# *Pamela*, *Shamela*, and the Politics of the *Pamela* Vogue

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> There are Swarms of Moral Romances. One, of late Date, divided the World into such opposite Judgments, that some extolled it to the Stars, whilst others treated it with Contempt. Whence arose, particularly among the Ladies, two different Parties, *Pamelists* and *Antipamelists*. ... Some look upon this young Virgin as an Example for Ladies to follow; nay, there have been those, who did not scruple to recommend this Romance from the Pulpit. Others, on the contrary, discover in it, the Behaviour of an hypocritical, crafty Girl, in her Courtship; who understands the Art of bringing a Man to her Lure.[1]

Ever since Dr Peter Shaw's assertion in *The Reflector* that *Pamela* had created two factions called Pamelists and anti-Pamelists, the critical orthodoxy about the *Pamela* vogue has been that it centred on Pamela's chastity and entailed a strict division between admirers and critics of Richardson's heroine. At first, Shaw's remarks certainly look like a fair account of contemporary responses to *Pamela*. Almost every book, pamphlet, and poem of the *Pamela* vogue discusses sexual morality and presents itself as an attack on Pamela or as a more authentic account of her life than Richardson's. Even the titles of these works support

1 Dr Peter Shaw, *The Reflector* (1750), quoted in A.D. McKillop, *Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist* (1936; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), pp. 101–2. McKillop, in fact, identifies Shaw's remarks as plagiarism of a passage from the Danish dramatist Ludvig Holberg's *Moral Thoughts* (1744).

Shaw's claim of a straightforward division between opposing camps: Fielding's *Shamela*, Haywood's *Anti-Pamela*, Parry's *True Anti-Pamela*, and the anonymous *Pamela Censured* constituting one side, and Kelly's *Pamela's Conduct in High Life*, Giffard's *Pamela. A Comedy*, and three anonymous works—*The Life of Pamela*, *Pamela in High Life: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, and *Memoirs of the Life of Lady H[esilrige], the Celebrated Pamela*—constituting the other.[2]

But if the commonplace is true that *Pamela* represents a defining moment in the history of the English novel, then these works should delimit what might be called the "horizon of expectations"[3] in 1741—that is, the set of conventional moral and aesthetic standards that resisted the moral insights and technical innovations distinguishing *Pamela* from earlier fiction. It is surprising, then, that even the best accounts of the *Pamela* vogue ignore the possibility that Richardson's novel, by virtue of its audacious attempt at recording the minutiae of moral experience, met with resistance and incomprehension that cannot be explained away by reference to obvious ambiguities in Pamela's conduct. A.D. McKillop and, more recently, T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel tend to support both Shaw's claim that the *Pamela* vogue is about moral authenticity and the corollary that the Pamelists understood and agreed with Richardson's portrayal of Pamela.[4] But by emphasizing the debate over Pamela's sincerity, Richardson's biographers disregard what contemporary readers perceived as the political implications of *Pamela* and what their understanding of these implications did to their opinion of Richardson's heroine.

2 These, along with Charles Povey's Bunyanesque *The Virgin in Eden* and an anonymous play consisting largely of dialogue lifted from Pamela, are the main productions of the *Pamela* vogue; all were published between April and December 1741, the height of the vogue in England. But despite their titles, some are not responses to Richardson's novel. Parry's memoirs have a blatantly adventitious title (internal evidence suggests that *The True Anti-Pamela* was written before the publication of *Pamela*). The biography of Lady Hesilrige presents a story roughly analogous to Richardson's, but its title too seems superadded. Even Haywood's *Anti-Pamela* bears only a tenuous connection to *Pamela*, since it presents a character unlike Richardson's. Haywood's book does, however, treat questions of sexual hypocrisy and the problem of being educated above one's degree. The best available reconstruction of the precise publication sequence of the major works of the *Pamela* vogue is "A Chronological Table of *Pamela* and the *Pamela* Vogue in England" in *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, ed T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), pp. xvii–xxii.

3 For a discussion of this term see the first chapter of Hans Robert Jauss's *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp. 3–43.

4 McKillop pp. 42–106; T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 119–53. Both imply that Pamelist works were opportunistic imitations and that when Pamelists attacked Richardson they were marketing their own wares rather than expressing reservations about the implications of Richardson's novel. A similar view emerges in Bernard Kreissman's peculiarly unsympathetic, anti-Pamelist *Pamela-Shamela: A Study of the Criticisms, Burlesques, Parodies, and Adaptations of Richardson's "Pamela"* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960).

Shaw's preoccupation with Pamela's chastity permits him to gloss over another of Richardson's concerns. After making an apparently incidental reference to the "Inequality of [Pamela's and Mr B.'s] Conditions," Shaw offers judgment on the novel's outcome: "Her History, indeed, would have been more exemplary, and her Conduct less exceptionable, if this Heroine, after suffering so many Persecutions, had continued in her low Condition."[5] Shaw's remarks are ambiguous (his objection could be to Pamela's imprudence in marrying her persecutor), but they immediately suggest a longing to read *Pamela* through the correcting spectacles of social conservatism. Shaw's valuation also reveals a curious obtuseness, reminiscent of Richardson at his moralizing worst, about the potential of the new genre to explore the effects of moral choice on individual experience, for Shaw reads *Pamela* as a moral tract in which Richardson has failed in a duty to bring Pamela's conduct into line with certain moral imperatives, even at the expense of having her act out of character.

Shaw is wrong, of course. The failings of *Pamela* are no more a matter of exceptionable conduct than its value is a function of Richardson's definition of chastity. And Richardson's best critics—among them, Margaret Anne Doody and Mark Kinkead-Weekes[6]—show that *Pamela* endures because of its account of how Pamela and Mr B. mature out of their respective egoisms and give themselves freely in marriage. Throughout at least the first half of the novel, Richardson's characters are highly enough individuated—that is, independent enough of literary-social stereotypes and Richardson's narrow moral declarations—to allow a probing account of the possible confrontations between the conscientious self and the authority that Mr B. embodies, an authority that is not a matter of simple political or legal power, but of the intangible customary relations between masters and servants, elders and juniors, rich and poor, men and women. And an understanding of character and context is fundamental: Pamela's lingering at Mr B.'s Bedfordshire estate means little to readers who do not take into account her youthful insecurity, her fear of legal prosecution, her anxiety to preserve the esteem of her fellow servants, and her affection (tinged, it is clear, by her assumptions about class) for Mr B.

5 McKillop, pp. 101, 102.

6 See Margaret Anne Doody, *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974) and "Saying 'No,' Saying 'Yes': The Novels of Samuel Richardson," *The First English Novelists: Essays in Understanding*, ed. J.M. Armistead (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), pp. 67–108; Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *Samuel Richardson, Dramatic Novelist* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1973).

