mind, it is the source of dissension and of crime of every kind.<sup>97</sup>

Bad mothers are demonised in necessary ratio to good mothers being celebrated. The more wonderful, beautiful and inspiring the maternal role is supposed to be, the more horrific and evil are those who betray that role. Rousseau’s belief in the importance of the mother’s role in a child’s life is apparent in the first page of *Émile* when he addresses the mother:

Tender, anxious mother, I appeal to you. You can remove this young tree from the highway and shield it from the crushing force of social conventions. Tend and water it ere it dies. One day its fruit will reward your care. From the outset raise a wall round your child’s soul; another may sketch the plan, you alone should carry it into execution ... We lament the helplessness of infancy; we fail to perceive that the race would have perished had not man begun by being a child. We are born weak, we need strength; helpless, we need aid; foolish, we need reason. All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man’s estate, is the gift of education.<sup>98</sup>

In *Émile*, note 1, he is suggesting that the mother show a greater participation in the early education of their children. He states:

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<sup>96</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Penguin, 1979), p. 316.

<sup>97</sup> *Émile*, p. 388; Anderson and Zinsser, pp. 118-119.

<sup>98</sup> *Émile*, p. 5-6.

The earliest education is most important and it undoubtedly is woman's work. If the author of nature had meant to assign it to men he would have given them milk to feed the child. Address your treatises on education to the women, for not only are they able to watch over it more closely than men, not only is their influence always predominant in education, its success concerns them more nearly, for most widows are at the mercy of their children, who show them very plainly whether their education was good or bad.<sup>99</sup>

Rousseau's reverence for the mother is evident within this footnote when he declares:

There are occasions when a son may be excused for lack of respect for his father, but if a child could be so unnatural as to fail in respect for the mother who bore him and nursed him at her breast, who for so many years devoted herself to his care, such a monstrous wretch should be smothered at once as unworthy to live. You say mothers spoil their children, and no doubt that is wrong, but it is worse to deprave them as you do.<sup>100</sup>

Rousseau argues for education through nature and that everything would be brought into harmony with natural tendencies. Milk provides the crucial bond of primary socialization. It is criminal for the mother to withhold her milk and criminal for the child to deny love to his mother having received it. He describes two incompatible types of edifying structures, one is public and shared by many and the other is private and household. He writes: 'If you wish to know what is meant by public education, read Plato's *Republic*. Those who merely judge books by their titles take this for a treatise on politics, but it is the finest treatise on education ever written.'<sup>101</sup> Rousseau's pupil will not be educated for a profession but will be a man. 'Life is the trade I will teach him.'<sup>102</sup> In a tirade against swaddling, Rousseau maintains that swaddling is about restraint, constriction and coercion. He declares that civilized people come into the world and

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<sup>99</sup> *Émile*, p. 5.

<sup>100</sup> *Émile*, p. 5.

<sup>101</sup> *Émile*, p. 8.

<sup>102</sup> *Émile*, p. 10.

leave it as slaves; just as the baby is restrained with tightly wrapped fabric, the dead body is confined in the coffin.<sup>103</sup> He describes the practice of swaddling:

The child has hardly left the mother's womb, it has hardly begun to move and stretch its limbs, when it is deprived of its freedom. It is wrapped in swaddling bands, laid down with its head fixed, its legs stretched out, and its arms by its sides; it is wound round with linen and bandages of all sorts so that it cannot move. It is fortunate if it has room to breathe, and it is laid on its side so that water which should flow from its mouth can escape, for it is not free to turn its head on one side for this purpose. The new-born child requires to stir and stretch his limbs to free them from the stiffness resulting from being curled up so long. His limbs are stretched indeed, but he is not allowed to move them. Even the head is confined by a cap. One would think they were afraid the child should look as if it were alive. Thus the internal impulses which should lead to growth find an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the necessary movements. The child exhausts his strength in vain struggles, or he gains strength very slowly. He was freer and less constrained in the womb; he has gained nothing by birth.<sup>104</sup>

Rosamond Bayne-Powell gives a vividly graphic description of swaddling:<sup>105</sup>

A strong cotton swathe about six inches in width and ten to twenty feet long was then wound tightly round the baby's body, beginning at the arm-pits and going down below the hips. This, it was thought, would keep its spine straight, and prevent the infant from breaking its legs, as it assuredly must do, if it were allowed to kick them about. The tighter the swaddling clothes were pulled the better it was for the child, and in some instances the arms were enclosed as well. In many cases, particularly among the poor, the infant's clothes were sewn on in the autumn, and were not taken off till the following spring. No wonder that the mortality among babies was at its height during the winter months. If the child cried in agony and its face was convulsed those around it declared that it was in a fit and dosed it with Daffey's Elixir, Godfrey's Cordial or Dalby's Carminative. It was very seldom washed, for washing, as everybody knew, was most injurious, and clean linen sucked the nature out of the body and left it weak and debilitated. If the child cried it was of course immediately fed, and it continued to be fed at odd hours during the whole of the day and night.<sup>106</sup>

Lawrence Stone explains how for the first four months of their lives, babies were kept completely motionless, so constricted they were barely able to move their limbs. He

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<sup>103</sup> See *Émile*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>104</sup> Quoted in *Émile*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>105</sup> See Rosamond Bayne-Powell, *The English Child in the Eighteenth Century* (London: John Murray, 1939), p. 164.

<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Bayne-Powell, p. 164.

quotes the medical grounds for this ritual of swaddling, that ‘for tenderness the limbs of a child may easily and soon bow and bend and take diverse shapes’<sup>107</sup>. There was also a commonly held view that children without restraint would injure themselves. On the other hand, it was much easier for adults to care for a swaddled and severely restricted child as this lack of movement encouraged them to sleep for longer periods. The infant was more portable and could be hung on a wall on a peg without supervision and with no imminent danger. Since unswaddled infants required closer supervision, their unswaddling responsibilities have the necessary effect of defining women more rigidly in terms of their maternal responsibilities at the expense of other work they might undertake. The liberation of the child overdetermines women as a consequence and the campaign against swaddling accelerates the urgency of discourses treating good and bad motherhood.

In fact, the damage it caused these unfortunate children was astonishing. Generally, when the swaddled bandages were removed from boys they were allowed to be free. The ill-fated girls were very often enclosed in adult-like clothes which included a corset shape to encourage straight posture; this compression lead to deformation of their organs.<sup>108</sup> When two years old Elizabeth Evelyn died in 1655, the surgeon who examined her explained that the iron bodice caused her death:

[he] found her breast bone pressed very deeply inwardly, and he said two of her ribs were broken, and the straightness of the bodice upon the vitals occasioned this difficulty of breathing and her death.<sup>109</sup>

Rousseau attacks this custom and realistically asserts that this restriction of movement slows down the heartbeat and circulation, which only impedes the development,

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<sup>107</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 115.

<sup>108</sup> See Stone, pp. 115-116.

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 116.

strength and health of the child. He labels this practice as ‘absurd precautions’. He warns parents:

Where children are swaddled, the country swarms with the humpbacked, the lame, the bow-legged, the rickety, and every kind of deformity. In our fear lest the body should become deformed by free movement, we hasten to deform it by putting it in a press. We make our children helpless lest they should hurt themselves.<sup>110</sup>

Rousseau questions the basis for this brutal custom. He blames mothers for neglecting their first responsibility to care for and nurse their own offspring hence their children had to be assigned to hired nurses who would have to devote more attention to an unswaddled child. Stone repeats the assertion that swaddled children were hung from a nail while the nurses went about their business.<sup>111</sup> Rousseau calls on women to release their children from these restrictive garments:<sup>112</sup>

No cap, no bandages, nor swaddling clothes. Loose and flowing flannel wrappers, which leave its limbs free and are not too heavy to check his movements, not too warm to prevent his feeling the air ... you will see him gain strength from day to day. Compare him with a well swaddled child of the same age and you will be surprised at their different rates of progress.<sup>113</sup>

*The Tatler* (1709–1711) carried a satirical account of this treatment from the perspective of the child:

I lay very quiet, but the Witch, for no manner of reason, or provocation in the world takes me and binds my head as hard as possibly she could, then ties up both my legs, and makes me swallow down an horrid mixture. I thought it an harsh entrance into life to begin with taking physic, but I was forced to it or else must have taken down a great instrument in which she gave it to me ... I was bred by hand and anyone that stood next me gave me pap if I did but open my lips, so much that I was grown so cunning as to pretend myself asleep when I was not, to prevent my being crammed. But my grandmother began a loud lecture on the idleness of wives of this age who, for fear of their shapes, forbear suckling their own offspring. And ten nurses were immediately sent for, one was whispered to have a wanton eye and would soon spoil her milk, another was in a

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<sup>110</sup> *Émile*, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> *Émile*, p. 12; Stone, p. 368.

<sup>112</sup> *Émile*, p. 27.

