CHILDISHNESS IN THE AGE OF REASON

ROBERT JAMES HUGHES

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CHILDISHNESS IN THE AGE OF REASON

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Robert James Hughes
CHILDISHNESS IN THE AGE OF REASON

BY

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M.A., Northeastern University, 1973
A.B., Brown University, 1967

A DISSERTATION

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the Requirements for the Degree of

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in
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PREFACE

Fiction written specifically for children first appeared in the eighteenth century. Books like Sarah Fielding's The Governess and Thomas Day's Sanford and Merton contain child characters whose adventures offer moral instruction to young audiences. Most fiction intended for adult readers seems to deal almost exclusively with the concerns of adult life. Children appear in Richardson's and Fielding's novels, and Defoe and Smollett give accounts of their protagonists' childhoods, but all these writers are most concerned with the early adult years or middle life of their heroes and heroines. Peter Coveney in Poor Monkey: The Child in Literature has stated: "Until the last decades of the eighteenth century the child did not exist as an important and continuous theme in English literature."\(^1\) In a recent dissertation on attitudes toward children in eighteenth-century fiction, however, Lois Gibson concludes that while the child is viewed consistently as a "creature of passion rather than thought," he shifts "from being a creature to be saved or changed to becoming a source of salvation or inspiration."\(^2\)

While there was not a uniform view of the child in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a tacit consensus among


thinkers as different as Locke and Susanna and John Wesley that the child should develop control over his passions, appetites and imagination. Self-control was the primary lesson in the English public schools where boys learned to take a caning without a whimper. Self-control was not only a measure of maturity; it was a central cultural value. Neo-classicism discouraged undisciplined self-expression and encouraged decorum, restraint, and balance. Reason had to hold sway over emotion and imagination. Chesterfield's Letters to His Son with their emphasis on decorum suggest that the true gentleman is he who makes his life into a neo-classical work of art.

The Age of Reason produced an adult-centered civilization. Captain Cook and other bold adventurers who could appeal to the longings of repressed schoolboys were among its heroes, but its leading figures were urbane sophisticates, like Chesterfield and Johnson, more at home in the realm of the drawing room than on the high seas. The eighteenth century thought of itself as the era when civilization had come of age. Gibbon, in his Autobiography, smugly gives thanks that he has been born in an enlightened time free of the befuddlement and superstition of earlier centuries. Johnson in criticizing the excesses of older romance literature points out that nations, as well as individual persons, have to pass through a period of childhood before reaching maturity. The sense that his own time is England's maturity allows Johnson to patronize Shakespeare, who would "leave his work unfinished" to pursue a "quibble," as if Shakespeare were a brilliant but undisciplined adolescent.

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The Restoration and eighteenth century was a time of adult heroes but the literature of the period is concerned with children and childishness nonetheless. While there are few child characters, many adult characters are presented as overgrown children. My focus is on these adults and near-adults who lack self-control and who continue to be as impulsive, emotional, and imaginative as children. Wycherley's Margery Pinchwife, Fielding's Parson Adams, Sterne's Uncle Toby, and Cleland's Fanny Hill may have little in common, but each of them has traits that eighteenth-century readers would associate with children. Some, like Margery Pinchwife, both delighted and outraged contemporary audiences; others, like Parson Adams and Uncle Toby, do not measure up to the eighteenth century's standards of maturity, but they have always been loved and remembered by readers. Some of them are "childish" while others are "childlike." In normal usage the two terms have always had different connotations. Saying a person is childish implies criticism of immature behavior, whereas saying someone is childlike suggests praise of a special innocence. I shall use the term "child-adult" for inclusive reference to both categories. I do not intend to add to our historical knowledge of the treatment of children or their place in society. I intend rather to examine the significance of child-adults in the literature of a period when self-control seemed an important value. Writers use such characters to raise questions about the degree of restraint that a person should impose on the non-rational part of the self to assure his own happiness and the well-being of his society.

My introductory chapter establishes the traits of those characters I call child-adults. I review assumptions about children during the period and cite contemporary comments on adults who behave like
children. My sources include essays, letters, educational tracts, children's literature, and historical studies. The second chapter focuses on Restoration and eighteenth-century drama. Characters such as ignorant country girls, booby squires, and young people reared in exotic locales are child-adults who are not fully grown up. Playwrights from Davenant to Goldsmith use these figures to judge accepted standards of behavior in a mannered and self-consciously civilized society. Chapter three explores a paradox in Fielding's attitude toward adults who behave with childlike impulsiveness. Both Parson Adams and Jonathan Wild have the energy and exuberance of children, but in one case the lack of self-control seems a virtue, while in the other it seems to be a vice. Chapter four discusses how the eccentricities of Sterne's characters are like the antics of children. Whimsy, make-believe, and imagination are important features of the retired life at Shandy Hall. I conclude with a chapter on Cleland and Beckford. Both Fanny Hill and Vathek are child-adult protagonists intended to scandalize reader's. Fanny Hill lives for momentary pleasures, never moderates her natural impulses, and yet she finds happiness. Vathek is wilful, impulsive, greedy, and sometimes cruel, and his fate depends on his struggle with a mother who seems a parody of the conventionally strict parent and who would force him to control his inclinations.
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ABSTRACT

CHILDISHNESS IN THE AGE OF REASON

by

ROBERT JAMES HUGHES

During the Restoration and eighteenth century educators regarded children as creatures of passion who responded instinctually to immediate pleasures and pains. To become mature adults children were expected to moderate their passions and to guide their actions by reason. The drama and fiction of the period deal primarily with the lives of adults rather than children, but many adult characters such as Wycherley's Margery Pinchwife, Fielding's Parson Adams, Sterne's Uncle Toby, and Cleland's Fanny Hill are portrayed as impulsive overgrown children. This dissertation examines the significance of characters who think and behave like children in the literature of an age when self-control seemed an important value. Writers use these "child-adults" to raise questions about the degree of restraint that a person should impose on the non-rational part of the self to assure his own happiness and the well-being of his society.

The first chapter reviews the prevailing assumptions about children from the Renaissance to the late eighteenth century. Lessons in self-control were the common denominator of all educational theories. Children had to be protected from their own natures. Appetites demanding immediate
gratification had to be controlled to prevent a self-indulgence that would be destructive of future well-being. Imagination, likewise, had to be controlled by reason lest it provoke irrational fears and possibly madness. If a person imposed no restraint on his natural inclinations, he would selfishly ignore the rights of others.

Chapter two discusses dramatic characters who remain as children either because of extraordinary circumstances or a misguided education. A variety of such figures ranging from young people brought up on an enchanted island to booby squires and country hoydens appear in plays representative of the dramatic styles of the Restoration and eighteenth century. The Restoration playwrights use child-adults to criticize current standards of civilized, adult behavior, but they withhold a total endorsement of an impulsive, immoderate approach to life. Lillo's The London Merchant takes a harsher view of the child-adult and upholds the conventional standards of maturity. Goldsmith in the late eighteenth century, however, makes a booby squire of the sort ridiculed in earlier plays the hero of a comedy.

Chapter three focuses on Fielding, who believes that character is determined by inborn traits and cannot be altered by education. Both Parson Adams and Jonathan Wild have the energy and exuberance of children, but in one case the lack of self-control seems a virtue, while in the other it seems to be a vice. Fielding condones the childlike impulsiveness of the benevolent man, but he recognizes that most people require strong checks on their natural inclinations.

Chapter four discusses Sterne's attack on the values inherent in the educational theories of his age. Sterne admires the child's whimsy, his spontaneous feeling, and his free imagination, and he does not believe that they should be discouraged as the child grows older. The Shan-
dys, Yorick, and Trim are overgrown children, and Sterne implies that they are fortunate to be so because they are able to salvage some happiness amid life's misfortunes.

Chapter five concerns Cleland and Beckford, who blatantly criticize the expectations that the eighteenth century imposed on children. Fanny Hill and Vathek are childlike hedonists who live for the moment. Fanny's excesses bring her happiness, not misery. Vathek, when left to himself, pursues pleasure, and while he may not be virtuous, he is at least relatively harmless. When he follows his mother's advice and acquires self-control, he fulfills his potential for evil and becomes a danger to himself and others.
CHAPTER I

THE CHILD AND THE CHILD-ADULT

From the Renaissance to the late eighteenth century writers who discuss children display attitudes ranging from adoration to contempt. A few see the child as spiritually superior to adults. John Earle in his character book *Micro-Cosmographie* (1628) credits the infant with the purity of the unfallen Adam.¹ Thomas Traherne, like Wordsworth in the "Intimations" ode, remembers possessing a supranatural perceptive faculty as a boy: "I knew by intuition those things which since my apostasy I collected again by the highest reason."² But most other writers on children take a less exalted view of the child. Two schools of thought, one humanist, the other Calvinist, persisted throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Calvinist commentators scarcely concealed a profound mistrust and resentment of the child. A 1708 pamphlet on the newly founded charity schools asserts: "Children are made tractable and submissive by being early accustomed to awe and punishment and dutiful subjection. From such timely discipline the public may ex-


²Quoted by George Boas in *The Cult of Childhood* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1966), p. 45. Boas discusses the history of the tendency of artists and thinkers to admire and to try to recapture the innocence of the childlike mind.
pect honest and industrious servants." Humanists, in the tradition of Elyot, Ascham, and Locke did not regard children as specimens of unregenerate humanity as the Calvinists did. They saw them rather as potentially rational adults who needed to be gently guided, not beaten into submission. Despite their differing views of the child's nature, both the Calvinists and humanists considered the child as more subject to appetites and passions, and more capable of wilful self-love than most adults. Teaching him to control these tendencies was the common goal of all educational schemes.

The belief in original sin and in the innate depravity of the newborn determined many English Calvinists' thinking about children. John Robinson in 1628 warned of children's "spiritual dangers, both for nourishing and increasing the corruption which they bring into the world with them; and for diverting them from all goodness, which God's grace and men's endeavour might work in them!" It was the duty of good parents, therefore, to make children into fit receptacles for grace. Before the bar of divine justice there was no dispensation for the very young. Calvinist parents saw the proper training of children as a burdensome duty to make the child recognize his own depravity and submit to the will of God. "Wilful" is a frequent term in writings about child-

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5Bogna W. Lorence, "Parents and Children in Eighteenth-Century Europe," History of Childhood Quarterly, Summer 1975, 1-30. Lorence discusses the "intrusive" style of many religious parents who considered their children as malleable objects to be shaped and who associated childishness and appetite with original sin.
ren. Robinson advises parents to suppress their children's wills:

"Children should not know, if it could be kept from them, that they have a will in their own, but in their parents' keeping; neither should these words be heard from them, save by way of consent, 'I will' or 'I will not'" (p. 14).

The child's expression of his wants were suspect and had to be controlled. Until the late eighteenth century, even the bodily movements of English infants were restrained by swaddling bands. Swaddling made children passive and supposedly kept them from hurting themselves. Lloyd deMause sees this practice as a sign of adults projecting their own unacceptable and unconscious desires onto children. In any case, the swaddled infant is a fitting emblem of adult efforts to suppress the impulses of young children.

One hundred years after Robinson wrote his tract, Susanna Wesley took up the same themes while giving advice on child rearing to her famous son John. Her methods are stern and are aimed at instilling self-control at an early age. At about one year "the fear of the rod" taught her children "to cry softly." Crying is the most blatant expression of a child's needs and appetite, and Mrs. Wesley refers to it as "odious noise" (p. 47). Her children's daily activities were regulated by a harsh discipline. Their desires were never indulged. They had to eat the food that was given them, not food of their own choice, and they risked punishment in voicing any preference. There was no "loud

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playing or talking permitted" (p. 49). John Wesley himself felt that anyone who played as a child would continue to play as a man. Injunctions against play and frivolity must have been common in religious households. William Godwin remembered the consequences of his playing with a cat on a Sunday as follows: "My father saw me and seriously reproved my levity, remarking that on the Lord's day he was ashamed to observe me demeaning myself with so much profaneness."