Richardson's ability to create psychologically individuated characters imposes important qualifications on any discussion of the politics of *Pamela*. As Carol Kay has argued, Richardson's Humean interest in the power of opinion and unspoken rules (as opposed to legal sanctions) to regulate moral conduct precluded a specifically political, let alone revolutionary, agenda.[7] And yet, in its emphasis on spiritual egalitarianism and the primacy of conscience, the first half of the original novel has widely been seen as politically progressive.[8] The progressive tendencies appear most strikingly where characters attest to the inadequacy of their assumptions about aristocratic honour to make sense of the particulars of social experience, as in Mr B.'s growing recognition of Pamela's fundamental dignity:

> I am awaken'd to see more Worthiness in you [says Mr B.] than ever I saw in any Lady in the World. All the Servants, from the highest to the lowest, doat upon you, instead of envying you; and look upon you in so superior a Light, as speaks what you ought to be. (p. 83)

And, conversely, in Pamela's rueful observation about the bad influences on her employer:

> Sure the World must be near an End! for all the Gentlemen about are as bad as he almost, as far as I can hear!—And see the Fruits of such bad Examples: There is 'Squire *Martin* in the Grove, has had three Lyings-in, it seems, in his House, in three Months past, one by himself; and one by his Coachman; and one by his Woodman; and yet he has turn'd none of them away. Indeed, how can he, when they but follow his own vile Example. There is he, and two or three more such as he, within ten Miles of us. (p. 72)

If such utterances seem strident, in their defining contexts they are usually convincing because they attest to the pressures of the moment. When he is angry, Mr B. talks of Pamela much less delicately; when Pamela is not immediately threatened, she can admire Mr B.'s qualities as a landlord and an employer. Nevertheless, it is passages like these, arising largely from the immediate pressures of the plot, that give *Pamela*

7 Carol Kay, *Political Constructions: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne in Relation to Hobbes, Hume, and Burke* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 139.

8 In *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 357–81, Michael McKeon argues that *Pamela* is a conflict between progressive and aristocratic versions of events in which, with some qualifications, Pamela's version triumphs. For another progressive reading, see Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 96–134. Other critics interested in the sexual politics of the novel emphasize the novel's conservative endorsement of the husband's authority within marriage. See, for instance, Kristina Straub, "Reconstructing the Gaze: Voyeurism in Richardson's *Pamela*," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 18, ed. John W. Yolton and Leslie Ellen Brown (East Lansing, Mich.: Colleagues Press, 1988), pp. 419–31.

its revolutionary flavour, and one might forgive Richardson's original readers who assumed that the novel was a leveller's treatise.

The strident egalitarian pleas are all but absent from *Pamela*, Part II, largely because there are so few incidents that demand of the conscientious self the extreme self-reliance that Pamela displays in the original novel. Eaves and Kimpel observe that Richardson's sequel "is open to no attacks on the ground of social radicalism," and Terry Castle argues that Richardson's "covert ideological project" is to "refute once and for all complaints against his fiction's revolutionary message."[9] To be sure, there are signs that Richardson fears that he may have established a new model for the socially ambitious. In reply to Sir Jacob's question, "what will become of degree or distinction, if this practice of gentlemen marrying their mothers' waiting-maids ... should come into vogue?"[10] Mr B. recites a bewildering list of qualifications for a second Pamela. Pamela herself frets about the social presumption of Polly Barlow and the scandal that would ensue should Polly either marry Jackey or be seduced by him. Pamela's last word on the subject of hypergamy is especially telling: "I don't mean that [gentlemen] should all take raw, uncouth, unbred, lowly girls, as I was, from the cottage, and, destroying all distinction, make such their wives" (2:414). Although throughout the sequel Pamela remains a model of virtue, and as such has a redemptive function among the local gentry, clearly no one, least of all Pamela herself, wants a proliferation of master-servant marriages.

But even if Richardson defends the original novel against charges of political subversion, it does not follow that he simply revokes his claims about the implications of social subordination. For one thing, *Pamela*, Part 2 does not amount to the exercise in forgetfulness that is sometimes claimed.[11] Amidst all the dreary compliments and coy self-effacement

9 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 152. Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 137. In "Enclosing the Immovable: Structuring Social Authority in *Pamela*, Part II," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 4 (1991), Betty A. Schellenberg argues that Richardson "expressly formalizes an exemplary model of social authority" (p. 28).

10 *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, 2 vols (London: J.M. Dent, 1962), 2:168. References are to this edition.

11 See, in particular, Castle, pp. 139–44. Castle argues that, by having everybody "forget" Pamela's background and by having Lady Davers self-consciously refer to Pamela as sister, Richardson undertakes to disguise Pamela's past. Both Christopher Flint, "The Anxiety of Affluence: Family and Class (Dis)order in *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*," *SEL* 29 (1989), 506, and James Cruise, "*Pamela* and the Commerce of Authority," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 87 (1988), 355, extend the project of forgetfulness back to the moment of Pamela's marriage. All three arguments ignore the references Pamela makes to her past and her continued correspondence with her parents (whom Richardson might, had he wished, have killed off well before the conclusion of *Pamela*, Part 2). Moreover, I do not think Castle sufficiently considers the extent to which good manners would require Lady Davers to acknowledge Pamela as a sister and preclude polite company from repeatedly drawing attention to Pamela's origins.

by which the characters preserve social harmony, there is, I think, a sustained effort on Richardson's part to reiterate the original novel's criticism of hereditary honour. This effort takes shape in a series of episodes in which Richardson subverts conventional social distinctions in ways that ought to have been clear to contemporary readers. One such episode—Mr B.'s dalliance with the unnamed Countess Dowager—has been explored in its carnivalesque richness by Castle; another—Sir Jacob's visit, which Castle dismisses as an "ideological slip"[12]—pointedly reaffirms Richardson's original political critique.