<sup>113</sup> *Émile*, p. 31.



consumption, the third had an ill voice and would frighten me instead of lulling me to sleep. Exceptions were made against all but one country milch wench, to whom I was committed and put to the breast. This careless jade was eternally romping with the footman and downright starved me, insomuch that I daily pined away, and should never have been relieved had it not been that on the thirtieth day of my life a fellow of the Royal Society who had written on cold baths came to visit me and solemnly protested I was utterly lost for want of this method, upon which he soused me head and ears in a pail of water where I had the good fortune to be drowned'.<sup>114</sup>

Rousseau complains about women not satisfied with having relinquished breastfeeding, they no longer aspired to motherhood as it has become an unwanted responsibility. He asserts that it would be to the detriment to the future of Europe and would contribute to the decrease in population. He also objects to the deceptions used by young women who pretend to be eager to breastfeed their own children but who engineer matters so that they can be discouraged from it.<sup>115</sup> Such women invoke their delicate constitution and their frailty yet indulge themselves by dancing at balls and attending Theatres.<sup>116</sup> They trick their husbands into believing that it would be dangerous for them to breastfeed and fool him into making the decision to prevent her nursing. Typically, Rousseau does not consider the possibility of a 'Mr. B.', a jealous, anti-breastfeeding husband. The husband must forfeit affection for his child to appease his wife. He warns husbands that the time gained by the mother who sends her children off to be nursed may be spent with other men.<sup>117</sup> Elisabeth Badinter asserts:

Husbands in turn were not without responsibility for their wives' refusal to nurse. Some complained of their wives' nursing as a threat to sexuality and a restriction of pleasure. Clearly, some men found nursing women repulsive, with their strong smell of milk and their continually sweating breasts. For them nursing was synonymous with filth, a real antidote to love.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Quoted in Bayne-Powell, pp. 164-165.

<sup>115</sup> See *Émile*, p. 14.

<sup>116</sup> See Elisabeth Badinter, *French Feminist Thought, A Reader*, Toril Moi, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 159.

<sup>117</sup> See *Émile*, p. 14.

<sup>118</sup> Badinter, p. 159.

Rousseau associates a mother's affection and attention with breastfeeding, although the child can receive food from other sources, there is no substitute for a mother's love.<sup>119</sup> He claims that 'the woman who nurses another's child in place of her own is a bad mother; how can she be a good nurse?'<sup>120</sup>

Lawrence Stone relates a story written by Stephen Guazzo (which preceded *Émile* by almost a century and a half) that gives the child's perspective in *Civile Conversation* (1581), where a child speaks resentfully to its mother:

You bore me but nine months in your belly, but my nurse kept me with her teats the space of two years ... So soon as I was born, you deprived me of your company, and banished me from your presence.<sup>121</sup>

In his memoir, the Anglo-Dutch author, John Gabriel Stedman, tells a horrific tale about wet-nurses:

Four different wet-nurses were alternately turn'd out of doors on my account, and to the care of whom I had been entrusted, my poor mother being in too weak a condition to suckle me herself. The first of these bitches was turn'd off for having nearly suffocated me in bed; she having slept upon me till I was smothered, and with skill and difficulty restored to life. The second had let me fall from her arms on the stones till my head was almost fractured, and I lay several hours in convulsions. The third carried me under a moulder'd old brick wall, which fell in a heap of rubbish just the moment we had passed by it, while the fourth proved to be a thief, and deprived me even of my very baby clothes. Thus was poor Johnny Stedman weaned some months before the usual time.<sup>122</sup>

Rousseau suggests that by starting with the mothers, if they could be persuaded to care for their own children, that men could be reinstated to their original obligations.<sup>123</sup> He suggests that because the children have been sent to a wet nurse that 'nature is quenched in every breast' and that home life is in an upheaval. During Rousseau's lifetime, it was very prevalent in France for mothers to send children born in the metropolis to the

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<sup>119</sup> See *Émile*, p. 28.

<sup>120</sup> *Émile*, p.15.

<sup>121</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 83.

<sup>122</sup> Quoted in Stone, p. 272.

<sup>123</sup> See *Émile*, p. 15.

country to be nursed. A study of 'Parisian Infants and Norman Wet Nurses' shows that the majority of the wet-nursing business served the requirements of urban mothers who could not breastfeed their own infants, whether it was from their employment, pleasure or illness. Most of the infants after a number of months in the country were returned to their natural mothers.<sup>124</sup> Rousseau emphatically states:

But when mothers deign to nurse their own children, then will be a reform in morals; natural feeling will revive in every heart; there will be no lack of citizens for the state; this first step by itself will restore mutual affection. The charms of home are the best antidote to vice. The noisy play of children, which we thought so trying, becomes a delight; mother and father rely more on each other and grow dearer to one another; the marriage tie is strengthened. In the cheerful home life the mother finds her sweetest duties and the father his pleasentest recreation. Thus the cure of this one evil would work a wide-spread reformation; nature would regain her rights. When women become good mothers, men will be good husbands and fathers.<sup>125</sup>

Many authors had made a similar appeal to mothers but it was only after the publication of *Émile* that it had become popular in France. Breast milk will, in other words, reform the world and heal all corrupt familiar and societal relations. In his *Essay on Nursing* in 1747, Doctor William Cadogan had similar views to Rousseau on the rearing of children. He advocates cleanliness, fresh air, loose clothing and regular habits.<sup>126</sup> As the nursing mother was being idealised, representation of France as a breastfeeding mother would be used as a motif of the Republic in the wake of the French Revolution.<sup>127</sup> Rousseau's contemporary, Georges-Louis Declerc, Comte de Buffon, rather resentfully remarked that 'Monsieur Rousseau alone commands and gets himself obeyed.'<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> See George D. Sussman, 'Parisian Infants and Norman Wet Nurses in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Statistical Study', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 7, no.4 (Spring, 1977), pp. 637-653: 637, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/202885>, accessed 11/2/2010.

<sup>125</sup> *Émile*, p. 15.

<sup>126</sup> See Bayne-Powell, p. 167.

<sup>127</sup> See Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 23-24.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Cranston, p. 176.

Rousseau argues for women to suspend their social lives and return to the pleasure of the home and do their duties as mothers. He assures women that if they become worthy mothers they would receive love from their families and deference from society. He was particularly horrified by the middle and upper-class mothers who customarily sent their children to unhygienic or neglectful wet nurses in order to maintain their pre baby shape and indulge their husbands sexually.<sup>129</sup>

Rousseau disapproves of institutional schooling where children were taught by repetitious learning and bad habits before their maturity.<sup>130</sup> He avers: ‘All our wisdom is slavish prejudice, our customs consist in control, constraint, compulsion. Civilized man is born and dies a slave.’<sup>131</sup> Being educated in the Rousseau manner is being given the will to choose.<sup>132</sup> Historian Philippe Ariès claims that the concept of individual tuition was already in existence and was continuously represented as the ideal education. It was a topic that could be found in educational literature from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, but it was not until Rousseau’s *Émile* that it gained international popularity.<sup>133</sup> Ariès asserts that ‘Individual tuition and the boarding school became part of French life together.’<sup>134</sup>

Many of Rousseau’s detailed proposals were straightforward and practical, such as hygiene, which Rousseau says ‘is the only useful part of medicine, and hygiene is rather a virtue than a science.’<sup>135</sup> Recommending the elimination of rote learning and the teaching of fables; he also proposed the idea, innovative at the time, that each individual was distinctive and required autonomy to develop.<sup>136</sup> He was more interested

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<sup>129</sup> See *Émile*, p. 15.

<sup>130</sup> See Damrosch, p. 11.

<sup>131</sup> Quoted in Damrosch, p. 11.

<sup>132</sup> See Damrosch, p. 333.

<sup>133</sup> See Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood, A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), p. 269.

<sup>134</sup> Quoted in Ariès, p. 280.

<sup>135</sup> *Émile*, p. 26.

<sup>136</sup> See *Émile*, p. 251.

in the outcome of education rather than its technique. Many contemporary writers had criticized the monotonous repetitious learning and violent authority of traditional schooling, such as the English historian Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) is disparaging when he writes quoting Plato's most famous parable: 'A school is the cavern of fear and sorrow. The mobility of the captive youths is chained to a book and a desk ... They labour, like the soldiers of Persia, under the scourge.'<sup>137</sup>

Rousseau, whom as we discover within the novel and also in *Confessions*, has absolutely no faith in doctors and even suggested that there was collusion between doctors and mothers. He writes:

The league between the women and the doctors has always struck me as one of the oddest things in Paris. The doctors' reputation depends on the women, and by means of the doctors the women get their own way. It is easy to see what qualification a doctor requires in Paris if he is to become celebrated.'<sup>138</sup>

Rousseau complains that when a nurse is required by the rich, the choice is made by the doctor. He is derogatory about wet nurses when he suggests that 'the best nurse is the one who offers the highest bribe.'<sup>139</sup> He asserts that if he has to choose a nurse for Émile he will make the choice himself. He may not be as eloquent as the surgeon, but will be more trustworthy, and will be able to make rational decisions as the doctor's choice would be based on avarice.<sup>140</sup> Fildes has maintained that wet-nursing had been a relatively profitable livelihood for working-class women in the eighteenth century.<sup>141</sup>

Although Rousseau made many outlandish statements in his writings, he presented justification for the belief that fundamentally children are born good and capable of good sense, and their innate qualities need to be encouraged. During his

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<sup>137</sup> See Damrosch, p. 333.