Mrs. Wesley claimed that the first step in rearing children is "to conquer their will" because "self will is the root of all sin and misery" (pp. 47-48). In a sermon on education, John Wesley emphasizes the need to cure the spiritual diseases present at birth because of original sin. He insists that children be told they are fallen spirits as soon as possible. The spiritual diseases include self will and love of the world. The first makes us follow our own desires rather than God's will, and the second makes us love our own pleasure rather than God. Like his mother, Wesley insists that the child's will be broken early and that crying not be tolerated after the first year.

This advice on child-rearing is consistent with the Calvinist belief in predetermination and innate depravity. The child has no right to exercise his will because only the divine will is legitimate. He must first learn submission to his parents, then to God. The child, far from being a vessel of innocence, is seen as a wild creature of wayward impulses who must be tamed like an animal. The appetites and delights

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9 Quoted in Bayne-Powell, pp. 127-28.

expressed by crying and laughter have to be restrained. The child is a small nihilist whose instincts are contrary to God's law and social order. In the execution day sermons of Puritan New England, the standard metaphor for the criminal is "the ungrateful child."\(^1\)

As the first step toward conversion the child had to recognize the promptings of his own nature as loathsome. John Bunyan recalled how his youthful sins separated him from God:

> These things, I say, when I was but a child, about nine or ten years old, did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my many sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down and afflicted in my mind therewith, yet I could not let go my sins.\(^2\)

In 1679 James Claypoole, a fifteen year old, looked back on the "wickedness and "vain imaginations" of his past life as an "Egypt, wherein I was a captive and a bond slave under the prince of the power of darkness."\(^3\) While Claypoole does not specify his actual trespasses, most sermons and instructional literature for people his age stress the sinfulness of sensuality and pride. Steven R. Smith in an article on seventeenth-century adolescence points out that the sins of sensuality which included worldly amusements like drinking, gambling, and frequenting theaters as well as sexual lust were particularly reprehensible because "they seemed to be more animal than human and resulted from the failure

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of self discipline."\(^{14}\)

The doctrine of original sin, so important in Calvinist thinking, is, however, conspicuously ignored in the theories of humanistic educators. It is not a consideration in important works by Thomas Elyot, Roger Ascham, and John Locke. Ascham in *The Scholemaster* (1570) anticipates Locke's *tabula rasa* metaphor to describe the minds of young children: "For the pure clean wit of a sweet young babe is like the newest wax, most liable to receive the best and fairest printing..."\(^{15}\) In his system there is no need to break the child's will because of depraved nature. He urges that children not be motivated by compulsion and fear. Beating should be reserved for extreme misconduct only. Like Quintillian, he feels that study should be made to resemble play.\(^{16}\) While Renaissance humanists do not speak of spiritual diseases, they recognize that the child, because of his ignorance and inexperience, can be easily misled. Elyot addresses this problem using a popular metaphor for the educational process:

> And I verily do suppose that in their brains and hearts, which be members spiritual, while they be tender and the little slips of reason begin in them to burgeon, there may hap by evil custom pestiferous dew to pierce the said members and infect and corrupt the soft and tender buds, whereby the fruit may grow wild, and some time contain in it fervent and mortal poison to the utter de-

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\(^{16}\)Ascham, p. 198; Quintillian in *Institutio Oratoria*, H.E. Butler tr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Loeb Classical Library, 1963), p. 30, says, "Above all things, we must care that the child, who is not yet old enough to love his studies, does not come to hate them and dread the bitterness which he has once tasted even when the years of his infancy are left behind. His studies must be made an amusement."
Elyot believes that reason, the quality separating men from animals, begins to develop even before a child can speak. Parents and tutors must cultivate the child's reason to guard against vicious influences that can distort his growth. Because a child's reason is not fully developed, he is liable to errors in judgment and not fully in control of himself. For Elyot, a person's thirteenth year is an important turning point, a time when "childhood declineth, and reason waxeth ripe and deprendeth [sic] things with a more constant judgement" (p. 33). The phrasing of this statement suggests that reason is incompatible with childhood. It more certainly implies that the child is irrational to some extent, and hence cannot always properly judge right from wrong.

John Locke's Concerning Education (1693) incorporates some of Ascham's and Elyot's assumptions, but offers a more detailed inquiry into the nature of childhood. Original sin has no place in his thinking. Though he warns against coddling and too much fondness, he acknowledges the child's need for the affection and company of its parents. This advice might seem ordinary enough, but the English were noted for being unaffectionate towards their children. Locke differs most from his

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18 Hobbes denies that children have reason until they can speak in Leviathan I, 5.

predecessors in being more concerned with instilling a proper frame of mind than with recommending a specific body of knowledge and accomplishments to be mastered. His scheme is not dogmatic and he recognizes that education has to be tailored for individual children. Like Elyot, he views the child as a person who is acquiring reason, but his discussion of children's irrational behavior and of methods for dealing with it are more specific.

Locke's appraisal of the child's reasoning faculties are realistic. He does not expect that children while still "in hanging sleeves" should have "the reason and conduct of Counselors." He considers them as "children, who must be tenderly used, who must play and have play-things." Although he advocates a careful discipline for children, he warns against breaking their spirits and leaving them cowed and passive. Locke appreciates the child's energy and curiosity, and his educational scheme takes advantage of these qualities to make the child love learning. While he is patient with children, he constantly warns of evils produced by pampering and coddling. Moderation and self discipline are the most important things the child has to learn.

The first thirty sections of Concerning Education are devoted to the physical care of the young child. The guiding principle is the need to prepare his body for the rigors of an active life. Locke, who was a medical doctor, opposes swaddling bands and tight clothes because they constrict the proper development of muscles and limbs. He also advocates

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21 Joseph E. Illick in "Anglo-American Childrearing" in The History of Childhood, p. 318, writes, "... the aristocratic ideal of the seventeenth century was moderation which hinged on self control. No man better articulated this goal than John Locke. ..."
a strict regimen for hardening the child physically. Frequent baths in cold water are recommended for strengthening the constitution. The mind too must be trained to endure hardships of another sort. Locke sees the basis of virtue as a person's ability "to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations, and purely follow what reason directs as best, tho' the appetite lean the other way" (p. 138).

Locke ascribes the cause of all "vicious actions" to "our natural propensity to indulge corporal and present pleasure, and to avoid pain at any rate" (p. 119). A child begins to exercise his reason when he begins to make decisions on the basis of their long term consequence. Motivating a child to study by either the threat of physical punishment or by the promise of material reward reinforces his dangerous "natural propensity." Rewards and punishments that act upon the body Locke considers "ill-chosen" (p. 152). Teaching children self-control requires that adults treat them as rational creatures. According to Locke, good actions should be rewarded by affectionate approval, and bad ones should be punished by disdain and withheld affection.

Locke also feels that children have to be taught to control their appetites and to distinguish real needs from fanciful ones. This is a vital part of self-discipline. A child who says he is hungry should be fed, but, if he voices a preference for a particular food, it should be denied just for the asking (p. 208). This system may seem unnecessarily harsh, but Locke credits children with a "love of power and dominion" (p. 207) which manifests itself in their desire to have the compliance of everyone around them and to possess as many objects as they can. Early adjustment to automatic denial of whimsical desires and appetite helps develop moderation, a desired virtue in maturity.

The value Locke places on self-control is carried to an extreme
by Lord Chesterfield. He is restrained and almost apologetic in voicing affection for his son and denies that there is anything instinctive or impulsive about his feelings. He writes to his fifteen year old son, "As I have no womanish weakness for your person, your merit must and will be the only measure of my kindness." Whether or not these are his true sentiments, he wants his son to see their relationship as emotionless and entirely contractual. In a subsequent letter he states, "to talk of natural affection is talking nonsense" (I, 6). A dominant theme in all the letters is the gentleman's and the diplomat's need for total government of the self. Chesterfield's preaching about discipline must have been a standard feature of paternal advice, in as much as the letters the rakish second Earl of Rochester wrote to his son have a similar tone. He tells the boy: "Dear child, learn your book, and be obedient and you shall see what a father I will be to you; you shall want no pleasure while you are good." Chesterfield also demands that a strict discipline be imposed on the mind's tendency to aimless thoughts. If a man is to gain knowledge, his attention has to be concentrated on what he is doing at the particular moment. This control is as important in hours of pleasure as it is in hours of study. He sees "the silly and idle suspension of thought" that others "would dignify with the name of ABSENCE and DISTRACTION" (I, 31) as inappropriate at all times. While Chesterfield did not warn against all gaiety as the Calvinists did, his well known censure of laughter, "Since I have had the use of my reason,


nobody has ever heard me laugh" (I, 58), shows the importance he places on controlling natural impulse and irrational outbursts.

Chesterfield's warning to his son about daydreaming reflects his concern that children can be harmed by their imaginations. The romantic poets were not the first to discover the power of the child's imagination. Lloyd deMause has assembled evidence showing that throughout history adults have used stories of ghosts and imaginary beings to terrify children into acceptable behavior.²⁴ Locke is sensitive to this abuse and urges that children be protected from their ability to imagine things. He cites servants with their tales of "spirits and goblins" (p. 242) as special offenders. Although ghost stories might make a child avoid misconduct, Locke fears that terrifying ideas, once impressed on a child's mind will have a lasting influence. He tells the story of a boy who was chased by a mad man and who narrowly escaped by running into his father's house. Years later, the boy was still scared when entering the house by that door even though his reason assured him there was nothing to fear.

Locke has few positive things to say about imagination in Concerning Education. He praises curiosity, a quality closely allied to imagination in so far as it leads the mind to new and unknown things, but he has little tolerance for children's daydreaming. If a child is reluctant to study, Locke recommends that the father observe the child at play to discover if he goes about it in "a purposeful systematic way or if he lazily and listlessly dreams away his time" (p. 232; italics are Locke's). When the latter is the case, the problem is serious, because for Locke an idle or daydreaming temperament is "the least to be

indulged, or permitted in young people" (pp. 318-19). Parents are warned to stifle a child's interest in writing poetry if it should develop (p. 284). Locke feels that children have to be weaned away from allowing thoughts to aimlessly play through their minds. The fancy, like the sensual appetites, has to be controlled for the child to become a useful member of society rather than a self-indulgent dreamer.

Renaissance and eighteenth-century pedagogues recognized the child's fascination with imaginary things in their disapproval of certain forms of literature.25 Roger Ascham claimed that books like Le Morte d'Arthur and Italian romances corrupt the young. Not only are such works sometimes lascivious, but they distract young minds from the real world. Fairy tales were suspect to educational theorists, although they may have been popular with less literate people. These stories were in disfavor because it was feared that children's imaginations might be taken with the supernatural elements and that their reason might fail to apprehend the moral.26 Even Rousseau, whose ideas on proper education differ radically from those of his predecessors, is wary of the value of fairy tales and apologues in instructing children. While he admires the fables of La Fontaine, he sees them as more suited to adults than to children. Using "The Fox and the Crow" as an example, he points out that children can be misled because the charm and cunning of the fox are more striking and memorable than the allegorical lesson on flattery

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26 In Sarah Fielding's The Governess, Jill E. Grey ed. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 165-66, Mrs. Teachum is concerned that the magic and giants in the tale of Barbarico and Benefico might make her pupils miss the story's allegorical point.
and vanity. This concern with the possible dangers of fanciful literature demonstrates that eighteenth-century thinkers recognized and distrusted the child's delight in imaginary things.

Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*, subtitled *The Little Female Academy* (1749) incorporates many of the assumptions about children discussed above. It is one of the first realistic books written specifically for children. The setting is a small grammar school with nine boarders presided over by a widow. Its young readers probably recognized the girls' daily activities and experiences as similar to their own. Besides being an early example of its genre, *The Governess* is important for other reasons. The girls act on the basis of their passions and momentary pleasures and pains with little forethought or judgment. They are prone to misguided self-love, but they respond to reasoned persuasions in behalf of virtue and consideration for others. Fielding presents the girls as charming and likeable, if somewhat mischievous, but she does not ignore their vices which include deeply seated hostilities. The book is a product of its author's intellectual milieu but it also anticipates some modern attitudes.