In a letter to Polly Darnford, Pamela reports that while she has been out visiting "four poor sick families" (2:156), Mr B.'s uncle, Sir Jacob Swynford, arrives to protest her marriage. From the moment of his arrival, Sir Jacob comports himself rudely, snubbing Lady Davers and prompting her to remark, with an *hauteur* familiar from the first novel, "A surly brute he always was! *My* uncle! He's more of an ostler than a gentleman" (2:156). Then, in a refreshing moment of pique, Pamela describes her new relation:

> He is about sixty-five years of age, a coarse, strong, big-boned man, with large irregular features; he has a haughty supercilious look, a swaggering gait, and a person not at all bespeaking one's favour in behalf of his mind; and his mind, as you shall hear by and bye, not clearing up those prepossessions in his disfavour, with which his person and features at first strike one. His voice is big and surly; his eyes little and fiery; his mouth large, with yellow and blackish teeth, what are left of them being broken off to a tolerable regular height, looked as if they were ground down to his gums, by constant use. But with all these imperfections, he has an air that sets him somewhat above the mere vulgar, and makes one think half of his disadvantages rather owing to his own haughty humour, than to nature; for he seems to be a perfect tyrant at first sight, a man used to prescribe, and not to be prescribed to; and has the advantage of a shrewd penetrating look, but which seems rather acquired than natural. (2:157)

The sketch is reminiscent of Pamela's well-known descriptions of Jewkes and Colbrand. The style is a little more elevated than in the earlier descriptions: "prepossessions" and "supercilious" seem new to Pamela, as does the attempt to balance unflattering detail with euphemistic generalization. But it retains the vigour of the earlier sketches, and there is a familiar tendency to caricature in Pamela's description of Sir Jacob's simultaneous resemblance to a bear and a boar. The description, in short, is distinctly Pamela's, though it comes from a Pamela who is decidedly more self-assured than the unmarried Pamela of Part 1.

12 Castle, p. 144.

Despite the disclaimer that half Sir Jacob's objectionable qualities are acquired rather than innate, Pamela's description of the baronet pointedly attacks a stereotype of genteel birth. Conventional descriptions of the well-born, like those of Tom Jones and Joseph Andrews, emphasize harmony of proportion combined with distinguishing moral or temperamental qualities. But Pamela's sketch describes a decidedly ungainly man whose main temperamental trait is the unsavoury imperiousness that distinguishes other members of the B. family. The baronet's vulgarity is later reflected in his voyeuristic delight in "surveying" Pamela "from head to foot" (2:161) and in his robust and sometimes colourful speech. Sir Jacob may well pride himself on "a family ancienter than the Conquest" (2:158), but his conduct supports Lady Davers's claim that he has "nothing else to boast of" (2:147).

In the episodes that follow, Pamela and her friends try to teach Sir Jacob a lesson about the nature of social distinctions. Mr B. presents Pamela to the baronet as Lady Jenny, the Countess of C.'s daughter. Sir Jacob is predictably impressed by Lady Jenny, who, he believes, "carrie[s] tokens of her high birth in her face, and whose every feature and look show ... her to be nobly descended" (2:164). When he is not praising Lady Jenny, he speaks the language of Mr B. from the original novel, peremptorily asserting his authority over his servants, and accusing Pamela's defenders of "talk[ing] in the language of romance" and living in an "enchanted castle" under the influence of a "grand enchantress" (2:160). When he is finally disabused, he spends an embarrassed moment or two nursing his wounded pride before beginning the obligatory encomiums on Pamela. Sir Jacob's conversion is annoyingly swift and it is clearly intended to attest to Pamela's redemptive power over the gentry, but the episode also pointedly reveals the poverty of Sir Jacob's assumptions about genteel birth. The odd reversal, by which the vulgarity of the high-born Sir Jacob is played off against the gentility of the base-born Pamela, economically subverts the notion of innate class characteristics and keeps the novel's focus on moral qualities independent of class. Sir Jacob seizes the first opportunity to identify Pamela's gentility as innate, remarking, "you seem ... born to these things" (2:167), but his beliefs are subverted by his own bear-like lack of gentility.

The treatment of Sir Jacob is only the most spectacular of several assaults on the ideology of innate class characteristics. At first, "Lord" Jackey's designs on Polly Barlow promise an ironic variation on Pamela's story designed to underscore the importance of preserving social distinctions. (The territory has already been prepared by Mr B.'s disquisition on the qualities necessary for a second Pamela.) But once Jackey speaks and writes for himself, the affair gains a new dimension, reminding the

reader that the distinctions separating Jackey from Pamela's maid are arbitrary. The point is reiterated when, towards the end of the novel, the simple-minded Jackey, now Lord H., marries imprudently and defiantly writes his uncle:

My Lord Davers,

For iff you will not call me neffew, I have no reason to call you unkell; surely you forgett who it was you held up your kane to: I have as little reason to valew you displeassure, as you have me: for I am, God be thanked, a lord and a pere of the realme, as well as you; and as to youre nott owneing me, nor your brother B. not looking upon me, I care not a fardinge: and, bad as you think I have done, I have marry'd a woman of family. Take thatt among you! (2:433)

Having suffered the depredations of his wife and her friends, Lord H. eventually resorts to having his affairs managed by Mr B., who "saved him from utter ruin, punished his wife's accomplices, and obliged her to accept a separate maintenance" (2:473).

The cumulative effect of these episodes (and one might include with them the treatment of Sir Simon Darnford early in the sequel) is to reinforce an important premise of the original *Pamela*, the essential arbitrariness of social distinctions. Part 2 certainly does not welcome the loss of social categories, but neither does it resort to the simple identification of honour and hereditary rank voiced by Mr B. in the original novel and Sir Jacob in the sequel. The sequel reiterates the original novel's rejection of what McKeon calls "aristocratic ideology" and tentatively affirms something like McKeon's "conservative ideology" (although even this affirmation tends to make way for the progressivism of the original novel the moment Pamela is faced with an important moral question, as when she considers the prospect of giving up her son in the event of a divorce).[13] These ideological distinctions are important, for the absence of an unproblematic social authority guaranteed by the innate gentility of the well-born means that the conditions of the original *Pamela* are always on the verge of being repeated. Even if nothing much happens in *Pamela*, Part 2 (with the crucial exception of Mr B.'s dalliance with the Countess Dowager), the largely unrealized moral centre of Richardson's continuation remains the conscientious individual, whose capacity for self-determination is always potentially at odds with the demands of the representatives of aristocratic authority.

13 For aristocratic ideology see McKeon, pp. 131–33; for connections between aristocratic, progressive, and conservative ideologies see pp. 154–58, 205–11.

John Kelly's spurious two-volume sequel, *Pamela's Conduct in High Life*, is usually singled out as the most faithful of the Pamelist imitations, but the novel has scarcely begun when Kelly reveals a secret that announces a revision to the ideology of Pamela's story. During a dinner at Sir Simon Andrews's estate, Pamela's father unexpectedly reports that he is a descendant of his host's great-grandfather, and that Mrs Andrews has descended from the respected Jinks family.[14] Both families, it seems, can be traced back to the Norman Conquest. Years before, through a series of honourable but imprudent business dealings, Mr Andrews was turned from a respectable tradesman into a tenant farmer and, eventually, a day-labourer. He did not tell his daughter of her genteel ancestry, for he "fear'd the Knowledge of being deriv'd from two such ancient and unblemish'd Families as that of *Andrews*, and that of *Jinks*, might make her vain, and nothing is more contemptible than a proud Beggar" (1:121). From the moment of Mr Andrews's announcement, Pamela's gentility redefines the moral universe of the Pamela story. By raising Pamela's birth and thereby shifting the centre of value from the virtuous base-born to the genteel, Kelly rejects Richardson's critique of hereditary honour and begins the process of reaffirming the aristocratic beliefs that the original *Pamela* attacks.