<sup>138</sup> See *Émile*, p. 14, n. 1.

<sup>139</sup> *Émile*, p. 27.

<sup>140</sup> *Émile*, p. 27.

<sup>141</sup> Fildes, quoted in Julie Costello, 'Maria Edgeworth', *Inventing Maternity: Politics, Science and Literature, 1650-1865*, Susan C. Greenfield and Carol Barash, eds. (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), p. 180.

lifetime and afterwards, Rousseau's writings were fashionable and many influential conduct books by female writers were persuaded by his theories. One of his devotees was Maria Edgeworth, who with her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, helped to raise her younger siblings. Edgeworth wrote an interesting book called *Practical Education* which is deferential towards children's minds, offering appealing examples. That 'we should not prejudice either by our wisdom, or by our folly, children's assertion of their own values' was one of Maria Edgeworth's finest hypotheses.<sup>142</sup> In her early work, *Letters to Literary Ladies* (1795) and *The Parent's Assistant* (1796-1800), Edgeworth shows Rousseau's influence and an extreme concern for its time with the lack of the satisfactory education for women.<sup>143</sup>

Rousseau's influence can also be seen in Mary Robinson's *Walsingham; or, the Pupil of Nature*. Walsingham declares himself a pupil of nature because he obtains a Rousseauian education from his tutor Hanbury. This Rousseauian education should guide its pupils to develop natural kindness and to react to the kindness of others.<sup>144</sup> Having discovered the cousin Sidney is female, Hanbury discusses her education and refers to educational theorists Locke, Wollstonecraft, Rousseau and Chesterfield.<sup>145</sup>

Author and anti-slavery abolitionist, Thomas Day (1748-1789), an admirer of Rousseau, is quoted as saying that 'were all the books in the world to be destroyed ... the second book I should save, after the Bible, would be Rousseau's *Emilius* ... Every page is big with important truth.'<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Priscilla Robertson, p. 421.

<sup>143</sup> See Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 374.

<sup>144</sup> See Julie Shaffer, *Crossdressing and the Nature of Gender, Presenting Gender*, Chris Mounsey, ed. (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001), p. 150.

<sup>145</sup> See Shaffer, p. 150.

<sup>146</sup> Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 329. Thomas Day (1748-1789), British author and abolitionist, he was also a member of the Lunar Society along with his close friend Richard Lovell Edgeworth. He was an impractical high-minded eccentric who was an avid follower of Rousseau and his vision of women as quietly subservient. Day was well known for the children's book *The History of Sandford and Merton* (1783-1789), a moral story emphasizing Rousseau's educational ideals in *Émile* about the rearing of two

As recorded in *The Confessions*, Rousseau's friend Carrio was lecherously fond of women. As a diplomat, he could not have affairs with respectable women and was tired of pursuing other men's mistresses. He devised a plan that Rousseau claims was not uncommon in Venice. They both went and found a prepubescent girl, Anzoletta, whose mother was willing to sell her; they procured her for an affordable price and planned to rear her for future pleasure. Rousseau states: 'The difficulty was to find one with whom we should run no risk.'<sup>147</sup> Initially, Rousseau does not appear to find this distasteful or show apprehension about such an arrangement. They give the mother money and arrange for Anzoletta's keep. Afterwards, regretting his part in this procedure, Rousseau blames her 'unworthy mother' for allowing this transaction. Eventually, having become acquainted with her, Rousseau says: 'I felt that I should have dreaded connection with this child, after she had grown up, as an abominable incest.'<sup>148</sup> Carrio's attitude was similar to Rousseau's and they abandoned their quest.

Rousseau would not allow Émile to read novels.

I hate books; they only teach us to talk about things we know nothing about ... Since we must have books, there is one book which, to my thinking, supplies the best treatise on an education according to nature. This is the first book Émile will read; for a long time it will form his whole library, and it will always retain an honoured place ... it will always be read with delight, so long as our taste is unspoilt. What is this wonderful book? ... it is *Robinson Crusoe*.<sup>149</sup>

Rousseau believed that Émile would learn a great deal from this novel, that he should learn from the conduct of Crusoe, noting what he did well and also his mistakes, so that he could do better if he was to find himself in similar circumstances: 'This is the

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boys. Day's adoration of Rousseau had no restrictions, he took up Rousseau's plan of preparing a female for her role in the being of Sophie, who was to be his perfect wife. He adopted a twelve year old blonde girl from an orphanage and an eleven year old brown haired girl from the London Foundling Hospital. To avoid gossip, he brought them to France and attempted to emulate Rousseau's ideal of Sophie. The experiments failed and he abandoned his charges. He eventually married and lived a Spartan lifestyle with his wife.

<sup>147</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 311.

<sup>148</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 312.

<sup>149</sup> Quoted in *Émile*, p. 176.

genuine castle in the air of this happy age, when the child knows no other happiness but food and freedom.’<sup>150</sup> Crusoe on his island enjoys complete freedom from social boundaries which Rousseau himself longed for: ‘the idleness of society is tedious, because it is obligatory; that of solitude is delightful, because it is free and voluntary.’<sup>151</sup> Rousseau admired Robinson Crusoe because prior to Friday’s arrival he is omniscient and defies the narrow specialization of identity implied by a capitalist division of labour. The specificity of a profession has been removed from Crusoe on the island and he has to develop his autonomous self-sufficient self. Defoe’s novel is inspiring for both economists and educators as it makes Crusoe an icon for exiled people such as Rousseau.<sup>152</sup> Rousseau enjoyed living on the little Île de Saint-Pierre; Alexandre Deleyre wrote to him from Italy when he heard of Rousseau’s new sanctuary: ‘You recall Robinson to me; why can’t I be Friday.’<sup>153</sup> Rousseau’s pleasure is evident when he writes: ‘A day to be spent out of the island seemed to me a curtailment of my happiness; and to go beyond the circumference of the lake, was for me, to leave my element.’<sup>154</sup>

Michel Foucault in *Madness and Civilization*, quoting from eighteenth-century writings on the danger of exposure to novels, asserts that novels create an artificial environment, and are risky to those susceptible to instability; the modern authors’ efforts to present reality emulate fact, merely provides additional credence to erratic feelings they provoke in their female readers.<sup>155</sup> In order to reinforce the complex polymorphic ubiquity of ‘madness’ as a structuring narrative of ‘civilisation’, Foucault quotes the following:

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<sup>150</sup> Quoted in *Émile*, p. 176.

<sup>151</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 629.

<sup>152</sup> See Ian Watt, p. 33.

<sup>153</sup> See Damrosch, p. 397.

<sup>154</sup> See *Confessions*, p. 625.

<sup>155</sup> See Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Vintage, 1965), p. 219.



In the earliest epochs of French gallantry and manners, the less perfected minds of women were content with facts and events as marvellous as they were unbelievable; now they demand believable facts yet sentiments so marvellous that their own minds are disturbed and confounded by them; but everything seems to them without sentiment and without life, because they are trying to find what does not exist in nature.<sup>156</sup>

The novel perfectly represents the environment of distortion of all emotional responses:

The existence of so many authors had produced a host of readers, and continued reading generates every nervous complaint; perhaps of all the causes that have harmed women's health, the principal one has been the infinite multiplication of novels in the last hundred years ... a girl who at ten reads instead of running will, at twenty, be a woman with the vapors and not a good nurse.<sup>157</sup>

J. Paul Hunter asserts that among eighteenth-century critics and moralists on fictional narrative, the term "novel" was often linked with romance; commentators were concerned about the encouragement of indolence and the other negative influences associated with the reading of fiction.<sup>158</sup> *The Female Quixote* by Charlotte Lennox (1752) and Jane Austen's gothic parody, *Northanger Abbey* (1817), reflect the danger of novel reading. These novels epitomize the foolishness of the main protagonists, who are unduly influenced by their choice of literature, as discussed in previous chapters. For Rousseau, it is merely a matter of retaining critical distance, it is not the novel's fault, it is the reader's.<sup>159</sup> Vaporous novel-reading causes milk to dry up. Although many eighteenth-century novels celebrate maternity, it appears that inculcating a taste for novel reading in general is corrosive of the most primary biological maternal responsibilities. The periodical writer known as the Sylph wrote in 1795:

My sight is everywhere offended by these foolish, yet dangerous books. I find them on the toilette of fashion, and in the work-bag of the sempstresses; in the hands of the *lady, who*

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<sup>156</sup> Quoted in Foucault, p. 219.

<sup>157</sup> Quoted in Foucault, p. 219.

<sup>158</sup> See J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels, The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1990), p.25.

<sup>159</sup> See Anita Levy, 'Reproductive Urges', *Inventing Maternity: Politics, Science, and Literature, 1650-1865*, pp. 196, 205-206.