The dedication announces the book's intention, which is the traditional aim of inculcating a love of virtue and "the keeping down of all rough and boisterous passions." The preface enumerates these as "pride, stubbornness, malice, and envy" (p. 97) and the plot dramatizes their effects. In the opening scene, Jenny Peace, the oldest girl, gives the other eight girls, all under twelve years old, a basket of apples.

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on behalf of Mrs. Teachum. Each girl wants the largest apple and a
graphically depicted brawl ensues. After all eight have received an
unspecified punishment, Sukey Jennett, one of the malefactors, confesses
to Jenny that being able to hurt her enemies without being hurt herself
would be her "greatest pleasure" (p. 112). Jenny points out the evil
of the lasting animosity this desire would produce, and in reasoning
with the girl proves to her that magnanimity contributes to the peace of
any group and ultimately benefits each individual. Sukey learns a les-
son preached by Shaftesbury, Montesquieu, and Pope when she discovers
that she can be happy only if her natural self-love is extended to em-
brace the common good. This incident is interesting because it shows
otherwise attractive children behaving like individuals in Hobbes's
state of nature at perpetual war with each other.

More sinister feelings are exposed as the girls are encouraged
to talk about their lives and to admit their past faults. The nine year
old Betty Ford confesses her secret hatred of a prettier sister and her
concealed joy at that sister's death. She is ashamed of these feelings
and reasons that the continuance of such jealousy will make her life
miserable because many girls besides her sister are prettier than she is.

The Governess shows Sarah Fielding's balanced understanding of
children. She acknowledges their capacity for selfishness and bitter
feelings, yet she also appreciates their attractiveness. The Calvinists
saw childish vices as proofs of original sin. Training such unregenerate
beings to submit to God's will was a sober and joyless burden. In The
Governess adults are patient with children and find delight in their
presence. Mrs. Teachum encourages her girls to run in the fields, to
gather flowers, and give vent to their high spirits. An old dairy woman
whom they visit is amused by their excitement. Fielding's teacher follows Locke's ideas in Concerning Education by bringing the children to see the wisdom of virtue by rational persuasion accommodated to their understanding. It is Jenny's lecture, not the punishment, that reforms Sukey Jennett's outlook. But the joyful fellowship the girls come to feel is different from that of the children in Blake's Songs of Innocence. It comes from a rational moderation of selfish feelings whereas Blake's children radiate an unlearned, instinctual benevolence. Some implications of Fielding's book are compatible with the assumptions of a post-Freudian age, however. She confronts the darker passions of children such as repressed sibling rivalry without recoiling in horror. She appreciates children, but does not idealize them.

In the second half of the eighteenth century Rousseau, who in Emile (1765) borrowed many of Locke's ideas, became the most influential authority on children. Like Locke, he sees the goal of education as the development of a proper state of mind rather than the mastery of a set body of knowledge or skills. Both want to teach the child how to learn by himself. In their estimations of the child's capacity for reason, they differ radically. Locke encourages parents and tutors to treat children as rational creatures because he feels it is easiest to make a child's mind "pliant to reason" when the child is very young (p. 138). Rousseau, on the other hand, claims, "I should no more expect judgment in a ten year old child than I should expect him to be five feet high."29 He accuses Locke of having started a dangerous trend: "'Reason with children' was Locke's greatest maxim; it is the high of fashion at pres-

ent, and I hardly think it is justified by its results" (p. 53). Rousseau views education as a process to prepare a man to use his reason. Appealing to a child's reason, then, is folly because if his reason were developed, he would not need a tutor.

*Emile* had little value as a practical manual. In England, attempts by Thomas Day and Richard Lovell Edgeworth to raise a perfect adult through a precise adherence to Rousseau's methods failed miserably. The book did, however, stress that children and adults are different beings who think and perceive differently. The injunctions against premature training in a second language demonstrate this. Before age fifteen a child can only memorize foreign words. He does not have the capacity for conceptual thought that would enable him to compare and subsequently to understand the way ideas are expressed by different vocabularies and syntaxes (p. 70). Rousseau is aware that the words a child uses to express an abstract idea may not mean the same thing to the child that they mean to an adult. He has little faith in the supposedly precocious child whose "ideas, if he has any ideas at all, have neither order nor connection" (p. 70). The child's inability to reason like adults should be accepted as part of his natural development because just as "mankind has its place in the scheme of things; childhood

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30 In 1769 Day adopted two girls, Lucretia and Sabrina, to educate according to Rousseau's principles. Lucretia proved to be slow-witted, and Day apprenticed her to a milliner. The other did not respond according to Day's expectation when he fired a pistol close to her ear and poured hot wax on her arm. He abandoned his scheme when the sixteen year old Sabrina refused to wear the uniform he proscribed for her. Richard Edgeworth tried to raise his son Dick like *Emile*. The boy became unruly at school, though, and when he ran away to sea and settled in America, Edgeworth disinheritied him except for a provision of three hundred pounds conditional on his return to England. See Sylvia Paterson's *Rousseau's Emile and Early Children's Literature* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1971), pp. 63-64 and 79-80. These followers of Rousseau treated their children as harshly as Calvinists would.
has its place in the sequence of human life; the man must be treated as a man and the child as a child" (p. 44).

Rousseau centers his hopes for social reforms in children, but he does not advocate that adults should become more like children. Infants are all born free of corruption; if they were educated properly, they would grow up to be a new kind of adult untainted by the old vices of pride and sensuality. Boas rightly asserts that Rousseau's admiration for children springs more from his dislike of society than it does from an exalted notion of the child's nature. Even though he denies innate depravity in the opening paragraph of Emile, Rousseau, who as a boy in Calvinist Geneva aspired to the ministry, shares with Robinson and the Wesleys the assumption that children have more in common with animals than with reasoning adults.

The similarity of children to animals for Rousseau lies in their inability to conceive of right and wrong as moral concepts. Since children have not developed reason, he argues, it is impossible for them "to form any idea of moral being or social relationship" (p. 53). Using promises of reward and punishment to teach a child abstract notions of duty and obedience is foolish because it may make him cunning and deceitful. It will teach him to hide his real motives. If he behaves well, he will do so from a desire for the promised reward and not from a conviction of the value of obedience itself. Rousseau, however, does not advocate that children always be indulged or coddled. Like others before him, he knows how children can become tyrants if their every whim is pampered. When this happens the natural order is perverted, and children become the masters of adults. He sums up his method for con-

\[31\] Boas, p. 33.
trolling children in the maxim: "Use force with children and reasoning with men; this is the natural order" (p. 55). He does not mean that children should be spanked and not lectured. He does mean that children, who are weak, should be compelled to accept their necessary dependence on adults, who are strong. Adults have the power to control the child's environment and should prevent him from doing things he should not without explaining why. A man should no more reason with his son than with his horse.

Both Locke and Rousseau find lying a despicable fault. Their respective advice on how to treat a child who lies highlights differences in their thinking. Locke recommends a child be told that lying is an abhorrent vice that debases a gentleman's character. This instruction should come before the child is ever caught in a falsehood. If he does actually tell a lie, he should suffer his parents' displeasure and reproof. If this does not produce penitence, he should be beaten (p. 239). Rousseau's approach to this problem involves neither punishment nor reproof. First of all, warning a child not to lie would only increase the likelihood of his doing so because he otherwise might not think of it. Since Rousseau regards children as "unmoral in their actions" (p. 56), they must not be judged morally. The only way they can learn to behave virtuously is to experience the consequences of their unvirtuous actions. A lying child, therefore, should not be punished or verbally reprimanded. His self-love will teach him lying is bad if after his being caught in a lie, people refuse to believe him when he is telling the truth and accuse him of doing things he has not in spite of his denials.

Locke and Rousseau offer methods of education designed to produce
adults who can moderate their passions and appetites. Both recognize that until a child's reason is fully developed the guidance of parents and tutors must serve as a substitute. Their methods differ because Rousseau sees the development of reason and judgment as a slower process than Locke does. Locke urges adults to regard children as rational creatures. Rousseau counters this advice. In Emile he warns that Locke's system would be fine if children moved from birth immediately to the age of reason, but, because their minds are not ready, a different sort of training is necessary (p. 57). In The New Heloise (1761), Julie says that adults should not appeal to children's reason and that education should prepare children to reason for themselves.32

Rousseau feels that abstract concepts are meaningless to children because their senses develop before their reason and they can only understand things they can verify with their senses. Early education has to prepare the five senses to perceive this world accurately because only then can common sense which Rousseau calls the "sixth sense" begin to blossom. He writes of its role in the acquisition of reason as follows:

... it [the sixth sense] results from the well regulated use of the other five, and teaches the nature of things from the sum total of their external aspects. So this sixth sense has no special organ, it has its seat in the brain: and its sensations which are purely internal are called precepts or ideas. The number of these ideas is the measure of our knowledge; exactness of thought depends on their clearness and precision; the art of comparing them one with another is called human reason. Thus what I call the reasoning of the senses, or the reasoning of the child, consists in the formation of simple ideas through the associated experience of several sensations; what I call the reasoning of the intellect consists in the formation of complex ideas through the association of several simple ideas. (Emile, p. 122)

Rousseau here is using Locke's associationist psychology with its distinction between simple and complex ideas to show how he and Locke differ in their view of the child's mind. Rousseau feels children under twelve are limited to simple ideas that can be confirmed by the senses.

*Emile* influenced children's literature written in England during the late eighteenth century. Thomas Day shares many of Rousseau's values, and in some respects, his *Sanford and Merton*, published in three volumes from 1783 to 1789, is a fictionalized *Emile.* Mr. Barlow takes over the education of two boys, Harry Sanford, a farmer's son, and Tommy Merton, a gentleman's son. Rousseau's ideal tutor, Barlow wants to educate the boys according to nature away from the corrupting influence of town life and upper class society. He directs his efforts toward developing young men who are free from affectation and vanity. Properly reared they will live simply, shunning luxury and, in Tommy's case, pride of birth. When Tommy first comes under Barlow's care, he has been spoiled by his mother's coddling. He has also been harmed by the example of his friends, Masters Compton and Marsh, who are praised by adults for aping fashionable forms of polite behavior and who show their rudeness by rioting in a theater. With Barlow's teaching and Harry's good example, Tommy reforms.

The title characters, however, behave more like philosophers than young boys. In a survey of eighteenth-century children's books, A. Charles Babenroth says Day was urging that the child be made over

33 Patterson discusses Day's borrowings from Rousseau in detail, pp. 62-76.

into an "infant prodigy" instead of being allowed to be Rousseau's natural child. Day wrote the book to show children what they should become rather than to show them what they are. Tommy sometimes acts like an impetuous child. When he sees that Harry has won the friendship of animals, his rough efforts to catch and feed a small pig get him into trouble. Tommy also learns from experience. He places a new value on work when he is denied the fruits of a garden he refuses to tend (p. 20). More often, he is a precocious philosopher. He deduces Rousseau's doctrine of adjusting the severity of punishment to the magnitude of the offense after hearing the parable of the elephant and the tailor. He commends the beast for only drenching the man who has teased him when he could just as easily have killed him. Both boys benefit from Barlow's moral fables by making reasoned judgments on the ethical problems the tales involve.

Harry and Tommy represent Day's idea of model children, and they behave like small men. The bad children, like Compton and Marsh, display childish traits that educators had traditionally wanted to suppress or to correct. They are impatient, wilful, impulsive, and selfish. Day also projects childish traits into adults who serve as cautionary examples. To impress the boys with the virtue of moderation and self discipline, Barlow tells them about a gouty gentleman who was almost too fat to move. He has lived like a child in so far as he has been unable to control his desire for immediate pleasure and been unable to see what is really good for him. To implement a cure, his physician treats him like a child by forcibly depriving him of food and compelling him to ex-

ercise.