By raising Pamela's prose style Kelly further distances his novel from Richardson's original. Kelly's Pamela has moments of homely or idiomatic prose, but she is as likely to sound like this:

> I am unpolite enough to prefer the old Sages of Antiquity, in their Calves-skin Jackets, to all the gay, stuttering, dancing, thoughtless Tribe of *Pleasure-Hunters*, who crowd this Place. ... What Satisfaction can a continual Hurry, Ceremony, Dress, Visits, and Play, afford! Methinks this constant Round of Pleasure, as 'tis term'd, should grow insipid if not nauseous by Repetition. Indeed I am heartily tired of it. (2:182)

No wonder the author of *The Life of Pamela* (1741) reported the common observation that Richardson's original letters "seem to be wrote by a Girl," whereas Kelly's read like the productions of a "Man of Sense and Learning."[15] The heightening of the stylistic register (and it extends to Mr and Mrs Andrews's speech and letters) is, of course, necessary to make the Andrews family unambiguously genteel. But Kelly's approach to style has regrettable consequences for the inner life of his characters, because their high-life banter presents itself in a bland stylistic homogeneity that robs them of their distinctness. What is lost is Richardson's

14 John Kelly, *Pamela's Conduct in High Life*, 2 vols (London, 1741), 1:35–36. References are to this edition. The major productions of the *Pamela* vogue are available in facsimile in the series *Richardsoniana* (New York: Garland, 1974–75).

15 *Pamela in High Life; or, Virtue Rewarded* (London, 1741), p. 416.

particularizing realism and all that it suggests about the importance of the individual's response to experience; what is gained is of more dubious value, a model of stylistic decorum based almost wholly on the rank of the speaker. Through interpolated tales featuring such staples of romance as mysterious births and dramatic revelations of noble ancestry, Kelly reinforces the moral order established by Pamela's new-found gentility and stylistic decorum. In one such story, Susan Darnford writes of seeing a footman who possessed "one of the genteelest Figures we had seen" (2:141). The high birth that the footman's appearance suggests is immediately confirmed by his manner, and Sir Simon Darnford predictably remarks, "the Man was certainly some Nobleman's Bastard, his Behaviour and Mien spoke good Blood in him" (2:141). His polished conversation, proficiency in music, and fluency in the continental languages could only be the effects of a genteel education, but it is largely his appearance—his "fine Face and Shape" (2:141)—that alerts the reader to his hidden rank. Days later the footman marries his employer, who is suggestively named Miss Dives, and appears in his true person as Mr Stanmore of Horsegate Meadow, a man of fortune and family. Susan Darnford's tale, in which the first evidence of a man's high birth is his appearance, reinforces the premise that beauty and virtue are inextricably linked with genteel ancestry. The echoes of a belief in hereditary honour[16] that are almost drowned out by the strident egalitarian pleas of the original *Pamela* and are carefully muted in Part 2 resonate in ways that attest to Kelly's assumptions about natural hierarchy and innate class characteristics.

*Pamela's Conduct in High Life* extends the association of hereditary rank with innate physical, temperamental, and moral traits to low characters who pose a threat to the blood-integrity of the gentry. When a sketch of Mr Barnwell begins with the information that his family grew rich by collecting "a Treasure of melted Gold and Silver from among the Rubbish" left by the Fire of London (2:18), we know that something is wrong with him, though the subsequent description of Barnwell as a bisexual transvestite and amateur seamster might come as a surprise. And in the letter that follows Susan Darnford's story of Mr Stanmore, Pamela reports a tale of a woman who "threw herself away upon her Footman" (2:170), this time a real footman, as immediately becomes clear from Mr B.'s account:

[H]e is of low Stature, narrow-shoulder'd, thick-legg'd, and tun-bellyed; as to his Behaviour, he is, as the *French* say, *poli comme un cheval de carrosse*, as

16 For instance, the observations that Pamela appears "better descended" (p. 59) than the other servants and that Miss Goodwin is the "genteelest shap'd" of the little girls (p. 392).

polite as a Coach-Horse; as to his Parts, ignorant, weak, and illiterate; and for his Temper, insolent, rough; and since taken out of his Livery, makes good the old Proverb, *set a Beggar on Horseback, and he will ride to the Devil.* (2:170)

The attack centres on the footman's moral and intellectual deficiencies (which even Kelly would likely ascribe to an impoverished education), but it is the Hogarthian caricature of the man's physique that betrays Kelly's assumptions about class. The story elicits disgust from Mr B.'s audience, one of whom priggishly remarks, "a great many young People of Birth, and Fortune of either Sex, have thrown themselves away, and married their Parents Servants, by their being accustomed to keep them Company" (2:170). This straitlaced condemnation of those who marry beneath themselves and of parents who allow their children to converse with servants[17] comes from the newly gentrified Pamela who, by now, has all but forgotten her modest upbringing.

Reversion to the romance conventions of hidden genteel ancestry and innate class characteristics suggests, at best, a failure on Kelly's part to recognize the ideological implications of the conventions he uses and, at worst, an attempt to appropriate Richardson's novel as an aristocratic text. In *Pamela* there are moments when Richardson seems on the verge of ennobling the virtuous poor—figuratively, by comparing them with nobility; and literally, by allowing them to have fallen from slightly more genteel circumstances. These moments suggest a nostalgia on Richardson's part for the good order that aristocratic ideology promises. But despite their vestigial glamour, Richardson's genteel characters are responsible for a crisis in aristocratic authority, the symptoms of which include the gentry's self-interested use of personal prestige and legal authority, and a corresponding refusal to recognize moral authenticity in social inferiors. For Richardson, as for Pamela, the subordinate's awe of rank and desire to appropriate aristocratic prestige must ultimately be held in check by the educated conscience. Kelly, on the contrary, apparently sees little that is problematic about aristocratic authority. Consequently, in *Pamela's Conduct in High Life* the prestige of rank is much more potent than it is in *Pamela*. Kelly continues *Pamela* as a romance in which urgent existential problems of conscience are replaced by the enjoyment of wine, food, and tired stories about fabulous dowries and tests of honour. Although Kelly's bookseller claimed that his author was more