*lounges on the sofa, and of the lady, who sits at the counter. From the mistresses of nobles they descend to the mistresses of snuffshops – from the belles who read them in town, to the chits who spell them in the country. I have actually seen mothers, in miserable garrets crying for the imaginary distress of an heroine, while their children were crying for bread: and the mistress of a family losing hours over a novel in the parlour, while her maids, in emulation of the example, were similarly employed in the kitchen.*<sup>160</sup>

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), Mary Wollstonecraft also attacks novels:

Novels, music, poetry, and gallantry, all tend to make women the creatures of sensation, and their character is thus formed in the mould of folly during the time they are acquiring accomplishments, the only improvement they are excited, by their station in society to acquire.<sup>161</sup>

She blames lack of education for a feminine weakness of character and is quite vociferous, alleging that:

These are the women who are amused by the reveries of the stupid novelists, who, knowing little of human nature, work up stale tales, and describe meretricious scenes, all retailed in a sentimental jargon, which equally tend to corrupt the taste, and draw the heart aside from its daily duties.<sup>162</sup>

The evangelical philanthropist and educationalist, Hannah More, warned that if young people were exposed to frivolous reading it would have a detrimental effect in the formation of their personalities. Within the proliferation of literacy there were progressively more invectives against popular novels; moralists and academics were increasingly concerned and appalled by the perils of unrestrained reading and writing.<sup>163</sup> Hannah More was very anxious by ‘that profusion of little, amusing, sentimental books with which the youthful library overflows.’<sup>164</sup> Samuel Johnson found the excess books very advantageous, while More cautioned its ominous aspect. She writes: ‘Abundance

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<sup>160</sup> Quoted in Levy, p. 203; John Tinnon Taylor, *Early Opposition to the English Novel: The Popular Reaction from 1760 to 1830* (New York: King’s Crown Press, 1943), p. 53.

<sup>161</sup> See Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Miriam Brody, ed. ([1792] London: Penguin, 2004), p. 79.

<sup>162</sup> See Wollstonecraft, p.229.

<sup>163</sup> See Levy, pp. 196, 198.

<sup>164</sup> Quoted in Levy, p. 198.

has its dangers as well as scarcity ... May not the multiplicity of these alluring little works increase the natural reluctance to those more dry and consist?'<sup>165</sup> George Colman, a prominent dramatist of the mid century, penned a verse reflecting the contemporary attitude towards novels:

Tis NOVEL most beguiles the female heart,  
Miss reads — she melts — she sighs —  
Love steals upon her —  
And the — Alas, poor girl! — good night, poor Honour!<sup>166</sup>

Not all of Rousseau's ideas found acceptance in Britain but many English writers of both genders approved of some of them. Mary Wollstonecraft had already formulated her ideas about education before she started reading *Émile* in March, 1787.<sup>167</sup> Wollstonecraft was an admirer of *Émile*; enthusiastically approving of his concept that women's distinctive natural ability lay in childrearing.<sup>168</sup> She vehemently disagreed, however, with his views on education for girls. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft argues for the education of women. She writes: 'Educate women like men,' says Rousseau, 'and the more they resemble our sex the less power will they have over us. This is the very point I aim at. I do not wish them to have power over men; but over themselves.'<sup>169</sup> Nancy Armstrong asserts that similar to *Émile*, English conduct books sought to promote a gender-based educational system known as 'the cultivation of the heart.' The emphasis within these books was on women's positive gender traits. Femininity could be perceived as a cause of significant political disorder.<sup>170</sup> Thomas Gisborne's *Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (1789) is one of countless conduct books to present innumerable negative qualities:

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<sup>165</sup> Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* ([1799] New York: Garland, 1974), p. 159, quoted in Levy, p. 198.

<sup>166</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 286; George Colman, prologue to *Polly Honeycombe* (1760).

<sup>167</sup> See Lyndall Gordon, *Mary Wollstonecraft A New Genus* (London: Little Brown, 2005), p. 115.

<sup>168</sup> See Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 329.

<sup>169</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 81.

<sup>170</sup> See Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 99.

The gay vivacity and quickness of imagination, so conspicuous among the qualities in which the superiority of women is acknowledged, have a tendency to lead to unsteadiness of mind: to fondness of novelty; to habit of frivolousness, and trifling employment; to dislike of sober application; to dislike of graver studies, and a too low estimation of their worth; to an unreasonable regard for wit, and striving accomplishments; to a thrift for admirations and applause; to vanity and affection.<sup>171</sup>

Paradoxically, these undermining elements are also feminine desirable qualities. Authors, aware of the risk of too much leisure, insisted that women should work as supervisors; this would be similar to Rousseau's advice of women teaching their children.<sup>172</sup> Again Rousseau registers the contradiction that even writing a novel about bad mothers is to be a bad parent; promoting the vice of novel-reading betrays one's daughters and subjects them to the vice of unrestricted imaginative conjecture.

Wollstonecraft condemned Rousseau's representation of Sophie in *Émile*; she also condemned all those writers of conduct books:

I may be accused of arrogance; still I must declare what I firmly believe, that all writers who have written on the subject of female education and manners from Rousseau to Dr Gregory, have contributed to render women more artificial, weak characters, than they would otherwise have been; and, consequently, more useless members of society.<sup>173</sup>

*Émile*'s education has been perceived as a model for child-centred education, progressing to the growth of a self-sufficient adult. The plan for Sophie's education is less than enlightening; she is taught to have accomplished skills for her roles as wife and mother. Rousseau thought women should carry on being dependent and subservient while men should continue being domineering.<sup>174</sup>

Claiming the rights of any intellectual being, Wollstonecraft emphasized that the mind has no gender and that a teacher cannot construct a child's mind whilst she

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<sup>171</sup> Quoted in Armstrong, p.99.

<sup>172</sup> See Armstrong, p. 99.

<sup>173</sup> See Wollstonecraft, p. 30.

<sup>174</sup> See John Darling and Maaïke Van De Pijpekamp, 'Rousseau on the Education, Domination and Violation of Women', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 42, No. 2 (June, 1994), pp.115-132, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3122332>, accessed 11/02/2010, pp. 116-117.

states 'it may be cultivated and its real powers found out.' She was speaking as a follower of Rousseau when he recommended that a child should follow nature and should not have prescribed education until the age of twelve. As she had a school and could not follow Rousseau's example, she did urge her pupils to look into 'the book of nature', and was against learning by rote: 'I have known children who could repeat things in the order they learnt them, that were quite at a loss when put out of the beaten track.' She maintains that 'each child requires a different mode of treatment.'<sup>175</sup>

Wollstonecraft questions Rousseau's conviction that women live just to please men and that intellectual works are outside of women's capabilities.<sup>176</sup> She applauded Catharine Macaulay, whose *Letters on Education* (1790) resisted:

...the absurd notion, that the education of females should be of the opposite kind to that of males. How many nervous diseases have been contracted? How much feebleness of constitution has been acquired, by forming a false ideal of female excellence  
...<sup>177</sup>

Wollstonecraft disagreed with Burke's theory of female beauty that it was in the nature of women to feign weakness and imperfection so that they would appear more attractive to a man, 'Women are very sensible of this; for which reason they learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness.'<sup>178</sup> Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* confronts Burke: 'it is only some of your pernicious opinions that I wish to hunt out of their lurking holes; and to show you yourself stripped of the gorgeous drapery [of rhetoric].'<sup>179</sup>

Aaron Burr, a future Vice-President of America, having read *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, admired Wollstonecraft's capacity to modify the 'liberty style of Rousseau' in a particular way so as to refuse to accept his degrading viewpoint on

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<sup>175</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 44.

<sup>176</sup> See Gordon, p. 151.

<sup>177</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 151.

<sup>178</sup> See Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Adam Phillips, ed. ([1757] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.100.

<sup>179</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 142.

female edification. Burr wrote to his wife: 'I made haste to procure [the book], and spent the last night, almost the whole of it, in reading it. Be assured that your sex has in *her* an able advocate.'<sup>180</sup> This paragraph is an example of her repudiation of Rousseau's educational notion:

The mother, who wishes to give true dignity of character to her daughters, must, regardless of the sneers of ignorance, proceed on a plan diametrically opposite to that which Rousseau has recommended with all the deluding charms of eloquence and philosophical sophistry: for his eloquence renders absurdities plausible, and his dogmatic conclusions puzzle, without convincing, those who have not ability to refute them.<sup>181</sup>

Essentially, Wollstonecraft wants Sophie to have the same education as *Émile*. Wollstonecraft was in agreement with Rousseau when she advocated breastfeeding; she is scathingly Rousseauian when she declares:

The wife, in the present state of things, who is faithful to her husband, and neither suckles nor educates her children, scarcely deserves the name of a wife, and has no right to that of a citizen ... Women then must be considered as only the wanton solace of men, when they become so weak in mind and body, that they cannot exert themselves, unless to pursue some frothy pleasure, or to invent some frivolous fashion.<sup>182</sup>

Critically, she also makes an appeal to the fathers to encourage breastfeeding:

Cold would be the heart of a husband, were he not rendered unnatural by early debauchery, who did not feel more delight at seeing his child suckled by its mother, than the most artful wanton tricks could ever raise; yet this natural way of cementing the matrimonial tie, and twisting esteem with fonder recollections, wealth leads women to spurn.<sup>183</sup>

Wollstonecraft advises women that to be a capable mother is not to be submissive:

To be a good mother — a woman must have sense, and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands. Meek wives are, in general, foolish mothers; wanting their children to love them best, and take their part, in secret, against the father, who is held up as a scarecrow ... Her parental affection, indeed, scarcely deserves the name, when it does not lead her to suckle her

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<sup>180</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 154.