In twentieth-century society, there is a gradual transition from childhood to maturity. Adolescence now is generally recognized as a distinct period of life with special needs and problems. For most people in the eighteenth century, however, the transition was more abrupt. Chesterfield wrote to his nine year old son telling him that he is no longer a little boy but a youth who must cast away the "levity" and "playthings" of childhood and direct his mind to "serious objects." Children of rural cottagers left home to become servants at age ten. From the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, English boys finished grammar school and entered the universities by age fifteen. Middle and upper class girls were pushed into adult society quite young. In the early eighteenth century they were considered ready for serious courtship and marriage at fifteen. Because children in the past assumed adult roles sooner, it does not mean they immediately ceased being children. J. Huizinga in explaining the tenor of late medieval life implies that adults were more childlike than they are now: "All experience had to the minds of men the directness and absoluteness of

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36 Smith in "Religion and the Concept of Youth in Seventeenth-Century England" argues that a period of "youth" similar to modern adolescence began to emerge in the life cycle of urban tradespeople. Philippe Aries in Centuries of Childhood (New York: Knopf, 1962), claims adolescence began to be distinguished from childhood when age, rather than experience or knowledge, became the criterion for assignment to school classes.

37 Chesterfield, II, 398.


40 Bayne-Powell, pp. 15-16.
the pleasure and pain of child-life. Rosamond Bayne-Powell's study of eighteenth-century childhood mentions that married women, as well as small girls, played with dolls and doll houses. She blames "the childish minds and manners of many grown-up people" on their precocious entry into adult life.

James Boswell, in part, was such a person. His London Journal records the erratic behavior of a young man lacking a firm adult identity. His hopes of becoming a guards officer are something like a young boy's fantasy. At twenty-two, he was already beyond the standard age for beginning an army career. Ignoring the harsh realities of military life, he saw only the splendor of the uniform and the promise of independence from a domineering father who criticized his want of self-discipline and his childishness. Boswell's habit of mimicking, which so provoked his father, is symptomatic of his need for attention and his need for experimenting with different postures. Frederick A. Pottle, his editor and biographer, claims that Boswell throughout his life preserved the character of a "brilliant, egotistical, sensual boy." He describes him as a man "who never succeeded in making a completely mature adjustment between his instinctive urges on the one hand and the claims of the external world on the other."

Social critics from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century con-

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2 Bayne-Powell, p. 16.

sidered adults who did not submit their appetites and passions to the sway of reason to be childish. Roger Ascham, in the sixteenth century equated riotous young men with children: "Indeed, from seven to seventeen, young gentlemen commonly be carefully enough brought up: But from seventeen to seven and twenty (the most dangerous time of all a man's life to stay well in) they have commonly the reign of all license in their own hand, and specially such as do live in the Court." Young adults who yield to their passions and appetites for pleasure are, in Ascham's estimation, like children in their want of self-discipline. They are worse off because they lack close supervision as a substitute for self-control. During the Restoration and eighteenth century, writers of all temperaments accuse certain adults of childishness. John Bunyan, in the prefatory poem to his Book for Boys and Girls, makes it known that he is writing for children of all ages:

Their antic tricks, fantastic modes and way Show they, like very boys and girls, do play With all the frantic fopperies of this age; And that in open view, as on a stage; Our bearded men do act like beardless boys, Our women please themselves with childish toys.\(^{145}\)

Chesterfield finds women frivolous and dismisses them as "only children of a larger growth." While he admits that their conversation can be entertaining tattletale, he considers them less adult than men because their reasoning faculty is incapable of disciplined exertion. He declares he has never known a woman "who reasoned or acted consequentially

\(^{144}\)Ascham, p. 205.

for four and twenty hours.\textsuperscript{6}

Chesterfield's comments reveal his misogyny, but they also show the importance of reason to eighteenth-century notions of maturity. Addison in \textit{Spectator} 215 praises education because it brings to fruition the potential for virtue within the human soul by subjecting the passions to the control of reason. He makes his point in a tale of a love triangle among three African slaves. Two men love the same woman who in turn loves them both equally. Unable to resolve their conflicting passions, the men jointly kill and mourn the woman and then take their own lives. Addison sees their actions as barbaric, but grants that they resulted from the noble impulses of uncultivated minds. The three slaves are like grown-up children because they have been deprived of a civilized education, and as a result their "passions are not regulated by virtue, and disciplined by reason."\textsuperscript{7}

Many eighteenth-century social critics attribute defects in adults' characters to errors in child rearing. Their comments suggest that parents who thoughtlessly indulge their children prevent them from ever becoming self-controlled adults. A 1732 article in \textit{The Gentleman's Magazine} censures overly fond parents because the child humored in its early life "will prove headstrong and disobedient in a maturer age, and that all future miseries that befall it on that account, proceed from the parent's neglect of sowing the seeds of virtue in its tender years."\textsuperscript{8} By not placing any restraint on parental love, such parents act like children themselves. Steele, whose letters show his fondness for his

\textsuperscript{6}Chesterfield, I, 107.

\textsuperscript{7}\textit{The Spectator}, Gregory Smith ed. (London: Everyman's Library, 1907), II, 139-12.

\textsuperscript{8}\textit{The Gentleman's Magazine}, 2 (1732), 556.
own children, h9 cautions parents about the dangers of excessive familiarity. In the Tatler 252, Sir Jeffrey Wildacre invites his son to drink with his cronies and himself.50 The youngster comes to see his father as his peer and loses proper filial respect. Steele also disapproves of parents who favor one son or daughter over their other children. In doing so, they allow their own inclinations to escape the sway of reason. In Tatler 235, Steele writes: "The truth of it is, those parents who are interested in the care of one child more than another, no longer deserve the name of parents, but are in effect as childish as their children."51

Critics cited deficiencies in the education of the gentry's sons as the reason why so many "booby" squires were semi-literate, awkward, childish boors. By the mid eighteenth century it was a commonplace to say or to imply that the upper classes were more prone to vice than the rest of society.52 Throughout the period the merits of private education under tutors as opposed to public school training were argued. Even Joseph Andrews and Parson Adams enter the debate in one of their conversations. Adams calls public schools "nurseries of all vice and immorality," but Joseph holds that a boy's nature, not his education, determines his character.53 Eustace Budgell in Spectator 318 addresses the question

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50 The Tatler (London, 1759), IV, 354-55.

51 The Tatler, IV, 264.


and sums up the arguments for both sides. Private education is more conducive to virtuous habits, but it often produces shy and naive young men. Public education, on the other hand, introduces the scholar into the ways of the world and society early, but it often turns out arrogant young men. Riots were common in eighteenth-century English public schools, and show that schoolboys frequently gave vent to their more boisterous and rebellious inclinations.

Impudence and bashfulness, which are each departures from a decorous mean, are mentioned in arguments over the worth of foreign travel like Richard Hurd's imaginary dialogs between Shaftesbury and Locke. Shaftesbury claims that bashfulness, an unfortunate trait of many English youths, is corrected by travelling abroad. Locke retorts that modesty is "the blush of budding reason and virtue." He goes on to argue that when virtuous modesty is suppressed "the result is a sort of manhood: which, yet, in effect, is only a perpetual boyism, or rather a portentous mixture of both states, without the virtues of either."  

Defoe's *The Complete English Gentleman* also accuses the gentry of perpetual boyism and traces the problem to their early education. Defoe approves of public schools like Eaton, Winchester, and Westminster because young gentlemen who have remained at home are "brought up in the most obstinate ignorance and folly, and filled early with the most

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55. Aries, p. 318, says school rioting ceased during the eighteenth century in France but increased in England. Bayne-Powell, p. 95, mentions that during a 1793 rebellion at Winchester School a red liberty cap was set on the Founder's Tower.

riveted aversions to learning and improvement in the very face of an improving and knowing age."57 Mothers and female relations who spoil children rather than train them to guide themselves are Defoe's culprits. Well born children too often acquire a "love of pleasure" that provides an obstacle to virtue and learning. Private tutors compound the problem because they usually become the child's playfellows rather than his instructors (p. 88).

Defoe argues that without proper guidance the child will develop according to his natural inclinations. He describes the newborn infant as a "Carte Blanche" with a soul "like a piece of clean paper" (p. xiv). While this image carries no implication of original sin, Defoe offers a challenge to people who talk of the "rectitude of nature" and deny natural depravity. Asking to hear of a single case where unguided nature has taught a child to shun sensual pleasure and to love virtue, he asserts this has never happened: "I see nature acting the reverse of all this, and that men are in their youth hurry'd down the stream of their worst affections by the meer insensible impetuosity of nature" (p. 88). In Defoe's mind, the improperly reared gentleman remains like a child who lacks self discipline and cannot govern his natural inclinations.

Lessons in self-control were the common denominator of all educational theories during the Restoration and eighteenth century. Children had to be protected from their own natures. For the Calvinists, the child was a wild beast who must be tamed. For the humanists, on the other hand, the child was a savage, with generous as well as selfish in-

instincts, who must be enlightened. Rousseau, who shared assumptions with both the Calvinists and humanists, was unique in recognizing that children could become rational adults only through a long process, longer and more gradual than even Ascham and Locke had envisioned. Rousseau comes close to envisioning the twentieth-century notion of adolescence.

The common practice was to expect boys and girls to behave like adults as soon as possible. Nine years is an early age to put away the levity and playthings of childhood as Chesterfield advised his son to do. Children were asked to govern strictly their feelings, passions, and even their imaginations before they were ready. Virtue was associated with restraint, and people who lacked self-control were considered child-adults. The frequent complaints about parents who failed to teach their children self discipline indicate that many people failed to meet the prevailing standard of maturity. Child-adults often appear as characters in the plays and novels of the Restoration and eighteenth century. The following chapters explore the attitudes of playwrights and novelists toward such characters.
CHAPTER II

CHILDISHNESS ON STAGE

Much of the criticism of Restoration drama during the last thirty years has challenged L.C. Knights's claim that the plays have "no significant relation with the best thought of the time."\(^1\) Norman N. Holland connects the theme of the difference between appearance and nature in Restoration comedy with seventeenth-century thought in linguistics, physics and metaphysics. The playwrights, he asserts, are concerned with "how the nucleus of personality shows itself through the shell of appearance and how it gets to know other nuclei through their shells."\(^2\) Dale Underwood sees the libertine revolt against received opinion as an important influence in Restoration literature. In tentatively defining libertinism, Underwood argues that "the libertine considered human laws and institutions as mere customs varying with the variations of societies and characteristically at odds with Nature as, of course, with 'right reason.'"\(^3\)

Hypocrisy, disguise, and affectation are frequent subjects in


Restoration comedy and the dramatists pose probing questions about human nature, the reality hidden beneath surface appearance. They are interested in discovering how much the natural man departs from the social man, if one is superior to the other, and whether the two can be reconciled. To resolve these questions the playwrights sometimes introduce a character who is closer to the state of nature than the rest of the dramatis personae. Often this character is an outsider who has never submitted to the rules of any society. Almanzor in The Conquest of Granada, Part I (1670) proclaims: 

"I am free as Nature first made man / Ere the base Laws of Servitude began, / When wild in woods the Noble Savage ran."  

The outsider can also be an Indian, a black, or some variation of a wild man like Caliban. In many cases the natural man or woman is someone who has preserved the character of a child. Even Almanzor with his ranting, his refusal to abide by any rules, and his failure to restrain his passions somehow suggests an unruly child. Fielding, whose parodies of heroic drama will be discussed in the next chapter, saw this side of Restoration stage heroes. In Tom Thumb, Fielding reduces a ranting hero to the size of a child. This chapter will focus on those characters in Restoration and eighteenth-century drama who remain as children either because of extraordinary circumstances or a misguided education. A variety of such characters ranging from young people brought up on an enchanted island to booby squires and country hoydens appear in plays that are representative of the different dramatic styles of the Restoration and eighteenth century.