17 Significantly, Richardson's Pamela objects to this prohibition on the grounds that it may "fill the minds of the [children] with a contempt of those below them, and an arrogance that is not warranted by any rank or condition, to their inferiors of the same species" (*Pamela* II, 393). For an account of the sequel's treatment of servants, see John A. Dussinger, "Masters and Servants: Political Discourse in Richardson's *A Collection of Moral Sentiments*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 5 (1993), 241–44.

conversant with high life than was Richardson,[18] Kelly's novel presents a bland idealization of aristocratic existence that could only be the product of an outsider's imagination. In *Pamela*, Part 2 the reader is given a detailed, even tedious account of Pamela's "*benevolent round*" (2:181) as well as discussion about the appropriate degree to which a woman in Pamela's position might promote the interests of her family. But in Kelly's novel, Pamela's tendency to concern herself with the well-being of none but her dinner guests and correspondents suggests that charity is indistinguishable from showing off one's wealth or promoting the interests of friends.

The most serious consequence of Kelly's use of literary convention is the reduction of the self to something that is conveniently and completely subjugated to the demands of social order. Of the many interpolated stories, there is one that briefly rehearses a variation on the Pamela story (2:184–91), the emphasis falling on the man's defiance of his family; in the others the emphasis falls squarely on the preservation of social order. Love stories are generally reported with great attention to ancestry and wealth, but little concern for the sentiments of the man and none at all for those of the woman. In several of these tales, disguise figures prominently as a means of courting one's beloved or of defeating "a too scrupulous Point of Honour" in one's parents (2:52). Deception in the service of an honourable match is forgivable, but marrying much beneath one's degree is not. In a story that at first seems bound to end in an unequal match, Mr Grantwell falls for his foster sister, the poor granddaughter of an alderman. When his perfunctory attempt at seducing the lovely Etheldred fails, Grantwell arranges a marriage between her and Mr Skerton, an alderman's son. Etheldred acquiesces, since "all Men, her young Master excepted, were equally indifferent to her" (2:34). Sir Simon Darnford presents the tale as a lesson in "*Autarchy*" (2:23), and the implications for the body politic are inescapable.

Kelly is not alone in resorting to the romance conventions of hidden birth and natural hierarchy. In Goldoni's popular theatrical version of *Pamela* (English translation, 1756), the heroine is nobly born, as Lord Bonfil learns before he marries her. Similarly, the author of *The Life of Pamela* apparently adapts Kelly's account of Pamela's background, remarking that Andrews formerly lived "in a yeomanly way, partly as a Gentleman, and partly as a Farmer, upon a slender Estate of his own."[19] Eaves and Kimpel report that *The Universal Spectator, and Weekly Journal* published a dramatic poem entitled "Pamela the Second" which

18 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 137.

19 *The Life of Pamela* (London, 1741), p. 1.

resolves the tension between hypergamy and natural hierarchy in a different way. Here Pamela resists the advances of her father's landlord until she is rescued by her true love, a young miller.[20]

Nor is Kelly alone in wanting Pamela to write in a more heightened prose: some of Richardson's correspondents complained that her style was too low and urged him to invest it with more dignity.[21] The homogeneous and heightened style and the consequent reduction of psychological complexity that mar *Pamela's Conduct in High Life* infect almost all Pamelist literature except for the anonymous *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded. A Comedy*, which consists mainly of dialogue lifted from Richardson, and Giffard's *Pamela, A Comedy* (1742), which deserves recognition as the most sensitive Pamelist response to the questions of class and conscience raised by Richardson's novel. When in 1743 Edge rewrites Giffard's *Pamela* as an opera, he raises Belvile's style because Giffard's hero does not speak as a "Gentleman, or a Lover";[22] Belvile, needless to say, becomes less interesting, as does Pamela, whose style is also much above that of Richardson's original. *Memoirs of the Life of Lady H—, The Celebrated Pamela* (1741) also resorts to a class-based model of stylistic decorum. Although Sir A— H—'s other servants speak in a fairly robust rural manner, the virtuous (though uneducated) Pamela is given a style elevated enough so that she can lament her lack of education in the following terms:

> I cannot be insensible of the Obligations your Love and Esteem have laid me under: I am thoroughly sensible of the Disadvantages occasioned by the Want of Education; and I was wishing for the Opportunity now offer'd for my Instruction—My Parents, however, taught me to tread in the Paths of Virtue, from which I have never lost my Way: They likewise told me, if ever I was married, that I must be dutiful to my Husband: I have hitherto been so; and it shall always be the Study of my Life to regulate my Behaviour to your liking.[23]

If Kelly's novel is as representative as these correspondences suggest, then Pamelist literature is marked by incomprehension of—or resistance to—Richardson's interest in the kinds of confrontation that can occur between the conscientious individual and the hereditary stewards of political and social authority. Reading Pamelist works, one never senses that hereditary honour is seriously in question or that a servant might find

20 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 134.

21 Eaves and Kimpel, pp. 122–23. In response to this complaint, Richardson tended to revise Pamela's style slightly upward. See T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, "Richardson's Revisions of Pamela," *Studies in Bibliography* 20 (1967), 61–88.

22 Edge, *Pamela, An Opera* (Newcastle, 1742), p. vi.

23 *Memoirs of the Life of Lady H—, The Celebrated Pamela* (London, 1741), p. 50.

herself irreconcilably at odds with the demands of her position. Viewed from the ideological perspective that informs these works, Pamela must have seemed a confusing and threatening social chimera, exhibiting oddly mismatched linguistic, moral, and physical qualities. She would therefore have posed special problems for the writer who sought to appropriate Richardson's novel as an aristocratic text. Pamelist fascination with a servant girl who marries into the gentry is ultimately inconsistent with the project of making Pamela's birth conform to her beauty and moral qualities; but the inconsistency can, I think, be traced to a mixture of desire and anxiety—desire to appropriate aristocratic prestige, and anxiety that cultural order itself might be threatened by a too serious examination of the nature of aristocratic authority. By removing Pamela from her humble origins and forging linguistic and hereditary links between her and an idealized gentry, the Pamelists attempt to reconcile desire and anxiety. Pamelist revisionism, then, is a way of neutralizing *Pamela*.