<sup>181</sup> See Wollstonecraft, p. 55.

<sup>182</sup> See Wollstonecraft, p. 182.

<sup>183</sup> See Wollstonecraft, p. 177.

children, because the discharge of this duty is equally calculated to inspire maternal and filial affection.<sup>184</sup>

Although not generally recommended in the eighteenth century, she stressed the importance of cleanliness and bathing; she followed Rousseau's advice about hygiene, while she disapproved of the cold water regime that Rousseau had advocated which was to 'harden their bodies against the intemperance of season, climates, elements.' Through Thomas Wedgwood, Dr. Darwin sent a message to Wollstonecraft warning about cold bathing which he regarded as 'a very dangerous practice.'<sup>185</sup> She ascribes the good health of her own breastfed daughter, Fanny Imlay, to 'the natural manner of nursing her.' Wollstonecraft promotes maternal breastfeeding in almost all of her major works.<sup>186</sup> It was ironic that having promoted breastfeeding, Wollstonecraft was unable to nurse her second child. In his memoir of his wife, William Godwin recounts that as Mary was forbidden to breastfeed following the birth of her second daughter, 'we therefore procured puppies to draw off the milk.'<sup>187</sup>

Bowers writes that some historians of motherhood believe that *Émile* was responsible for huge changes in childcare in the eighteenth century. She challenges this idea and maintains that changes in maternal care in England were already underway and the writings of Rousseau and Cadogan merely accelerated these developments.<sup>188</sup> In *Émile*, Rousseau refers to the child about to be given to the tutor as 'so precious a treasure,' so it seems strange for Rousseau to write a text on child-rearing when he sent his own five children to a foundling hospital. In his *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, he defends his stance: 'Since I was not in a position to bring them up myself, I should have

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<sup>184</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 189.

<sup>185</sup> Quoted in Gordon, p. 353. Thomas Wedgwood, son of Josiah, founder of Wedgwood potteries; Erasmus Darwin, 18<sup>th</sup> century physician and polymath.

<sup>186</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters, Novels and the Politics of Family Romance: Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2003), pp. 84-85.

<sup>187</sup> See Kipp, pp. 39, 197, n.42.

<sup>188</sup> See Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood, British writing and culture 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.15.

been obliged by my circumstances to leave their education to their mother, who would have spoiled them.’<sup>189</sup> Not only does Rousseau deprive the mother of his children from rearing them, he also disparages her with his comment. In *The Confessions* he calls himself ‘an unnatural father’ and states:

I will content myself with observing, that my error was such that, in handing over my children to the State to educate ... I thought that I was behaving like a citizen and a father, and considered myself a member of Plato’s Republic. More than once since then, the regrets of my heart have told me that I was wrong.’<sup>190</sup>

Towards the end of *Confessions* Rousseau writes again about his children and *Émile*:

The course of action I had taken in regard to my children, however rational it had appeared to me, had not always left my heart in peace. While thinking over my ‘Traité de l’Education’, I felt that I had neglected duties from which nothing could excuse me. My remorse at length became so keen, that it almost extorted from me a public confession of my error at the beginning of *Émile*; and the allusion itself is so obvious in a certain passage, that it is surprizing to me how anyone, after having read it, can have had the courage to reproach me.<sup>191</sup>

While starting out with an apology for abandoning his children, he then abdicates responsibility. Edmund Burke’s renowned condemnation of Rousseau in *Reflections on the French Revolution in France* (1790), accuses him of being ‘incapable of harbouring one spark of common parental affection.’<sup>192</sup> For Burke, Rousseau is an unfilial infanticide and is father to parricidal French revolutionaries.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Rousseau played an essential part in the discussion about mothers’ nursing relationship and their responsibilities to their children. In *Émile*, Rousseau used the contemporary studies of medical developments to publicize new proposals about motherhood, maternal bodies, and the wellbeing of children. Rousseau acknowledged mothers with the naturally social practice of rearing

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<sup>189</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (London: Penguin, 2004), p.139.

<sup>190</sup> *Confessions*, p. 346.

<sup>191</sup> *Confessions*, pp. 582-583,

<sup>192</sup> See Kipp, p. 33. Edmund Burke, *Reflections of the Revolution in France*, Leslie Mitchell, ed. ([1790] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 271.



future French people. He constantly blamed bad mothers for the prospective collapse of the ethical and physical constitution of France. For Rousseau, the maternal body was social and political; public and private interests were intermingled as the mother had to provide the state with its citizens. Thus, the mother-child attachment provides a paradigm for the association between the state and its nation.<sup>193</sup>

In his Introduction, Rousseau's biographer, Leo Damrosch, wrote in 2007: 'Years of exploring Rousseau's writings with students at every level, from freshman seminars to adult education classes, have convinced me that his ideas remain fresh and powerful, and also that the way they emerged from his life is a story that deserves to be told. His deepest concern was with the painful dissonance between inner feelings and outward social pressures, and he came to see that versions of that personal dissonance haunt our culture at large.'<sup>194</sup> Without doubt Rousseau had a big influence throughout the centuries with his many texts on diverse subjects.

As my reading of this chapter suggests, Rousseau was strongly influenced by Richardson and as evidenced by his writings in *Émile* and *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Rousseau is a complete contradiction, for even though he tried to emulate Richardson, as shown in my quote of the endnote of *Julie*, he also shows his distaste for him. *Émile*, which contained Rousseau's educational ideas, ground-breaking in their day, continues to be discussed, and his ideas are still contentious; they persist in being extraordinary, irritating and exciting. I believe that many of Rousseau's ideas were excellent, such as his campaign to have mothers breastfeed their own children and his anti-swaddling crusade. Some of his other ideas were bizarre, the concept of raising a child in the 'natural' way might seem idyllic but the reality is very different. It is also strange that it is only boys who should be raised this way while the girls would be raised

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<sup>193</sup> See Kipp, pp. 22-24.

<sup>194</sup> Leo Damrosch, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), p.4.

in an alternative fashion. *Émile*, was to be protected from socialization for as long as possible while Sophie, his future wife, was to be socialized from the start and was to acquire the traditional female accomplishments of music, cooking, sewing and so forth. Rousseau appears to be misogynistic by even suggesting this plan. It also seems incongruous that Rousseau would write a treatise on child rearing even though he sent his own five children into a Foundling Hospital (against their mother's wishes).

Having taken almost two years to have it printed, *Émile*, eventually appeared in May 1762. Less than three weeks later, Rousseau received a message from an emissary of Mme de Luxembourg warning him that on the following day the Paris *Parlement* was evidently going to condemn *Émile* and to order the arrest of the author. Rousseau had already left for Switzerland when the officers came to arrest him and the *Parlement* had to be satisfied with just burning *Émile*. Having found sanctuary in a number of places, Rousseau finally returned to France in 1767 under an assumed name and with an arrest warrant still pending. With few exceptions, the only writings he did after 1762 were those validating and rationalizing his previous work, mainly *Émile* and the *Contrat social* (*Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont*, 1763, *Lettres écrites de la Montagne*, 1764) and also his autobiographical works, the *Confessions*, the *Dialogues* and *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Damrosch, p. xx.

## **CONCLUSION**

From 1744-1746, Eliza Haywood wrote the periodical *The Female Spectator*, she underscores that with her experience ‘added to a Genius tolerably extensive, and an Education more liberal than is ordinarily to Persons of my Sex, I flattered myself that it might be in my Power to be in some measure both useful and entertaining to the Public.’<sup>1</sup> Haywood uses various characters to discuss diverse topics; these characters signify three phases in a woman’s life. These included a single woman, the attractive and consummate merchant’s daughter, Euphrosine; Mira, the happily married and amusing socialite and The female anonymous ‘Widow of Quality’ who is clever, vibrant and principled. The most mature woman within this quartet is the Female Spectator herself, who refers to herself as ‘never was a beauty’ and is ‘very far from being young’. She had a lifetime of experience and feels qualified to give advice within her periodical:

I have run through as many Scenes of Vanity and Folly as the greatest Coquet of them all. Dress, Equipage, and Flattery were the Idols of my heart ... The company I kept was not, indeed, always so well chosen as it ought to have been, for the sake of my own Interest or Reputation ... but also enabled me ... to judge of the various Passions of the Human Mind.<sup>2</sup>

Among other subjects Haywood discusses are motherhood and claims that maternal feelings are instinctive. Haywood uses allegories within the *Female Spectator* to advise women about how inappropriate decisions can affect their lives. In Volume 1, Book 1, written circa 1744, Haywood relates the story of a ruthless mother who tries to use her beautiful and intelligent daughter, Flavia, for her own selfish means, not unlike Mrs. Tricksy in *Anti-Pamela*. Flavia’s father is dead, her other siblings have been dispensed with as the mother can only afford to keep her daughter. A well-known purveyor for the vices of other men had recommended Flavia to the wealthy Rinaldo and had agreed to

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Helene Koon, ‘Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, University of California Press, Vo. 2, No. 1, 1978. p. 45. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817409>, accessed 15/03/2313.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Helene Koon, p. 46.

set up a meeting. The mother listened and approved of his request on behalf of Rinaldo. Flavia diplomatically refused and promised to pray for Rinaldo and maintain her chastity. The mother decided to collude with this man to coerce her daughter into cooperating.<sup>3</sup> Having received no compliance from her daughter 'she proceeded to threats, and even to blows; nay, denied her necessary food, and used her with a cruelty scarce to be paralleled in a mother.'<sup>4</sup>

Although Flavia, tired of repeating herself, remains silent. Her mother assumes this silence is acquiescence and arranges for visits from Rinaldo intimating that her daughter has consented. Flavia escapes and decides to go to a local clergyman for help, because of the authority of her mother and the wealth and power of Rinaldo, the clergyman, a much older man, suggests that she marry him. She agrees and marries him in London the same day. Flavia is blessed with a happy marriage and puts to shame all those who at first pretended to censure so unequal a match. Rinaldo penalises the purveyor of vices by sacking him and the unscrupulous mother is rewarded by being forsaken by her chaste daughter.