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William Davenant, whose early comedies anticipate those of the Restoration, builds the subplot of *The Platonick Lovers* around young Gridonell, who has been kept in an extended childhood by his peculiar education. Sciolto, his father, believes that learning and women turn men into fools so he has consigned his son to thirteen years in a military camp where he has never learned to read and has never conversed with a woman. The experiment is a failure. While old Sciolto is pleased with the boy's disregard for ceremony at their reunion, he is taken back when Gridonell tells him that, when he is ready to inherit, Sciolto "must make haste and die." Sciolto is shocked, but recovers by saying he would rather hear the boy say such a thing than to have him merely think it. When Gridonell does meet a woman in his father's presence, the dull witted Sciolto mistakes his son's expression of sexual curiosity for the cant of platonic love. After likening Amadine to an angel, Gridonell says: "If she would fly / Aloft, methinks I should so peep under her" (p. 25). The father despairs that the hope of his line will ever beget an heir. To correct the error in his son's upbringing, Sciolto gives Gridonell a love potion which inflames the desires he does not exactly know how to fulfill. As a consequence, he is almost tricked into an inappropriate marriage that would serve the purposes of Fredeline, the play's scheming villain.

The subplot of Gridonell's unusual education is related to the central theme of platonic love. In the main action, two friends are in love with each other's sister. Theander's love is strictly spiritual, or so he believes, while Phylomont seeks marriage and normal earthly fulfillment of his passion. Davenant's play is a topical response to

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the idea of platonic love then fashionable at the court of Henrietta Maria. His sympathies are clearly with Phylomont and Ariola who succeed in fulfilling a sensual but lawful love. Theander's lofty sentiments make for poetic speeches, but they are in opposition to the normal sexual impulses of human nature. Sciolto's educational experiment is a departure from tradition that makes Gridonell's life in society difficult in ways he could not foresee. His system foreshadows Rousseau's scheme to keep Emile away from most book learning and in ignorance of sexuality for as long as possible. Rousseau designed Emile's education to make his adjustment to society difficult. He implies that if adjustment to society, as it is, becomes difficult for enough young people, then society itself will adjust to meet human needs. Davenant, however, does not offer the loutish Gridonell as a model to be imitated. His criticism of adult society is less sweeping than Rousseau's. Sciolto quite rightly objects to Theander's cant of platonic love because it endangers the ducal succession. His method for raising a son does prevent an infatuation with platonic love, but it also ignores the realities of human sexuality and leaves the boy as a likely prey for clever rascals. Gridonell, who has no control over his instincts, and Theander, who totally represses his instincts, are both departures from the sensible middle way represented by Phylomont.

Dryden, who collaborated with Davenant to rewrite The Tempest (1667), uses the setting of an enchanted island, free of the customs and fashions of normal society, to raise questions about human nature and the passions. In Shakespeare's original, Miranda who has never seen a man other than her father, is a child-woman. Dryden in his Preface cred-

its Davenant with the idea of adding Hipplolito, a youth who has never
seen a woman, to Shakespeare's *dramatis personae* in order to give the
play symmetry so that "those two characters of Innocence might the more
illustrate and commend each other." Davenant and Dryden also give Mir-
anda a sister Dorinda who falls in love with Hipplolito, and they also
provide Caliban with a sister who bears her mother's name Sycorax. Be-
sides giving the cast a neo-classical balance, the additional charac-
ters allow the collaborators to examine the operation of the passions
in people who are closer to nature than those who have been raised in
normal society. The Dryden-Davenant *Tempest* demonstrates the association
of the childish and the primitive in seventeenth-century thinking. Cal-
iban and Sycorax exist on the most bestial level possible. They epito-
mize Robinson and the Wesleys' vision of children as unredeemed monsters.
Hipplolito, Miranda, and Dorinda represent an opposite view of the primiti-
tive human condition. They are uncivilized but innately noble. They
conform to Elyot and Locke's notion of children as creatures ultimately
capable of reason and self-control. These new characters appealed to
Restoration and eighteenth-century audiences. Various versions of *The
Tempest* were staged throughout the period, but Dorinda, Hipplolito and
Sycorax disappeared only with Macready's production of the original in
1838.8

Dryden and Davenant's Caliban, like Shakespeare's, represents

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7. *The Works of John Dryden*, Maximillian E. Novak and George Rob-
   Hereafter cited in text. Novak and Guffey claim that Davenant's role
   in the adaptation was limited to the suggestion of adding Hipplolito, to
   the writing of part of the mariners' scenes, and to general supervision,
   p. 321.

8. For a stage history of the play see *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*,
the animal side of human nature. His thoughts and desires are limited to physical needs. Prospero, like a good foster father, has treated Caliban well and tried to educate him. Caliban, however, responds to these efforts like an ungrateful child. He is sullen and wilful, and only the threat of physical punishment makes him behave properly. He is willing to worship Trincalo because the sailor's wine brings him physical pleasure. Caliban's sister Sycorax is also a childish figure. She takes a liking to Trincalo's boatswain's whistle which he tells her will be a toy for their first infant. She answers, "I'll be thy pretty child, and wear it first" (p. 53). Trincalo calls her "sweet Babby," a term meaning child or foolish child. Like Dorinda and Miranda, Sycorax has never seen a man other than Prospero or Caliban. The three women are childish figures, but Sycorax displays baser instincts. She is candidly selfish and amoral. Looking on Trincalo's bottle and whistle, she says, "I shall have all his fine things when I am a Widow" (p. 53). She is a creature of sexual appetite. Dorinda and Miranda also have sexual longings, but Sycorax's lust is indiscriminate and unaccompanied by any higher feelings. She commits incest with her brother, and as soon as she meets Trincalo's companions, she asks, "May I not marry that other King and his two subjects to help you anights?" (p. 57).

The shipwrecked mariners who become the companions of Caliban and Sycorax are suddenly cast back into a state of nature where no social restraints prevail. A comic subplot focuses on their efforts to re-establish a social hierarchy and on the reluctance of each to surrender his right to all things. Earl Miner in a provocative essay "The Wild Man Through the Looking Glass," sees their experience as a reflec-

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tion of the seventeenth-century concern with the primitive. The age of exploration had exposed exotic and supposedly savage races. Travelers' reports varied in their accounts of native peoples, showing them either as bestial subhumans or as survivors of a golden age. In art and thought, the wild man raised questions about the "government of strong passions, of the individual, and of the state."\textsuperscript{10} The sailors' adventures on the island can also be regarded as a regression to childhood, however. They move from the purposeful adult world of the ship with its established hierarchies and accepted responsibilities to an enchanted playground. The foolish quarrels over who shall be duke and who shall be viceroys are like children's play. There are, after all, no subjects to rule except for Caliban and Sycorax. It is all a game of make-believe in which each participant struggles to have his own way and dominate others. As Huizinga has shown, games and play are not the exclusive domain of children,\textsuperscript{11} but the mariners' contest is peculiarly childish in that each wants to abide by his own rules. After the ship's captain Stephano declares himself duke of the new realm, his men, Mustacho and Ventoso, then argue over who shall be viceroy and draw their swords before Stephano names them both as his viceroys. Trincalo refuses to have any part of this government and says he will "have no Laws" (p. 34). He sets up a rival regime with Caliban and Sycorax as his subjects and declares a state of civil war.

Dorinda, Miranda, and Hippolito are large children because of


the peculiar circumstances of their upbringing. Not only have they never seen a marriagable member of the opposite sex, but they have no experience of human society beyond a limited version of family life provided by Prospero. Compared to Caliban, Sycorax and the sailors, they are like survivors of a golden age. They benefit from having Prospero as a tutor. He raises them with the affection and tolerance of their limited understanding that Locke recommends in Concerning Education. They cannot by themselves wisely restrain their passion, and they need the guidance that Prospero and the mature young Ferdinand can offer.

The two girls who have been forbidden to see the dangerous creature "man" have a natural and childlike curiosity which causes them to disobey their father. Even before they fully understand what a man is, they can sense some indefinite longing. On the verge of disobeying her father by gazing on Hippolito, Dorinda confesses, "I find it in my Nature, because my Father has forbidden me" (p. 41). If the sailors regress to childhood during the play, the two girls and Hippolito progress to maturity. The sisters move from complete ignorance of their sexuality to an understanding of true love. Hippolito eventually does the same, but, as his experience is different from the girls', he will be discussed separately.

Dryden and Davenant's Prospero is less in control of his world than the Prospero in the original Tempest is. He underestimates the strength of the instincts in the young people for whom he cares. Finding he has failed in making Hippolito afraid of women, he says, "How much in vain it is to bridle Nature!" (p. 63). His daughters' love for their men is a natural development of their feelings. As their love is innocent and artless, Prospero fears that the girls will be harmed by giving vent to their passions. When Dorinda speaks openly of her affec-
tion for Hippolito, Prospero urges her to be more coy, "It is the way to make him love you more, / He will despise you if you grow too kind" (p. 48). Prospero's advice would be more relevant in normal society than on the enchanted island, but the girls do face real danger in surrendering to new passions. Becoming committed to the men they love is the girls' symbolic exit from the innocence of childhood. In arguing over the justice of Ferdinand's death sentence when it appears he has killed Hippolito, Dorinda and Miranda say they will never sleep in the same bed again. They are no longer little girls, and the hostility they show toward each other arises from their sexual love. Even at the close of the play they still have much to learn about controlling passion. Dorinda feels jealous when she sees Miranda dressing Hippolito's wound, and another quarrel almost erupts. It is the sensible and rational Ferdinand who must remind them: "From such small errors / left at first unheeded, / Have often sprung sad accidents in love" (p. 98). The moderation of passion is an important theme in this version of The Tempest. Perhaps Dryden and Davenant make Prospero humanly fallible to suggest that even the best of men must struggle to control his passions. He does not have the cool detachment of Shakespeare's Prospero, and his decision to forgive his enemies is an exemplary triumph: "... with my nobler / Reason 'gainst my fury will I take part" (p. 49).

Hippolito is a more complicated and more interesting character than either Dorinda or Miranda. His ignorance is childlike. He does not know that young people grow old, nor does he know what death is. He also has dauntless courage which may in part be a result of his supposed immortality. Children, until they learn the consequences of dangerous action, generally have little fear. If Sycorax's nature is bestial and selfish and Prospero's daughters' nature is refined and gene-
rous, Hippolito occupies a place between these extremes.

He is taken by the beauty of Dorinda whom he calls an "Infant of the Sun" (p. 48), and his feelings toward her are gentle and loving. When he learns from Ferdinand, however, that there is more than one beautiful woman in the world, he asserts his right to have them all. He does not understand Ferdinand's explanation that a man must love just one woman, and he urges Ferdinand to deliver him to Miranda:

But, Sir, I find it is against my Nature. I must love where I like, and I believe I may like all, All that are fair: come! bring me to this Woman, For I must have her. (p. 66)

Hippolito even projects his own attitude into Prospero whom he thinks has tried to frighten him away from women just to have them all to himself. Dryden's editors, Novak and Guffey see Hippolito as a "typical, indeed a symbolic, figure in the seventeenth century."¹² He is the uncivilized man raised in the state of nature who feels he has a right to all things, but he is an overgrown child as much as he is a wild man, and thereby demonstrates the association of the child and the savage in the thinking of the period.

At the end of the play, Hippolito is converted to monogamy. It is not his close brush with death that makes him appreciate the virtue of fidelity; rather, it is his momentary fear that he has lost Dorinda's love:

I never knew I lov'd so much, before I fear'd Dorinda's constancy; but now I am convinc'd that I lov'd none but her, because none else can Recompense her loss. (p. 98)

Through experience he has learned a lesson about love. By imagining himself scorned in favor of a new lover, he discovers the value of Dorinda's affection. In part, this realization comes from Hippolito's ability to empathize with the feelings of another person. He can now appreciate the hurt Dorinda would have felt if she had to share his love with her sister. He has also learned a lesson in Hobbesian self-interest that will serve him in an adult society; by ceasing to threaten others, he encourages others not to threaten him.