Writers opposed to *Pamela* attacked the novel on various grounds, both trivial and important: at some point, its length, its colloquialisms, its violation of classical poetics, its adulatory puffs, and the self-approving tone of the "editor" all came under attack. But despite the apparent diversity of opinion, anti-Pamelists were united on what they saw as three serious problems, all of which pertain to the early, apparently subversive part of the novel: first, the warmth of the language and its potential effect on the morals of youth; second, the perceived hypocrisy of the heroine and callow ineptness of the hero; and third, the breakdown of social distinctions. The attack on Richardson's language of sexuality is not of concern here, since it does not bear directly on the politics of the *Pamela* vogue. But the charges of faulty characterization and social levelling can be traced to resistance against Richardson's treatment of the relation of the complex, highly individuated self to the structures of social authority.

The Pamela-as-hypocrite interpretation arose with *Shamela* and was adopted by almost all subsequent anti-Pamelist works. Among these, the only serious exploration of the psychology of hypocrisy is to be found in Eliza Haywood's *Anti-Pamela* (1741), a politically conservative book that is anti-Pamelist mainly in the sense that it presents a heroine unlike Richardson's. In it, Haywood's anti-Pamela, Syrena Tricksy, occupies ground somewhere between Pamela and Shamela: she is not very virtuous, but she is not, at first, very hypocritical, either. Like Defoe's heroines, she is neither vicious nor cruel, but weakly religious and aggressively entrepreneurial. But other anti-Pamelist interpretations of

Richardson's novel, following Fielding's lead, present Pamela as a hardened hypocrite. An epigram appearing in the *London Magazine* (June 1741) begins, "Admir'd *Pamela*, till *Shamela* shown, / Appear'd in every colour—but her own."[24] *Pamela Censured* is representative in its claims that from the beginning "the *innocent Girl* appears mighty skilfull" and that later "the innocent *Pamela* ... with all the Inconsistence imaginable expresses herself as cunningly and knowing ... as the best bred Town Lass."[25] A few years later, the author of a shilling pamphlet called *Critical Remarks* complains that Pamela is a "little pert minx" and that instead of inculcating "some great and useful moral," *Pamela* teaches servants to resist their masters in order to elicit a marriage proposal.[26]

Anti-Pamelist distrust rests at least partly on the belief, carefully subdued in Kelly's novel, that social relations are based on competition and deception. This premise in turn provides the grounds for the charge that Richardson's novel is politically heterodox, partly because it provides a model for education that effaces social distinctions, and partly because it challenges assumptions about innate class characteristics. In *Anti-Pamela* Haywood objects, without naming Richardson's novel, to the levelling tendencies that characterize the education of Pamela Andrews and Syrena Tricksy. Haywood complains of parents "who flattering themselves that by breeding [their daughters] like Gentlewomen, and setting them forth to the utmost of their Abilities, and often beyond, [think that] they shall be able to make their Fortune by Marriage."[27] The result, in Syrena Tricksy's case, is a Moll Flanders–like ambition to establish herself socially, if not morally, as a gentlewoman. *Critical Remarks* reiterates Haywood's conservatism, but extends its criticism of *Pamela* to include an attack on the very idea of chastity among the lower orders. After distinguishing between political chastity, by which the "good oeconomy and internal happiness of the state much depends" (p. 29), and religious chastity, which is "equally obligatory on all ranks" but in practice much less binding than political chastity (p. 32), the author contends that Pamela "was not of that rank or situation in life which could entitle her to those notions of honour and virtue, which are extremely proper and becoming in Clarissa" (p. 35). Haywood's remarks offer the conservative common sense that also lies behind Pamela's initial misgivings about the value of her education, but in their recourse to class stereotypes that enforce comfortable social distinctions the anonymous pamphleteer's claims seem much less tolerant.

24 Quoted in McKillop, p. 74.

25 *Pamela Censured* (London, 1741), pp. 26, 32.

26 *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, and Pamela* (London, 1754), pp. 58, 11–12.

27 Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela* (London, 1741), p. 6. References are to this edition.

Anti-Pamelists also charged that the portrayal of Mr B. was morally and politically dangerous. Since Pamela is obviously a scheming hypocrite, the reasoning seems to go, then Mr B. must be an imbecile to submit to Pamela's terms. The author of *Pamela Censured* states the case mildly when he complains to Richardson, "your fine Gentleman does not come up to the Character you would fain have him be thought to assume" (p. 22). The author of *Critical Remarks* accuses Richardson of teaching that "when a young gentleman of fortune cannot obtain his ends of a handsome servant girl, he ought to marry her" (p. 14). The pamphleteer accepts Fielding's portrayal of Mr B. completely, referring to him as Booby and calling him "one of the greatest bubbles, and blunderers" and "a downright Covent-garden rake" (pp. 21, 23), before concluding that "any man of common sense might have had [Pamela] on his own terms in a week or fortnight" (p. 58). The pamphleteer even contends that Williams's cuckolding of Mr B. would be "a proper catastrophe for all such preposterous matches" (p. 23).

One result of the extreme conservatism of *Pamela Censured* in particular is its unwitting emphasis on the gap between Richardson's probing examination of the effects of aristocratic authority on the conscientious self and his evasion of the question of authority within marriage, particularly in cases of male hypergamy. This gap was exploited by the author of *Pamela Censured* not to attack Richardson's attitudes towards women, but to ridicule his social criticism. The pamphleteer makes the following argument:

> by the same Rule that it may hold good with *Servant Maids*, in regard to their obtaining their *Young Masters* ... it must equally make the Ladies conclude, that if they can find any Thing more deserving in their *Footmen*, than in the *Young Gentlemen*, who by a suitable Rank and Fortune are designed to be their Suitors, they are under no Obligation to chuse the latter, but *act meritoriously*, throwing down all Distinction of *Family*, and taking up with the former. (pp. 18–19)

Like Lady Davers, who argues this case in *Pamela*, the pamphleteer argues in bad faith, momentarily ignoring the cultural values he shares with his opponent in order to propose a case which both would likely dismiss in the terms Mr B. uses: "a Man ennobles the Woman he takes, be she *who* she will; and adopts her into his own Rank, be that *what* it will: But a Woman, tho' ever so nobly born, debases herself by a mean Marriage, and descends from her own Rank, to his she stoops to" (*Pamela*, p. 349). Even the tone of the argument—the suggestion that the case is patently ridiculous—discloses the sponsor's bad faith. In the next paragraph, the author falls back on the gender assumptions he momentarily ignores, remarking that *Pamela* is particularly inappropriate reading for young women.