This next story was written circa 1746, *The Triumph of Fortitude and Patience over Barbarity and Deceit* is the story of a young woman whose father is a wastrel and whose mother dies of a broken heart, a similar theme used by Richardson in *Sir Charles Grandison*. Jemima's father dies in prison and is sent to live with an aunt who reluctantly takes her in. Aunt Dalinda is inattentive towards Jemima and leaves her ignorant of social practices regarding courtship. Because of the aunt's neglect, Jemima is induced into a clandestine sham marriage with the libertine Lothario whom she believes is in love with her. Pretending that his mother would not approve of her,

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<sup>3</sup> Eliza Haywood, *The Female Spectator*, Vol. 1. Book 1. Sixth Edition (London: [1766] M.DCC,LXVI). *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 26/03/2013.

<sup>4</sup> Eliza Haywood, *The Female Spectator*, Vol. 1. Book 1. p. 57.

Lothario abandons her while she is pregnant and promises he will acknowledge their marriage when the baby arrives or if his mother dies.

Lothario has fallen in love with another woman and ignores the letters Jemima has sent informing him that he is the father of twin sons. Having been robbed by her maid and rejected by her aunt whom she writes to for help, Jemima is destitute. In the interim, Lothario breaks his leg and has pangs of conscience. He writes to his mother admitting his guilt and attempts to make reparation to Jemima. Jemima decides to travel to Lothario's country estate with her twin boys; she is rescued by Lothario's messenger who tells her that Lothario and his mother were anxious to see her and the children. Lothario's mother is the complete opposite to the manner in which her son represented her. Lothario fulfils his promise by having his marriage legalised and acknowledging his children. Because of his injuries Lothario dies, leaving Jemima and his mother united in their grief.<sup>5</sup> The story ends fifteen years later when the narrator states:

[Jemima] continued to live with the old lady, and paid her all the respect of a daughter; and the other treated her in the same manner as if she had been her own: an entire harmony has always subsisted between them, and the story of *Jemima's* suffering been soon made public, every body admired the proofs she had given of so comfortable a fortitude.<sup>6</sup>

In the commentary in *The Female Spectator* regarding the above story, the Spectator remarks:

Had not Heaven in a peculiar manner touched the remark of the once gay rover, what must have become of the undone Jemima! By what means could she have proved herself his wife! would not the whole world have laughed at her asserting such a thing? And with all that stock of honour, fidelity, and the thousand other Virtues she was mistress of, would she have been looked upon as any better than a prostitute, and must not herself and helpless infants have been rendered as wretched and contemptible as they now are happy! I could find nothing to condemn in what she did ... and conclude with wishing the

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<sup>5</sup> See Eliza Haywood, 'The Triumph of Fortitude and Patience over Barbarity and Deceit', *The Female Spectator*, Sixth Edition, Vol. 4. (London: printed for T. Gardner, at Cowleys-Head, opposite St. Clement's -Church, in the Strand, [1766] M.DCC,LXVI). *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 15/03/2013.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Eliza Haywood, 'The Triumph of Fortitude', p. 209.

amiable Jemima all the satisfaction she can hope for from children who can never pay too much duty to such a mother.<sup>7</sup>

In 1750, not long before the Gin Act of 1753 which was to limit the sale of alcohol was passed, Eliza Haywood wrote her advice book to women entitled *A Present for women addicted to drinking. Adapted to all different stations of life, from a lady of quality to a common servant*.<sup>8</sup> She gave much advice on the pernicious effects of alcohol and how it could affect a mother's ability to care for her children. Haywood addresses women in charge of infants and young children where their habit of drinking is dangerous and destructive. She makes the case that children who are being breastfed by a wet nurse who has been drinking are at risk. She also warns mothers against a drinking dry-nurse who is fond of sleeping and who will put other dangerous substances, such as a 'dram' of alcohol into a child's pap to make them sleep. She points out that drunken nurses can drop the children although death would be a better outcome for the child rather than be disabled or in constant pain. If the nurse is looking after someone ill, she is more likely to give the wrong medicine or too much, again risking life. Because the children depend on mothers for their education, alcohol would have an impact on their future and starving children who may end up on the streets suffer because of their mothers' drinking. Haywood cautions:

If you are Mothers, and in what Circumstance soever, be particularly careful to fortify your Children, but especially your Daughters against this prevailing Vice while they are young; vigorously assert your Authority; let them know that a bare tasting of a Dram will draw upon them the utmost Weight of your displeasure; inculcate in them, as they grow up, the Reasons of so severe a Prohibition; shew them the Idleness and Folly; explain to them the extreme Danger of such a Practice; and make them conceive that Liquor is a more fatal Poison, than Ratsbane, or Opium; these can only effect [*sic*] the Body, that infatuates the Mind; these destroy Life, but that endangers

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<sup>7</sup> Eliza Haywood, 'The Triumph of Fortitude'. p. 211.

<sup>8</sup> Eliza Haywood, *A Present for Women Addicted to Drinking*. Adapted to all the Different Stations of Life, from a Lady of Quality to a Common Servant (London: W. Owen, 1750), *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 15/12/2010.

the Soul; in respect to these, we have only to guard against our Enemies, whereas we are most in danger of that amongst Friends.<sup>9</sup>

Over a decade later, Frances Sheridan wrote *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph* (1761), in which she investigates questions of women's virtue, depravity and their power or lack thereof within the text.<sup>10</sup> Motherhood, conjugal, household and family concerns are the foundation of this novel. Throughout her journal Sidney's life is the centre of attention, from her time in her widowed mother's house and then in her husband Mr. Arnold's house. Because her journal is written in the first person to Cecilia, her best friend, Sidney's innermost thoughts are vital to the novel. It portrays a young woman who is under the complete control of her strict mother.<sup>11</sup> In a foreboding sentence: 'I have been accustomed from my infancy to pay an implicit obedience to the best of mothers; the conforming to this never yet cost me an uneasy minute, and I am sure never will,'<sup>12</sup> Sidney encapsulates the reason for her future distress and unhappiness.

Jean Coates Cleary maintains that it is as a conduct novel inspired by Richardson that this novel 'most powerfully and complexly bears the Richardsonian legacy into the second half of the eighteenth century.'<sup>13</sup> Within the novel Sheridan focuses on family matters and the private reflections of the submissive moral female protagonist. Sheridan examines rather than promotes the new contemporary attention to home life.<sup>14</sup> Maternal moral authority is investigated within the novel. Lady Bidulph desires her son to live with her because 'she says it will be for the *reputation* of a gay young man to live in a *sober* family' and conversely she encourages Sidney to go to the

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<sup>9</sup> See Haywood, *A Present for Women Addicted to Drinking*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>10</sup> Frances Sheridan, *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph*, Jean Coates Cleary, ed. ([1761] New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>11</sup> See Jane Spencer, 'Women Writers and the Eighteenth Century novel', *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century*, John Richetti, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.223.

<sup>12</sup> *Miss Sidney Bidulph*, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> See Jean Coates Cleary, ed. *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph*, p. xvii.

<sup>14</sup> Jane Spencer, p.217.



theatre. Sidney is pleased with this suggestion and writes: 'I am indeed indebted to her tenderness, when she relaxes so much of her usual strictness.'<sup>15</sup> It is evident that strictness rather than tenderness represents the default setting of her maternal character.

Sidney is introduced to Orlando Faulkland whom she describes as 'a perfectly handsome and accomplished young man.'<sup>16</sup> Her mother's opinion is evidently important to her when she reflects: 'I never saw my mother so pleased with any one.'<sup>17</sup> It is Lady Bidulph who takes control of Sidney's decisions. Lady Bidulph, prior to the discovery of Faulkland's lack of discretion, relates her own story to her daughter about being duped by a suitor who was already engaged to another; he broke her heart to honour his obligations to a former lover and subsequently died as a result of his duplicity. Sidney becomes engaged to Faulkland with her mother's encouragement and agrees to be married within the month. Sidney's obedience to 'the best of mothers' is responsible for her most ill-fated catastrophes regarding love and marriage:

My mother, tho' strictly nice in every particular, has a short of partiality to her own sex, and where there is the least room for it, throws the whole of the blame upon the man's side; who, from her own early prepossessions, she is always inclined to think are deceivers of women, I am not surprized at this bias in her; her early disappointment, with the attending circumstances, gave her this impression.<sup>18</sup>

Lady Bidulph was exercising what she believed to be her natural maternal power over Sidney and is inconsiderate towards her daughter's feelings. Sidney was just recovering from a serious illness and is missing her closest friend Cecilia. By obeying her mother she is coerced into breaking off her engagement; her obedience to her mother takes precedence over self-interest. Sidney constantly admits that she marries because her

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<sup>15</sup> *Miss Sidney Bidulph*, pp. 12-13. Original italics.