Three groups of characters in *The Tempest*, the mariners, Caliban and Sycorax, and Dorinda, Miranda, and Hippolito are portrayed as adults who because of the special conditions of the island have either reverted to childhood or else have never left it. These childish characters all behave differently. Caliban and Sycorax are testimony to natural depravity. The sailors, freed from the restraints of actual responsibility, act out fantasies of power and dominance in a chaotic parody of adult life. Dorinda, Miranda, and eventually Hippolito display an inborn nobility manifesting itself in the quality of their love. Interestingly, the characters who behave the best are the best born.

While no one version of a childish nature can be taken as Dryden and Davenant's definitive portrayal of the natural man or woman, Hippolito with his mixture of selfishness and nobility seems a likely choice. The *Tempest*'s childish characters live in a world apart from normal society. Even at the end of the play Dorinda, Miranda and Hippolito have to be careful of their passions as their little outburst of jealousy indicates. These naive young people would have a difficult time if they were suddenly transported to Restoration London.

Margery Pinchwife in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) is the
child-adult come to town. In describing her timeless appeal William Hazlitt attributes many of the childish traits we have examined to Wycherley's heroine: "Mrs. Margery Pinchwife is a character that will last forever, I should hope, and even if the original is no more if that should ever be, while self will, curiosity, art, and ignorance are to be found in the same person, it will be just as good, and just as intelligible as ever in the description." Self-will, curiosity and ignorance are frequently mentioned as childish traits in educational literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Margery is artful as well as ignorant, but her art is the clever cunning of a child who connives to get what she wants while under the domination of an older and more powerful person. Bred in the country, Margery is naive and unsophisticated, and does not understand the ways of the town. Her visit to the town is an abrupt entry into an adult world. Her jealous husband not only treats her as a parcel of property but also as a child whose lusty instinct and appetite for pleasure he distrusts and struggles to manage.

At the same time Margery desires physical pleasure and the freedom to do as she will, she is thoroughly naive. She regards her marriage as an escape from the monotony and restriction which country life represents in the play. Although she is anxious for new experience, she has little idea of what London society is like and of what the rules governing sexual adventure are. Her exact age is not specified, but she is probably barely in her teens because she behaves like a very young girl on her first visit to a city. She lacks any understanding of those emotions which she has not experienced herself. When her sister-in-law

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13 Quoted in Holland, p. 73.
Alithea tells her Pinchwife refuses to let her go out of the house because he is jealous, Margery naively asks, "Jealous, what's that?" She seems to be proof of Rousseau's notion that children cannot grasp abstract notions. Margery is a married woman, but she does not understand the full implications of the marriage agreement. After being in Horner's bed, she decides that she can discard her first husband and take a second at will. When Horner says that this is impossible, she answers: "I see every day at London here, women leave their first Husbands, and go, and live with other men as their Wives, pish, pshaw . . ." (p. 354).

Margery, in this respect, is a more attractive version of the same sort of character as Sycorax. Both feel that when dissatisfied with one husband they can simply take up with another more to their liking, but Margery, at least, limits herself to one lover at a time.

In addition to not understanding jealousy or the permanence of marriage, Margery cannot see the consequences of sexual liaisons. In Concerning Education, Locke speaks of the need for children to overcome the "natural propensity to indulge corporal and present pleasure and to avoid pain at any rate." Margery is still a child in so far as she thinks only of immediate pleasures and pains. She has not been exposed to gallantry and gives full vent to her sexual longings because they promise pleasure. She has no sense of reputation or sexual "honor" and cannot understand Pinchwife's warning that a lover might ruin her. She tells her husband: "Ay, but if he [Horner] loves me, why should he ruin me? Methinks he shou'd not, I wou'd do him no harm." This comment demonstrates Margery's kinship with those other child-adults, Dorinda, Mir-

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anda and Hippolito, who are all wary of Prospero's words on the harm that can befall artless lovers.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were anxious to make children see life as a serious business and as a result the child's love of pleasure was suspect. Margery sees London as a marvelous playground, whereas the other characters in The Country Wife all take life more seriously. The Fidget women, and Squeamish are as lusty as Margery, but they have to work hard to maintain the facade of reputation and honor. For Pinchwife and Sir Jasper Fidget life is a bootless struggle to avoid cuckoldom. Alithea is burdened with important considerations of love and honor in deciding whom she shall marry. Sparkish affects carefree gaiety, but his efforts at being a rakish wit are laborious. Horner, even through Jasper Fidget tells him his "business" is "pleasure" (p. 290), works hard to revenge himself on women and ultimately takes little delight in his conquests. Of all the characters involved in consummated sexual intrigues, only Margery seems to derive any real sexual pleasure.

Margery's relationship to her husband shows her as a childish figure. Pinchwife, an old man married to a young girl, is a stock comic character. But at the same time he is a jealous husband trying to guard his wife, he is a crotchety adult trying to control an unruly child. Margery does not determine her actions on the basis of a moral code of rights and wrongs. Instead she decides to do something if it is pleasurable or not. Pinchwife does not try to persuade her with any rational arguments on the duties of a wife. He governs her with authoritative commands, and threats of physical punishment and constraint in the manner of a guardian taxed with an undisciplined ward. His efforts, of course, end in a failure which follows a traditional pattern in adult-child confrontations. By forbidding Margery certain pleasures, he only
succeeds in making them more attractive to her. Alithea points this out to him when he accuses her of arousing his wife's interest in the town's diversions. Margery herself notices as much in telling Pinchwife why she wants so much to attend the theater: "I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me as't were desire it" (p. 275).

Like a child with no sense of right and wrong Margery is guileless in confessing that she "loves" Horner. She resorts to cunning in substituting in her own letter to Horner in place of the one Pinchwife dictates only after he has threatened the use of force. Even though she uses deceit Margery does a poor job of learning the vice of hypocrisy. At the end of the play she is still like an innocent child who can embarrass adults by speaking the truth. When she is about to testify that Horner is indeed no eunuch, Squeamish shouts, "Stop her mouth." Her cunning is not like that of Horner's other lovers which is used in the service of hypocrisy. Nor is it like Horner's cleverness, which results from disgust with the world. It is the cunning that Robinson and the Wesleys detested—the cunning of a wilful child who seeks forbidden pleasures.

Pinchwife's device of disguising Margery as her younger brother is one more thing that portrays her as a child. Dressed in male clothes, the actress playing Margery must look quite young. The unsuccessful trick gives Horner the chance to fondle her as a lusty satyr might fondle an attractive child of either sex. Margery's relish of his embraces is

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15 Rose L. Zimbardo in Wycherley's Drama: A Link in the Development of English Satire (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), p. 160, sees Margery as an object of satire because she learns to feign innocence with her husband and because she is willing to sacrifice Alithea's reputation to fulfill her passion for Horner. The latter accusation is strained since Margery is unaware of any harmful consequences her masquerade will have for Alithea.
evidence of her kittenish sexuality. Some more evidence of her playful sexuality is betrayed when she confesses to Pinchwife: "Why he put the tip of his tongue between my lips, and so musl'd me—and I said, I'd bite it."

It is easier to recognize Margery as a child-adult than it is to determine the significance of this type of character in Wycherley's play.\textsuperscript{16} While Wycherley does not present Margery as a model to be imitated, her unashamed indulgence of natural sexual desire does have a positive value in the context of the play. The refusal of the Fidgets and Squeamish to admit their sexuality is the source of the pretense and hypocrisy which plagues their society. Only when they are drunk at Horner's lodgings can these ladies admit they are sexual beings, and even then their lust seems sordid when compared to Margery's healthy appetite for pleasure. Margery provides a standard by which to judge other characters, but Wycherley does not recommend her careless abandon. One of his maxims states: "Our Luxury should teach us a Lesson of Temperance, since Pleasures turn to Surfeits by their Multiplicity; and too much of anything makes us satisfied with nothing."\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} Quoted in Fujimura, p. 125.
The limitations of Margery's way of life are apparent without any evidence from outside the play. For all her gaiety and her urge for freedom, Margery is a victim. The success she has in finding a lover is not complete. In the final scene she expresses disappointment: "And I must be a Country Wife still too I find, for I can't like a City one be rid of my musty Husband and doe what I list" (p. 360). By the end of the play, Margery has shed some of her naivety and might be on the way to become an artful deceiver like the other London ladies. Like a child restricted to the house by a domineering adult, she is clever enough to escape temporarily but in the end she is brought home. The dangers the world holds for childlike adults are hinted at by Prospero's speeches in The Tempest and clearly demonstrated in The Country Wife.

In Vanbrugh's The Relapse, Hoyden, a cousin in spirit to Margery, is also victimized. She is a rustic innocent ignorant of town manners and frankly admits to sexual desires. She looks forward to marriage as an escape from dull country life and an oppressive father. Like Margery, she is artful but is ultimately not in control of her destiny. Hoyden is courted for her fortune by young Fashion masquerading as his brother Lord Foppington who is betrothed to her. On his arrival, Hoyden voices her willingness to marry anyone to gain freedom: "It's well I have a husband a-coming, or, i'cod, I'd marry the baker, I would so. Nobody can knock at the gate but presently I must be locked up, and here's the young greyhound bitch can run loose about the house all day long, she can; tis very well."\(^18\)

The comparison Hoyden makes is an unwitting revelation of her

own animal desires. She looks forward to sexual fulfillment as well as freedom. When Fashion proposes a clandestine wedding ceremony to be followed by one with parental blessing, Hoyden enjoys the idea of two wedding nights (p. 81). Acting on impulse, Hoyden rushes into a marriage with an imposter. Sophisticated Restoration heroines like Harriet or Millamant would never do such a thing. With native simplicity and earthiness, Hoyden is a foil to affected creatures like Lord Poppington but is just as much a dupe as he. She is similar to Margery in that she does not understand the full implication of marriage. After marrying Fashion she entertains the notion of wedding his brother as well (p. 109). In the final scene she ends where Margery begins: in London just discovering the beauty of the town men.

If Margery is a foil to the lustful hypocrites in The Country Wife, she is also a complementary character to both Horner and Alithaea. Both Margery and Horner give free play to their sexual desires, but while she is inexperienced and unaware of the rules of the sexual game, Horner is cynically aware of the false mores which he devotes himself to exposing. Ironically, he adopts one kind of pretense to give the lie to another kind of pretense. Where Margery is trusting, inexperienced and naive, he is cynical, experienced and worldly wise. If she is a child, he is thoroughly adult. Yet in one significant way, he too is childish. His dominant emotion is a childish one, spite. All his time and effort are absorbed by his attempts to actualize his vengeful sexual fantasies. He renounces that important hallmark of maturity, moderation. During the play, he consummates adulterous or illicit relationships with every woman who is willing. He is a clever manipulator but in the famous china scene he is overwhelmed. When three of his paramours descend upon him for his "china" he is forced to confess, "I have none left now" (p. 329).
There is something in Horner of the small boy who has his dream of absolute power (or potency) come true and finds it is too much for him.