Anti-Pamelist attacks invariably dehumanize Pamela by stripping away the complex, authentic self that she attributes to the influence of Lady B., her parents, and Mrs Jervis. What is left after the pamphleteers get through with her is a sketch of a vain and socially ambitious servant who is less bland, but hardly more complex, than the Pamelist's Pamela. It would be difficult to say exactly how much anti-Pamelist scepticism stems from social conservatism and how much from misogyny: the anti-Pamelist's Pamela does not retain much right to self-determination, and the pamphleteers in particular come perilously close to saying her resistance is a denial of Mr B.'s *droit du seigneur*. And it is, after all, striking that of the various anti-Pamelas—Fielding's Shamela, James Parry's Parthenissa, Haywood's Syrena Tricksy—and reconstructed Pamelas of *Pamela Censured* and *Critical Remarks*, Haywood's is the most likeable and most complex. Still, the anti-Pamelist's Pamela, unlike her Pamelist counterpart, retains some of the subversiveness of the original Pamela, though it is that of the insurgent, not the reformer.

Almost every significant anti-Pamelist argument originates with *Shamela*, the first and best of the attacks on *Pamela*. Although Fielding has several targets in mind, including Conyers Middleton's *Life of Cicero* and Colly Cibber's *Apology*, what most modern readers remember most strikingly about *Shamela* is its satire on Richardson's literary practice: Conny Keyber's letter of praise to himself, for instance, or the lampooning of Pamela's practice of writing in the present tense, or the stylistic briskness that points up the dilatory pace of events in the original. These satiric touches are undoubtedly the best parts of *Shamela*, and their brilliance has contributed to the pamphlet's status (at least among those who dislike Richardson's novel) as a kind of sacred text, a definitive and irrefutable attack on *Pamela*. But there is a distinction to be made between literary parody and a political critique which is not (to a modern sensibility at least) targeted against what Fielding elsewhere calls "the true Ridiculous."[28] Any attempt to locate *Shamela* accurately within the *Pamela* vogue must eventually set aside the matters of technique that Fielding burlesques so effectively, and consider how well *Shamela* answers Richardson's claims about the effects of abused authority on the conscientious self.

Whereas Kelly and the other Pamelists raise Pamela's rank to make it conform to her moral qualities, Fielding reverses the direction of

28 Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1967), p. 7.

the transformation, first making Pamela the illegitimate daughter of an orange-wench and a disreputable custom-house official, and then lowering her morality and prose style. The comic transformation of Pamela into Shamela is, of course, attributable to Fielding's exaggeration of the colloquial and aphoristic elements of Pamela's prose and his complementary stripping away of her education and moral sense. Her letters exhibit the brisk, simplified syntax and orthographic peculiarities common to conventional portrayals of servants; as Claude Rawson points out, they also possess a farcical exuberance that is distinctly Fielding's and extends far beyond the local demands of parody.[29] The immediate consequence of these stylistic transformations is that Shamela's prose becomes inadequate for moral distinctions of any value, and Pamela re-emerges in Fielding's pamphlet as a semi-literate gold-digger whose very rare gestures towards conscience are impossible to take seriously.

Although the transformation of Pamela relies heavily on literary-social stereotypes, Fielding differs from other anti-Pamelists in that he exploits Pamela's psychological complexity instead of simply suppressing it. Nevertheless, some simplification of motive must inevitably occur and, when it does, Fielding's cavalier attitude towards tensions between the self and aristocratic authority emerges. In particular, when Fielding comically exaggerates Pamela's interest in gentility and the unrefined speech that (in the original novel) makes that interest slightly gauche, he ignores her increasingly difficult project of conducting herself as befits her position as a servant. The result is a presentation of some of Pamela's psychological contradictions that ignores the conscientious self that struggles, often unsuccessfully, to reconcile conflicting tendencies:

> I immediately run up into my room, and stript, and washed, and drest myself as well as I could, and put on my prettiest round-ear'd cap, and pulled down my stays, to show as much as I could of my bosom (for Parson Williams says, that is the most beautiful part of a woman), and then I practised over all my airs before the glass, and then I sat down and read a chapter in *The Whole Duty of Man*.[30]

Fielding exaggerates the incongruity between Pamela's self-dramatization and her desire to do right; in the references to clothes, he also shrewdly captures mundane details that are significant to the adolescent. The effect is undoubtedly funny, but it would be hard to imagine any very interesting character in the English realist novel who would be immune to this tactic, and some of the most engaging—Dorothea Brooke,

29 Claude Rawson, "Dialogue and Authorial Presence in Fielding's Novels and Plays," *Order from Confusion Sprung* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), p. 262.

30 *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), p. 322. References are to this edition.

for instance—seem particularly vulnerable. Moreover, what Fielding excludes is as significant as what he admits: throughout *Shamela*, Pamela's temper remains in evidence, but not her unsuccessful struggles to control it; her self-congratulatory resourcefulness remains, but not the imperfect submission to providence that competes with it. Other facets of her character—her only dimly understood attraction to Mr B., her qualms about the demands of adult life, and her adolescent skittishness about sex—disappear completely as Pamela becomes Shamela.

The tendency to whittle away the moral centre of Richardson's characters also appears in the transformation of Mr B. into Booby. As I noted, both Edge, a Pamelist, and the anti-Pamelist author of *Critical Remarks* (1754) object that Mr B.'s lovemaking is inept and that his speech is inappropriate for a gentleman. Fielding makes both points by exaggerating contradictions in the original Mr B.'s behaviour. Whereas Richardson's character betrays a mixture of desire and diffidence that makes him alternately approach and avoid Pamela, Fielding's Booby simply does not have the gumption to execute his designs, and so his assaults seem perfunctory and, for all Shamela's claims to the contrary, passionless:

> [H]ussy, slut, saucebox, boldface, come hither—Yes, to be sure, says I; why don't you come, says he; what should I come for, says I; if you don't come to me, I'll come to you, says he; I shan't come to you, I assure you, says I. Upon which he run up, caught me in his arms, and flung me upon a chair, and began to offer to touch my under-petticoat. Sir, says I, you had better not offer to be rude; well, says he, no more I won't then; and away he went. (p. 312)

Passages scarcely more abrupt than this, awkwardly attesting to Mr B.'s ambivalence, abound in *Pamela*, and they are a real embarrassment even to readers normally sympathetic to Richardson's aims. But Mr B.'s erratic behaviour extends beyond his relations with Pamela and, if it can be traced partly to Richardson's artistic clumsiness or inexperience with high life, it is also an insight into what happens to Mr B. when he, too, loses confidence in the authority of rank. Although Fielding's portrayal of Booby does not point to the last and most interesting of these causes, it does comically recreate Mr. B. as an inept low-life character whose speech and behaviour are ill suited to his rank. The reduction of Mr B. clearly serves Fielding's parodic ends, but as an attack on Richardson's gentleman it is only a qualified success, because Fielding's sensitivity to a weakness of Richardson's novel is accompanied by an insensitivity to one of its most important strengths, Richardson's subtle discrimination of the effects of changing social conditions on character.