<sup>16</sup> *Miss Sidney Bidulph*, p. 19.

<sup>17</sup> *Miss Sidney Bidulph*, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> *Miss Sidney Bidulph*, p. 45.

mother demands Sidney's consent for her choice of man.<sup>19</sup> All the ensuing unhappiness that includes her husband's ill-treatment, infidelity, her loss of reputation, and poverty are created by Sidney's dictatorial mother's demanding compliance.

Later in that decade, Maria Susanna Cooper writes about a loving mother in *The Exemplary Mother or Letters between Mrs. Villars and her family* (1769).<sup>20</sup> Mrs. Villars was married at nineteen and widowed at age twenty-five. She has two children, a son, Frederick, and a daughter, Flavia, whom she loves equally and her main goal is the education of her children. Each of her children read novels; Frederick chooses Henry Fielding and Flavia opts for Samuel Richardson. Mrs. Villars is more empowered as a widow as she is free from marital obligation and unlike Pamela, no longer has to prove that she is an excellent wife. She also has more authority than a wife. As Frank O'Gorman has demonstrated; unmarried women and widows would and did own property, got involved in business, and made wills.<sup>21</sup> She is an admirable mother whom she believes was fortunate enough to be able to breastfeed both her children, which she calls: 'A delightful task! and, where the mother is capable, an act of duty.'<sup>22</sup>

Mrs. Villars is constantly giving guidance and reassurance to her children as she believes that it is the duty of a parent to offer advice. She writes to her son: 'Remember you have a tender mother who is anxiously solicitous for your improvement in goodness, and whose happiness is dependent on her children's conduct.'<sup>23</sup> Toni Bowers asserts that Mrs. Villars's success in child-rearing was accredited to maternal feeding and her technique for discipline was ascribed to the Halifaxian strategy that

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<sup>19</sup> See Katherine Binhammer, *The Seduction Narrative in Britain, 1747–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> Maria Susanna Cooper, *The Exemplary Mother or Letters between Mrs. Villars and her family* ([1769] London: Printed for T. Becket, Pall Mall, 1784), p. 17, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*. Gale, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, accessed 18/11/2011.

<sup>21</sup> See Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century, British Political and Social history 1688 – 1832* (London: Arnold, 1997), p.10.

<sup>22</sup> Cooper, p. 17.

<sup>23</sup> Cooper, p. 23.

meant distracting concentration rather than forbidding them and not challenging them too often.<sup>24</sup>

Mrs. Villars also advises Lady Egerton to forgive her estranged daughter who has made an indiscreet marriage. She asks: ‘Will you aggravate her misfortune by depriving her of maternal consolation?’<sup>25</sup> Mrs. Villars arranges a very successful reunion with Lady Egerton and her daughter. Frederick Villars, having gone into the army, has lost his way; his mother writes to encourage him to improve himself. She describes the death of a libertine acquaintance, who ‘expired in agonies too dreadful for description.’ She compares this man’s death to that of his father:

How different from those were the last moments of the best of men, my husband, and your father! Never can time efface the sadly-pleasing remembrance! His illness you know was a fever, which occasioned a galloping consumption. He was sensible of approaching death, and shewed the becoming resignation of a Christian. I will repeat to you his last words, that you may be convinced, “the sting of death is sin”, and may observe the different manner in which this awful circumstance affects the Libertine and the Christian. My dearest Sophia, said he, taking my hand; the resignation with which I submit to the appointment of Heaven might appear to some persons only an indifference to this life; by your goodness can never suspect me of insensibility to its blessings. I deeply feel for you my dearest wife, I intreat you by all the motives Christianity suggests, to conquer the violence of your afflictions. — I cannot wish you should forget me, but I truly pray to the Almighty; that your may not preserve my remembrance to disturb your tranquillity. Your virtues will compensate for my loss, to my children.<sup>26</sup>

The above depictions are similar to the contrasting deaths reported by Belford to Lovelace of Mrs. Sinclair and Clarissa. Mrs. Villars’s warnings were heeded by her son and through her intercession he rediscovers religion and is so appalled at his former friend’s libertine behaviour that he no longer socialises with him. Because Frederick is

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<sup>24</sup> Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood, British Writing and Culture 1680 -1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 165, n. 19.

<sup>25</sup> Cooper, p. 32.

<sup>26</sup> Cooper, vol.I, pp. 207-208.

in love with Isabella, Mrs. Villars arranges for his tutor, Mr. Spencer, to be an intermediary for him with Isabella's father resulting in her eventual acceptance.

When Flavia receives a proposal from Sir John Raymond, she is apprehensive about accepting as she has to leave her mother. Mrs. Villars convinced her daughter that she would increase her mother's pleasure by her happiness. Unfortunately, her son-in-law, the former libertine, Sir John Raymond, became bored with marriage and resumed his old ways. Traumatized by his behaviour, Flavia is taken ill and dies. Mrs. Villars learns that although Sir John is in constant pursuit of pleasure that he is still miserable. Rather than being bitter, this grieving mother remarks: 'I am thankful for the appointment of Heaven in releasing my dear child from farther suffering.'<sup>27</sup> Mrs. Villars continues to enjoy her son, her daughter-in-law 'who is a counterpart of my deceased child' and her granddaughter.<sup>28</sup>

Maria Edgeworth in *Belinda* (1801) discusses gender, race and marriage market issues and also the revulsion of failed maternity.<sup>29</sup> Lady Delacour has received an injury to her breast when her pistol discharges during a duel but she conceals the wound from her doctors for fear of a public scandal. Her infected breast is a symbol of her damaged domestic and maternal role.<sup>30</sup> Lady Delacour, an aristocrat who has rejected her daughter Helena, describes the births of her children to Belinda:

I had three children during the first five years of my marriage. The first was a boy; he was born dead ... My second was a girl, but a poor diminutive, sickly thing. It was the fashion at this time for fine mothers to suckle their own children — so much the worse for the poor brats. Fine nurses never made fine children.<sup>31</sup>

She blames herself for the death of her daughter who died after three months, maintaining that: 'If I had put it out to nurse, I should have been thought by my friend

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<sup>27</sup> Cooper, vol. 2, p. 230.

<sup>28</sup> Cooper, vol. 2, p. 233

<sup>29</sup> Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*, Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick, ed. ([1801] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>30</sup> Kirkpatrick, ed. *Belinda*, p. xvi.

<sup>31</sup> *Belinda*, p. 42.

an unnatural mother — but I should have saved its life.’<sup>32</sup> She refuses to let her husband’s relatives see her grieving but admits she has suffered more than her dowager mother-in-law. She decides not to breastfeed again and declares:

I determined, that if ever I had another child I would not have the barbarity to nurse it myself. Accordingly, when my third child, a girl, was born, I sent it off immediately to the country, to a stout healthy, broad-faced nurse, under whose care it grew and flourished; so that at three years old, when it was brought back to me, I could scarcely believe the chubby little thing was my own child. The same reasons which convinced me I ought not to nurse my own child, determined me, *à plus forte raison*, to undertake its education. Lord Delacour could not bear the child because it was not a boy.<sup>33</sup>

Susan C. Greenfield asserts that because Lady Delacour’s maternal body has been polluted, Edgeworth is intimating that this pollution is from Lady Delacour’s participation with the improper inclinations of aristocratic society, and that when she refrains from these habits, her infected breast is depicted as a misconception and she is healthy again.<sup>34</sup> Lady Delacour’s breast is represented as retribution for her denunciation of motherhood; she regains her maternal instinct but the ‘hideous spectacle’ of her bosom indicates her maternal failure and her sexual uncertainty.<sup>35</sup> Julie Kipp argues that mothers who chose not to breastfeed were represented by writers of this period as a risk to their child’s health.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, the historian and education theorist Catharine Macauley was constrained in her encouragement of maternal breastfeeding. In her *Letters on Education* (1790), she writes:

Can you expect that a fine lady should forgo all her amusements and enter into the sober habits of domestic life, in order to enable her to nourish her offspring with wholesome food? ... Now milk overheated with midnight revels, and with the

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<sup>32</sup> *Belinda*, p. 42.

<sup>33</sup> *Belinda*, p. 42.

<sup>34</sup> See Susan C. Greenfield, *Mothering Daughters, Novels and the Politics of Family Romance: Frances Burney to Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), p. 108.

<sup>35</sup> *Belinda*, p. 32; Greenfield, p. 108.