Margery provides a standard by which Alithea’s merits may be judged. Alithea, along with Harcourt, is the most virtuous character in the play. She is honest, as her name implies, and she takes seriously the concept of honor which the other women use as a façade. Charles A. Hallett sees the Alithea-Harcourt plot as the play’s moral touchstone. Her commitment to honoring a marriage engagement transcends self-interest. Harcourt shows his faith by being willing to take her when her reputation appears tarnished. Holland, in his right way-wrong way interpretation, sees Harcourt and Alithea as “the most successful and ethically right” of all the characters. They are wise when they appear most foolish. These critical assessments are valid but they raise a problem. Alithea is indeed virtuous and ethical, but her allegiance to Sparkish is more than just apparently foolish. Any intelligent young woman should be able to see that he is an affected and stupid dolt. In her conversation on other matters Alithea is witty and bright. This discrepancy could be dismissed as an artistic flaw in the work. There is, however, another way of looking at it. Perhaps Wycherley is being critical of Alithea’s abstract and overly rational debate over a matter in which she should allow her heart to dictate. She quibbles and the patient Harcourt tries to point out the folly of her denial of her own feelings in consenting to wed Sparkish:

Alithea: He only, not you, since my honour is engaged so far to him, can give me a reason, why I should not marry him; but if he

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19 Hallett, p. 395.
20 Holland, p. 83.
be true, and what I think him to be, I must be so to him; your
Servant, Sir.

Harcourt: Have Women only constancy when 'tis a vice, and like
fortune only true to fools. (p. 309)

Margery, in marked contrast, does what her feelings tell her
to do, without agonizing over what is right and wrong. Harcourt urges
Alithea to do the same and to trust her heart. Margery faces external
opposition but is happy as she struggles against it. Alithea almost
squanders her chance for happiness by going through with an ill advised
marriage. Circumstance gives her undeniable proof of her two suitors'
merits, and her native virtue is rewarded. Margery and Alithea both
have shortcomings. Wycherley seems to offer no models, only characters
with various, and possibly incompatible, admirable qualities.

Congreve also uses child-adults to pass judgment on the flawed
adult society of London. Prue and Ben in Love for Love are not fully
grown up. The instinctive dislike they take to each other is like
that of a pre-adolescent couple forced together by meddling adults. She
is a naive country girl as yet uninitiated into the ways of town gallant-
ry. Ben has lived close to nature in the open, honest world of the sea.
Ben and Prue, however, are not the hero and heroine of the play. Their
unsophisticated naturalness may be a foil to the affectations and dis-
guises of society, but it is not enough to bring them the highest happi-
ness. Prue is too eager to shed her artlessness and becomes an attentive
pupil in Tattle's lessons on town coquetry. She temporarily escapes en-
trapment in an unfortunate marriage but, like Margery Pinchwife she is
on the way toward losing her country ways and imitating the worst of the

21Birdsall in Wild Civility, pp. 215-16, considers Ben and Prue
to be childlike.
town's. Ben is luckier. He preserves his natural freedom by withdrawing from the adult world of marriage intrigue and by going back to the sea where he can live like a child. The principal characters, Valentine and Angelica, achieve happiness not by retreating but by transcending the evils of town life.22

The playwrights discussed so far have all made their childish adults attractive. They are foils who show up the follies of more sophisticated characters. If the Margeries and Bens are morally superior to many mature adults who surround them, they are not offered as exempla of the best possible way to live one's life. But Davenant, Dryden, Vanbrugh, and Wycherley were not part of the Puritan tradition which distrusted the child's nature, and all were able to attach some positive value to the childishness which remains in some grown-ups. George Lillo, author of *The London Merchant* (1731), was part of that tradition, and he saw a young man's lingering childishness as the basis of tragedy.

*The London Merchant* enjoyed great stage success during the eighteenth century with an estimated one hundred and seventy-nine performances between 1731 and 1776. Until 1819, it was presented every year during the Christmas holidays for an audience of apprentices.23 Ernest Bernbaum has speculated that *The London Merchant* was performed frequently not because people enjoyed it but because it was valued as a cautionary drama for young people.24 A modern audience would be likely to concur with

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22Holland, p. 171, makes this point in his discussion of the play. Ben and Prue who lack a knowledge of the world exist on a pre-social level. Valentine and Angelica achieve a suprasocial knowledge. The other characters exist in a fallen social world which in the end absorbs Prue.


24Cited in McBurney, p. xiii.
Charles Lamb who called the play a "nauseous sermon." The London Merchant is unadulterated melodrama, and its characters represent polarities of good and evil. In his "Dedication," Lillo adopted a utilitarian aesthetic: "If tragic poetry be, as Mr. Dryden has somewhere said, the most useful kind of writing, the more extensively useful the moral of any tragedy is, the more excellent that piece must be of its kind." George Barnwell's tragedy is, if nothing else, useful. The characters moralize over every event and their every feeling in asides, as if there were the slightest chance of the audience's missing the point.

Many features of The London Merchant contributed to its great popularity. The play is a fine example of the domestic tragedy so popular in the period. Lillo managed to write a modern kind of tragedy in which the protagonist is an ordinary young man far below the rank of princely heroes. This innovation would have a natural appeal to middle-class audiences. Even though the hero is a lowly apprentice, the play's theme is similar to that of much Restoration heroic drama—the conflict of passion and reason. Barnwell, like Dryden's Antony or Almanzor, is torn between the demands of private feelings and public duty.

Walter Jackson, in an article on Lillo and Dryden, observes that the ethical precepts of their tragedies are determined solely by reason. All actions, therefore, must be judged by "an ideal of social utility that is exclusive of, and antagonistic to, eccentric or heroic individualism." In such a world, excessive passion is always a destructive

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force incapable of bringing about positive change or regeneration.

During the eighteenth century, the need for the passions to be governed by reason was a theme in books about children as well as in tragedies. George Barnwell is of particular interest because of his age and his status as an apprentice. His name, like Thorowgood's and Truean's, has an allegorical significance. "Barn" is an archaic form of "bairn," and its use has survived until the twentieth century in northern England.\(^2^8\) As a youth, Barnwell is particularly liable to the temptations of the flesh. After his first breach of duty, staying out of his master's house all night, Thorowgood muses:

> When we consider the frail condition of humanity, it may arouse our pity, not our wonder, that youth should go astray; when reason, weak at the best when opposed to inclination, scarce formed, and wholly unassisted by experience, faintly contends, or willingly becomes the slave of sense. The state of youth is much to be deplored, and the more so because they see it not; being then to danger most exposed when they are least prepared for their defense.\(^2^9\)

Thorowgood's remarks imply a definition of maturity. Before a youth can become fully adult, he has to submit his sensual inclinations to the sway of reason. Declaring independence from a guardian and entering a sexual adventure do not signify true manhood in this play. Growing up, in Lillo's mind, is a battle in which reason must vanquish the urgings of the more animal parts of the self. The Puritans, Locke, Chesterfield, and even Rousseau, called for parents and tutors to train their children in self-discipline. Thorowgood's speech asserts that self-discipline continues to be important in later years, especially

\(^2^8\) See "bairn," OED, I, 627.

after sexual longings emerge.

While Barnwell's exact age is not specified, he is more than a child, but less than an adult. In a study of apprenticeship in seventeenth-century London, Steven R. Smith claims that the completion of an apprenticeship marked a person's formal entry into adult life. Real life masters, like Thorowgood, served in loco parentis. Smith considers apprenticeship as a transitional phase between "the morality learned by the child and the ethics developed by the adult."\(^{30}\)

An adult ethic is implicit in Thorowgood's discussion of the merchant's profession with his faithful apprentice, Trueman. These conversations which begin the first and third acts interrupt the plot's dramatic development. At first glance, their only purpose seems to be an argument for the dignity of trade and a justification for mercantilism. These dialogs do, however, have a thematic significance because they express an ideal that sanctifies duty and scorns self-indulgence. If Barnwell's apprenticeship is a final preparation for manhood, then the values espoused by Thorowgood are the appropriate standard for maturity.

In the play's first scene, Thorowgood tells Trueman that merchants contribute to the happiness and safety of the nation (The time of the play is the year before the Armada). Because of the importance of their calling, any action with "the appearance of vice or meanness reflects on the dignity of our profession" (p. 187). Thorowgood even goes on to say that prompt payment of bills serves the country's interest because time taken up by dunning takes artisans away from their work

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(p. 188). At the opening of act three, Thorowgood discloses the philosophical basis of his ethic. Trade, he tells Trueman, is more than a means to personal wealth. It provides mutual benefit to all humanity and "is founded in reason and the nature of things" (p. 203). The virtues of the profession to which Barnwell aspires are sobriety, discretion, and concern for the common good. It is a thoroughly rational and orderly way of life. The master's praise of Trueman's well kept accounts emphasizes this: "Method in business is the surest guide. He who neglects it frequently stumbles, and always wanders perplexed, uncertain, and in danger" (pp. 204-205).

The master's words on poor business methods aptly describe Barnwell's progress in sin. After yielding to the temptations of the flesh, he loses the capacity for rational judgment, and he literally becomes the slave of passion and shifting emotions. His infatuation with Millwood destroys his will power. Using the pleasure her favor brings as a lure, she manipulates him like a child. The generosity of the good characters is a foil to Barnwell's self-indulgence and his mistaken generosity to Millwood. In stealing from his master and in murdering his uncle, he abandons all moral perspective and acts on impulse in total disregard of the consequences for himself and others. While he knows his actions are wrong, he cannot stop himself. He does not think abstractly or rationalize his crimes, as Millwood does hers in ascribing criminal motives to everyone. Barnwell's conviction that theft and murder are unpardonable renders the strength and danger of passion more awesome. If he had the resolve to resist the initial temptation, he would not have been compelled to commit enormous sins. In a soliloquy before the murder he exclaims, "In vain does nature, reason, conscience all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and
drives me on to lust, theft, and murder" (p. 210). Reason and conscience, the normal restraints on the baser desires of mature people, do not work for Barnwell. He becomes a wilful child who cannot tolerate being crossed in getting what he wants.

Barnwell's first encounter with Millwood awakens sexual longings he is unable to control. He says in an aside, "I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone while I have power to go" (p. 193). Reason tells him to go, but he cannot because he allows the animal part of himself to dominate him. His feelings, not his judgment, determine his actions. Even a seemingly innocent emotion can be dangerous. In a sentimental comedy like Steele's The Conscious Lovers, the hero's compassion for the unfortunate heroine is a commendable virtue even when it compels him to disobey a parent. Yet, the same feeling gets Barnwell into trouble. It is pity for Millwood's feigned distress which compels him to steal a bag of money. Mandeville, who saw some danger in pity, felt that children and women (those children of a larger growth) are particularly susceptible to it: "Pity, though it is the most gentle and least mischievous of all our passions, is as yet as much a frailty of our nature as anger, pride, or fear. The weakest minds have generally the greatest share of it, for which reason none are more compassionate than women and children."31

The weakness of Barnwell's mind is his inability to restrain his

31 Quoted in Rodman, p. 57. Rodman refutes earlier critics' claims that Lillo is a sentimental dramatist who holds that human nature and exquisite feelings are in themselves good. He sees Lillo as adhering to a more orthodox view of human nature that distrusts passions and fears the frequent victory of lower instincts over the higher faculties. Raymond D. Havens in "The Sentimentalism of The London Merchant," ELH, 12 (1945), 183-88, argues that the play shows Barnwell as "an amiable, spineless youth whom Lillo judges not by his actions but how he feels about them."
passion. The conflict of reason and passion, which is the play's theme, is often mentioned by the characters themselves. Maria expresses sympathy for Barnwell in pitying "the wretch who combats love with duty" (p. 204). Lucy, Millwood's maid, speaks of Barnwell's "transport of excessive fondness . . . when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost" (p. 208). Barnwell himself warns youths in the audience to avoid his fate: "By reason guided, honest joys pursue" (p. 216). Thorowgood regards his apprentice's ultimate anguish as "the bitter fruits of passion's reign and sensual appetite indulged" (p. 222). The moment when Barnwell's doom is sealed comes when, as he is about to give Millwood stolen money, he questions the usefulness of reason itself: "Now you, who boast your reason all sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me whether it's right to let her suffer for my faults, or by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past" (p. 203).