It is in Parson Oliver's concluding letter that Fielding obligingly lays bare the ideological foundation of *Shamela*. With the exception of the

first objection—that complaining of the "lascivious images" (p. 338)—Oliver's five points attack Richardson's progressive tendencies while betraying Fielding's reluctance to take the moral complexities of character seriously. Here are Oliver's second and third objections:

> *2dly*, Young gentlemen are here taught, that to marry their mother's chambermaids, and to indulge the passion of lust, at the expense of reason and common sense, is an act of religion, virtue, and honour; and, indeed, the surest road to happiness.
>
> *3rdly*, All chambermaids are strictly enjoined to look out after their masters; they are taught to use little arts to that purpose: and lastly, are countenanced in impertinence to their superiors, and in betraying the secrets of families. (p. 338)

The second objection is properly two complaints. *Pamela*, Oliver claims, teaches "Young gentlemen ... to marry their mother's chambermaids [Objection 2a], and to indulge the passion of lust [Objection 2b]." The grammatical coordination slyly glosses over Richardson's careful distinctions. Yes, Mr B. marries Pamela, but no, he does not "indulge the passion of lust"; his passions are educated before they are gratified, and by the time he and Pamela marry, his beliefs are too complex and his emotions too varied to be adequately described in the space Oliver accords them. The third objection begins by reiterating the Pamela-as-hypocrite thesis and ends by repeating Mr B.'s two most common accusations against Pamela. What it ignores entirely is Pamela's struggle to contend with what she herself recognizes as objectionable tendencies in her behaviour. Taken together, the second and third objections suggest, first, that the getting of power is a primary concern for maidservants and, second, that those who have power must perpetually be on their guard against the schemes of those who do not.[31]

If Oliver's second and third objections imply a Hobbesian state of social contention, his fourth and fifth objections reveal inconsistencies in Fielding's thinking about the importance of conscience:

> *4thly*, In the character of Mrs. Jewkes vice is rewarded; whence every housekeeper may learn the usefulness of pimping and bawding for her master.
>
> *5thly*, In Parson Williams, who is represented as a faultless character, we see a busy fellow, intermeddling with the private affairs of his patron, whom he is very ungratefully forward to expose and condemn on every occasion. (p. 338)

It is a common observation that in *Shamela* Mrs Jewkes is portrayed with remarkable inconsistency and bears an unstable relationship to her counterpart in Richardson's novel. At times she is the pander of *Pamela*,

31 The second point is effectively dramatized in the deliciously conspiratorial Letter 7, in which the alliance of servants suddenly extends to include Jewkes, Robin Coachman, and (Mrs Jervis suggests) all the rest.

and as such she is subject to Oliver's censure in his fourth objection; at other times, she is the properly obedient servant who would protect Booby from Shamela's schemes. Fielding's evasion of the question of whether the original Mrs Jewkes ought to serve her master's illegitimate interests suggests that he has not understood the central dilemma of Richardson's novel. On the one hand, he suggests that good servants always obey their master; on the other, like Richardson, he would not have a servant obey a vicious command. But if, in the fourth objection, Oliver complains that "In the character of Mrs Jewkes vice is rewarded," then he cannot reasonably claim, in the fifth, that Williams—a clergyman whose concern ought to be the conduct of his parishioners—is "a busy fellow, intermeddling with the private affairs of his patron." Furthermore, Fielding can only carry out his attack on Williams in the fifth objection by employing the usual anti-Pamelist trick of caricature, which he has already applied to Pamela and Mr B. in the second and third. In the original *Pamela*, Williams is not "faultless": he is, on the contrary, vain, imprudent, gullible, physically cowardly, and a little opportunistic. Moreover, he neither "exposes" nor "condemns" Mr B. "on every occasion," as Fielding claims, nor is it very likely that Richardson would approve if he did.

To say that *Shamela* does not answer the central political concern of *Pamela* is not to imply that *Shamela* affirms nothing, or that Fielding is simply complacent. All the elements necessary for an examination of abused aristocratic authority are present in *Shamela*, but the events of *Pamela* are distorted and the original characters' motivations fudged to reflect conservative resistance to Richardson's treatment of master-servant relations. Eric Rothstein argues that *Shamela* protests against "doffing of authority for personal assertion" and that Fielding fears "the social chaos inherent in disrupting the established places of gentlemen, maids, and curates."[32] These, however, are precisely the offences of which Mr B. is guilty in *Pamela*. Fielding does not admit that an Anglican Justice of the Peace is as capable as a Methodist preacher of abusing his authority; if he did, he could not be quite so hostile to Richardson's novel. The position Fielding takes in *Shamela* is that it is always the individual who poses the threat to community standards, and never the other way around: as long as the forces of social chaos are kept in check, abuses of aristocratic authority may safely be ignored.

Perhaps the most important difference between Richardson and the writers of the *Pamela* vogue, including Fielding, is that the voguists

32 Eric Rothstein, "The Framework of *Shamela*," *Journal of English Literary History* 35 (1968), 394–95.

ignored what Richardson saw with great clarity: first, that there is something genuinely problematic about the relation of the conscientious individual to representatives of cultural authority; and second, that for the Christian—and particularly the Puritan—concerned with salvation, acting by the dictates of conscience is a far greater concern than the appropriation of power. Richardson's detractors seem partly to understand the first point, but not the second. For them, the getting of power is the primary motivation for all members of the lower orders, and the only real cultural problem is that of keeping the upstart poor in their place. Given the seductive appeal of such beliefs for those who could identify themselves with the sources of political and cultural authority, it can hardly be surprising that there appeared a group of writers to exploit the ambiguities that are part of Pamela's adolescent complexity in order to recast Richardson's heroine as a scheming impostor. Even those who see themselves as continuing the literary and moral tradition of *Pamela*, some of whom considered themselves to be improving upon Richardson, have, if anything, read *Pamela* with less acumen, and only a little more sympathy, than the anti-Pamelists. Whereas the anti-Pamelists negate the subversive potential of Richardson's novel by attacking Pamela's motives, the Pamelists achieve the same end by depriving Pamela of her humble background. When formal strategies evolve out of their ideological position, the Pamelists appropriate Pamela's story as an aristocratic text in which Richardson's discriminating depiction of character gives way to romance plot conventions, class stereotypes, and a homogeneously bland style. The immediate result of the ideological preoccupations of Pamelists and anti-Pamelists alike is that Richardson's most important early contribution to the English novel—the effective use of psychological realism as a means of inquiry into the problem of abused authority—seems to pass virtually unnoticed among his first readers. It is a notable quirk of literary history that Pamelists and anti-Pamelists end up opposing Richardson's novel on largely the same grounds.

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