<sup>36</sup> See Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 42.

passionate agitation of a gamester's mind, must have qualities rather injurious than beneficial to life.<sup>37</sup>

Macauley referred to the lifestyle of the mother and the physical condition of her body which would prevent her from breastfeeding. The wet-nurse in *Belinda* was healthy but in urban areas some wet-nurses were connected with infectious diseases. As far back as 1497, the physician to the Borgias, Gaspara Torella, blamed the conveyance of syphilis on wet-nurses:

In nursing children the infection first appears in the mouth or on the face; and this occurs on account of infected breasts or from the face and mouth of the nurse, either one or the other. Also nurses are accustomed to kiss infants and I have often seen infants infected with this disease by diseased nurses.<sup>38</sup>

William Roscoe's 1798 translation of Luigi Tansillo's sixteenth-century *The Nurse, A Poem*, presents a scathing attack on a mother who is remiss because she does not breastfeed. Following pregnancy, the mother delivers a healthy child and is 'relieved from danger and alarms':

[t]he perfect offspring leaps into her arms,  
Turns to a mother's face its asking eyes,  
And begs for pity by its tender cries;  
Then, whilst young life its opening powers expands,  
And the meek infant spreads its searching hands,  
Scents the pure milk-drops as they slow distill,  
And thence anticipates the plenteous rill,  
From her first grasp the smiling babe she flings,  
Whilst pride and folly seal the gushing springs;  
Hopeful that pity can by her be shewn,  
Who for another's offspring quits her own ...  
Ah! Sure ye deem that nature gave in vain  
Those swelling orbs that life's warm streams contain ...  
- Why else, ere health's returning lustre glows,  
Check ye the milky fountain as it flows?  
Turn to a stagnant mass the circling flood,  
And with disease contaminate the blood?<sup>39</sup>

Lord Delacour's aunt, Mrs. Delacour, is contemptuous and scathing when she speaks of Lady Delacour and her treatment of her children:

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted in Kipp, pp. 42-43.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Kipp, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup> Kipp, p. 41.

‘There, lady Anne! There!’ cried Mrs Delacour, ‘will you tell me after this, that lady Delacour is not a monster ... Such a mother was never heard of,’ continued Mrs Delacour, ‘since the days of Savage and lady Macclesfield. I am convinced that she *hates* her daughter. Why she never speaks of her — she never sees her — she never thinks of her!’<sup>40</sup>

Mrs. Delacour continues her tirade to Lady Anne:

I remember well her performing the part of a nurse with vast applause; and I remember, too, the *sensibility* she showed, when the child that she nursed fell a sacrifice to her dissipation. The second of her children, that she killed —.<sup>41</sup>

In Lady Delacour’s defence, Lady Anne replies: ‘Killed! O, surely my dear Mrs. Delacour, that is too strong a word ... You would not make a Medea of Lady Delacour.’

Mrs. Delacour finishes her rant when she states: ‘I can understand there may be such a thing in nature as a jealous wife, but an unfeeling mother I cannot comprehend. That passes my powers of imagination.’<sup>42</sup> When Lady Delacour is declared healthy, her maternal sentiment is renewed and ‘her bosom — the penultimate symbol of femininity — recovers.’<sup>43</sup>

It is not until almost fifty years later in Anne Brontë’s *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) that the tension between marital and maternal obligations is satisfactorily resolved in favour of the maternal imperative when the main protagonist confronts the problem of parental abuse.<sup>44</sup> Helen Huntingdon, the mysterious tenant, has a son and is married to a debauched alcoholic. She is willing to take the abuse, honour her marriage vows and remain with her husband; she made her decision not to tolerate it anymore when he began to give her young son alcohol, he ‘learnt to tipple wine like papa, to swear like Mr Hattersley, and to have his own way like a man, and sent mamma to the

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<sup>40</sup> *Belinda*, pp. 102-103.

<sup>41</sup> *Belinda*, pp. 103.

<sup>42</sup> *Belinda*, pp. 103.

<sup>43</sup> Greenfield, p. 109.

<sup>44</sup> Anne Brontë, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, Peter Merchant, ed. ([1848] Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2001).

devil when she tried to prevent him.’<sup>45</sup> She would not let her young son follow his father’s footsteps and become a drunk: ‘my child must not be abandoned to this corruption: better far that he should live in poverty and obscurity with a fugitive mother, than in luxury and affluence with such a father.’<sup>46</sup> Because she is not a widow she has very few rights, her husband is still alive and many would insist that she return to him. This tension is satisfactorily resolved in favour of the maternal obligation. She puts her child’s needs first; the maternal imperative overrules the wifely submissive imperative for the sake of her child.

I have established that even when we allow for the fundamental timeframe, cultural and other differences, these novels have significant factors in common, and that consequently can be mutually beneficial in elucidating the main argument. The thesis has shown that whereas the discourse of family life in the eighteenth century generates an illusion of harmony and happiness that this was not the case. Moreover, I argue that due to the rise of capitalism and the onset of the Industrial Revolution, society was in flux and that this instability was represented by the volatility within families in the novels. The powerlessness of the female protagonist in novels to surmount their problems and take control of their lives could have a cathartic effect on some of these characters, particularly in Haywood’s texts as they encountered new challenges. Among the issues raised in this thesis is the manner in which gender influenced the role of these women and how these mothers attempted to challenge the status quo. The texts are concerned with the dynamics between mothers and their offspring but also the connotations within the extended family.

By identifying the common themes that lie beneath their narratives the study has demonstrated that the authors I have chosen provide access to eighteenth century

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<sup>45</sup> *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, p. 273.

<sup>46</sup> *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, p. 274.



maternal discourse. It is my belief that we can identify the ambiguities of these novels with the social complexities of the female position in the eighteenth century. As noted in the dissertation, a woman could only be elevated in status if she fulfilled her natural role of mother, but very often this role is at variance with that of a good wife.

As the various chapters of my study have shown, the novels offer a perspective on the world where the main protagonists are struggling against a society where women's rights were appropriated in favour of men. The comparative method adopted here endeavours to be sensitive to the explicit conditions of women who were precariously positioned as inferior within a male oriented society.

In the first chapter, I explored the social history of the eighteenth century with the emphasis on the female experience within eighteenth-century society. Because girls were raised to be good wives and mothers the importance of the preparation for this role could not be overlooked. These young women were taught what society believed were the most suitable accomplishments for their future. It was quite acceptable for young men to have profligate propensities but for women it was vital to preserve their chastity and modesty since the loss of it would lead to their destitution. I examined the advice through periodicals and conduct books imparted to these women regarding contemporary etiquette. I also examined Marriage laws and marriage markets and outlined the difficulties caused by pregnancy which in some recorded cases lead to infanticide or abandonment.

Chapter two examined Defoe's picaresque instances in *Moll Flanders*, many of which have a light-hearted perspective with some amusing outcomes. Moll has committed many petty crimes, Moll's desire for more wealth is excused by Defoe on the grounds that she repented. Defoe is more despondent in *Roxana*, where he has a much stronger emphasis on her greed than on Moll's because of her collusion with her maid,

Amy, on the death of her daughter. Deprived of absolution, Roxana was destined to live with a guilty conscience through her lack of contrition.

To differentiate between Haywood's mothers in *The Force of Nature* and *The Rash Resolve* and those of Defoe, I explored the lifestyles of Haywood's protagonists. The only crime that Emanuella and Berinthia committed was that of falling in love and becoming pregnant. The decisions made by both these women derived from love; Emanuella is blameless with her separation from her son, which leads to a tragic outcome. Berinthia is irreproachable because she conceded her motherhood to her son's father for the good of her child.

My third chapter on Richardson's *Pamela I & II*, *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* considers the convoluted representation of motherhood in each novel. *Pamela I & II*, exemplify Richardson's use of the eighteenth-century fascination with maternity and use Pamela as an allegory for a good mother. This is more challenging for Pamela as she has to concede to her husband's command to desist from breastfeeding.

The focus on motherhood in *Clarissa* is the lack of maternal affection from Clarissa's mother. Because Clarissa is not submissive, her mother does not consider her well-behaved or respectful. By highlighting the behaviour of Charlotte Harlowe towards her daughter, Richardson is drawing attention to how morally wrong it was to force pre-arranged marriages on innocent young women for materialistic reasons.

Because Lady Grandison in *Sir Charles Grandison* is an exemplar for virtuous motherhood, Richardson is accentuating by comparison the defectiveness of the other mothers within the text. Since he was brought up by a worthy mother, Grandison is the epitome of what Richardson called 'the good man'; he is an obedient son, a devoted brother and the essence of selflessness despite his rake of a father.

The next chapter studies the influence of Richardson on Rousseau in which the latter's novels *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Émile* are compared and contrasted with those of Richardson. I examine Rousseau's relationships with his surrogate mothers and how his relationship with them influenced his philosophies.

The fictions of Defoe, Haywood, Richardson and Rousseau are influential commentaries on contemporary family life, and the reactions of those who were dealing with the consequences of living within a developing capitalist society. My study imparts a method of reading these texts that clarifies the objectives of the authors. In a century whose fiction was largely defined in terms of extremes of good and bad maternity, sometimes marital and maternal obligations seem to collide, particularly in the work of Samuel Richardson, with very interesting results.

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