The London Merchant offers a nightmarish vision of adolescent depravity. Barnwell's killing of the kind uncle who has provided for him is the ultimate act of childish ingratitude. Sexual desire is the root cause of Barnwell's succession of crimes. Lillo's fear of the potential horror in adolescent sexuality is akin to his age's fear of children's love of pleasure and their wilfulness. The chaste and spiritually sublimated love of Maria is recommended as an alternative to Barnwell's lust which demands immediate gratification. Barnwell succumbs to the animality that children must be forced to renounce. To justify her crimes, Millwood offers her vision of human society: "I followed my own inclinations, and that the best of you do every day. All actions seem alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as they meet with others weaker or stronger
than themselves" (pp. 219-20). Barnwell, who is indeed a good child until he meets Millwood, fails to make the final transition to the rational, ethical and adult world that Thorowgood represents. Instead, he descends to the chaotic, amoral and subhuman world of Millwood.

George Barnwell is a departure from more innocent and happier child-adults like Margery Pinchwife. Restoration playwrights, however, present her male counterpart, the booby squire in a way that attracts less sympathy. Shadwell's adaptation of Terence's Adelphi, The Squire of Alsatia, argues that overly strict country squires raise doltish sons who cannot function as adults. The dramatis personae describes the protagonist Belfond Senior as a lad "bred after his father's Rustick, swinish manner, with great rigour and severity; upon whom his Father's Estate is entailed; the confidence of which makes him break out into open Rebellion to his father, and become leud, abominably vicious, stubborn and obstinate."32 Deprived of liberty at home, this wilful child wanders to the criminal enclave of Whitefriars where sharpers using wine and women as bait try to dupe him of his fortune. When his father comes after him, Belfond, who has surrendered to his lower instincts, barks like a dog at his father in an infantile tantrum. Shadwell's Belfond is the most unappealing booby squire in the comedy of the period. Sir Wilful Witwoud in Congreve's The Way of the World (1700) is also a loutish, overgrown child. At the ripe age of forty, he is finally about to begin his grand tour. Sir Wilful, like Ben, has a good natured gaiety that the vicious Belfond lacks. He is not particularly intelligent, but at least he avoids being manipulated by his scheming city aunt.

Tony Lumpkin in Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* is a descendant of the booby squires of earlier plays. He is a perfect example of the gentry bumpkins whom Defoe's *The Compleat English Gentleman* criticized as overgrown children. An indulgent mother has spoiled him, and he has grown into an ill-mannered, semi-literate practical joker more devoted to the pleasures of the hunt and the bottle than to the serious business of life. Tony, however, is thoroughly likeable despite his shortcomings. The ale house keeper in the play calls him "a sweet, pleasant—mischievous son of a whore." A large segment of the audience that made *She Stoops to Conquer* popular must have shared this opinion of Tony as a charming but naughty boy. A 1773 review in *London Magazine* described him as "quite a spoiled child, regardless of his mother, fond of low company and full of mischievous humour."

Tony differs from his antecedents most significantly in the way he controls events. Belfond Senior and Sir Wilful Witwoud respond to moves made by more clever characters. Tony Lumpkin, on the other hand, engineers the deceptions in Goldsmith's comedy of errors. He does this in part to gain his freedom by avoiding an imposed marriage. Yet he is also motivated by a love of mischief for its own sake. In this respect, he is a descendant of the comic vice of earlier English comedy like Dic-

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33 John Harrington Smith in "Tony Lumpkin and the Country Booby Type in Antecedent English Comedy," *PMLA*, 56 (1941), 1036-49 writes "There are thus on internal evidence, grounds for believing that in the framing of Tony, Goldsmith was under obligation to five old plays: The Lancashire Witches, The Tender Husband, The Wild Gallant (and possibly George Dandin), Woman's Wit, and The Lottery.


con in Gomer Gurton's Needle. He is also a more earthly and earthier version of Puck and exercises a kind of nocturnal magic in distorting other people's perceptions of reality in a play appropriately subtitled The Mistakes of a Night. Marlow and Hastings take Hardcastle's house as an inn, and Mrs. Hardcastle thinks she's spirited her niece away while traveling in circles. These mistakes are the material of farce, but their effect lingers into light of day. Marlow finds happiness with a modest woman, and Miss Neville, as well as Tony himself, escape the thrall of an overbearing mother.

She Stoops to Conquer reverses the usual situation of the earlier comedies where a country lout comes to the unfamiliar setting of the town. Goldsmith brings the London bucks to the country where it is they who are out of place. Tony, like the rake heroes of the Restoration, is the author of the successful intrigue. Not only is he responsible for Hastings and Marlow's initial deception, but he also arranges Hastings and Constance's elopement. Tony is as resourceful in his way as a Dorimant or a Mirabel. His scheme to rid himself of Miss Neville is twice foiled, when the jewels are returned and when the letter is intercepted, but he succeeds in the end. Goldsmith admired Farquhar and hoped to resurrect the spirit of his "laughing" comedy, but he goes a step further than his model. He moves the comic action to the country as Farquhar did, but the comic tricks are hatched by a booby squire, not an Aimwell or a Plume.

Although Tony is clever, he is still very much a young boy, and Goldsmith calls attention to his childishness. Tony is legally an adult, but he does not know it. He only finds out how old he is at the end of the play when Hardcastle admits to having not told Tony that he has been of age for three months in hopes that his conduct might somehow
become mature. Tony's mother still pampers her fully grown son as if he were a tender baby. Locke, Defoe, Rousseau, and Thomas Day all urged parents to avoid being oversolicitous. Tony has never had to do anything taxing. Even Rousseau and Day would expect a young gentleman of twenty-one to be able to read, but Tony has never been coaxed or compelled to learn. Tony's mother's excuse is "My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year" (p. 242). The results of Mrs. Hardcastle's errors are obvious. Tony balks at all restraint and lacks the sense of moderation and self-discipline valued by the educators of the period. Mrs. Hardcastle wants to have things both ways. She is willing to pamper the boy, yet she is upset when he is disobedient and irresponsible. Tony has never learned to restrict his wants, and he longs for the indulgence his inheritance will provide. When Mrs. Hardcastle uses a conventional phrase to ask Tony to stay away from his ale house cronies for one night, his answer is significant:

Mrs. Hardcastle: Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony: As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself. (p. 243)

Tony wants to have his own way. He is sick of hearing from his mother that she is doing things for his own good, like forcing medicine on him (p. 253). He is an overgrown wilful child and really describes himself in a snatch of song he sings: "There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will . . ." (p. 264). Just what Tony would have are the simple pleasures, his companions, his bottle and the hunt and an avoidance of any serious pursuit. For him life is a carefree game and he enjoys playing as a mischievous child would. In the opening scene
Hardcastle recounts some of his antics: "If burning the footmen’s shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying the kittens be humor, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head in Mr. Fizzle’s face" (p. 242).

While Tony is not asexual, his reaction to the idea of a possible match with Miss Neville is that of a small boy who wants no part of a prissy girl. When his mother has the two of them stand back to back to be measured like children, Tony gives his cousin a sneaky bang on the head (p. 253). He sees the girl much differently than her conventional lover Hastings does:

Hastings: To me she appears sensible and silent!

Tony: Ay, before company. But when she’s with her playmates, she’s as loud as a hog in a gate. (p. 264)

Perhaps Tony’s estimation has as much validity as Hastings’. Tony is attracted to a different sort of girl, Bett Bouncer, whose name and rustic origin suggest a buxom form and an unashamed appetite for unrefined pleasures.

Tony is a product of the country, and Goldsmith uses him to poke fun at the town’s affectation. Tony’s rustic simplicity makes Marlow’s unnatural pose before Kate as a conversationalist of sober and refined sentiments seem even more absurd. Lillo portrayed indulgence in exquisite feelings as dangerous, but Goldsmith portrays it as foolish and artificial. Not only does Tony prove surprisingly clever despite near illiteracy, but in one instance he shows keener moral insight than the otherwise sensible Hastings. After Hastings discovers Tony has been serving his interest all along, Tony gives him a deserved censure: "Ay,
now it's 'dear friend,' 'noble squire.' Just now it was all 'idiot,' 'cub,' and 'run me through the guts.' Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman" (p. 289).

Goldsmith, however, is not recommending that everybody be exactly like Tony Lumpkin, any more than Wycherley is recommending that everybody be exactly like Margery Pinchwife. There is, however, a different attitude towards the childish figure in She Stoops to Conquer than in the earlier plays. Miss Neville says of Tony, "It is a good natured creature at bottom," and this is an important, if obvious, observation. For Goldsmith, good nature is a more important quality than the discretion and self-restraint which Tony lacks. Even without these traditional measures of maturity, Tony is granted the rewards of manhood. He gains his inheritance and has a full share in the comic resolution. He does more than escape an unwanted marriage; he gains his freedom and is no longer under any obligation to conform his behavior to other people's expectations. The stables, the ale house and Bett Bouncer await him.

The plays discussed in this chapter are representative of a variety of attitudes toward child-adults. Davenant and the Restoration playwrights who follow him use primitive and unsophisticated characters to criticize current standards of civilized, adult behavior, but they withhold a total endorsement of a primitive, unsophisticated approach to life. Their plays share the skepticism characteristic of much seventeenth-century thought which holds all traditions, institutions, ideas and social conventions up to the test of reason and common sense. These playwrights are dissatisfied with some aspects of civilized life, but they are hardly romantic poets urging their audience to be children of
nature. The London Merchant, a play very popular with middle class audiences in the eighteenth century, takes a harsher view of the child-adult and upholds the conventional standards of maturity. Lillo's young apprentice who renounces adult responsibility and self-control is a dramatic testimony to the Calvinist suspicion that the child is an unregenerate monster who must conquer his natural inclinations. The plays of Shadwell, Congreve, and Goldsmith all portray booby squires as overgrown children. Belfond Senior, Wilful Witwoud and Tony Lumpkin confront characters from the adult world of the city, and the degree of success each meets with is a measure of an increasing sympathy for adults who still have much of the child in them. The oafish Belfond is thoroughly helpless, while a hundred years later the more likeable Tony Lumpkin is clever and resourceful.

Even though Goldsmith was consciously trying to revive the spirit of earlier comedy, She Stoops to Conquer is rooted in the sensibility of his own time. Richard Quintana has shown that while Goldsmith was reacting to sentimental comedy, he observed the conventions of the 1760's. In the comedies of that decade, humorous characters such as the tongue tied Marlow, the rustic Hardcastles, and also the childish Tony were frequently attractive and likeable as well as ridiculous. Quintana sees the same trend in mid-eighteenth-century fiction where eccentrics like Parson Adams and Uncle Toby are presented sympathetically.\footnote{Richard Quintana, "Goldsmith's Achievement as a Dramatist," University of Toronto Quarterly, 34 (1965), 164.}

In the following chapters, we shall see how Fielding and Sterne incorporate childish traits into characters whose virtues they would have their readers admire.
CHAPTER III

FIELDING'S GOOD FELLOWS AND BULLIES

Many characters in Fielding's novels behave in a way that suggests they may be modeled after energetic and exuberant children. In "An Essay on the Characters of Men" Fielding bases his conjecture about the varieties of human nature on his observations of children. He argues that inborn differences, not education or environment, determine how different people will behave in adult life:

This original difference will, I think, alone account for that very early and strong inclination to good or evil, which distinguishes different dispositions in children, in their first infancy; in the most uninformed savages, who can be thought to have altered their natures by no rules, nor artfully acquired habits; and lastly, in persons, who from the same education &c., might be thought to have directed nature the same way; yet among all these there subsists, as I have before hinted, so manifest and extreme a difference of inclination or character, that almost obliges us, I think to acknowledge, some unacquired, original distinction, in the nature or soul of one man from that of another.\(^1\)

Fielding believes that the child is not only father to the man but is in essence the man. The plot of Tom Jones reflects Fielding's idea that education cannot change people and that we are what we are born. Jones and Blifil have the same mother and are raised in the same household by the same tutors, but one turns out to be benevolent, the other vicious. Blifil's original nature enables him to learn lessons

in deceit and hypocrisy from Thwackum and Square. Tom Jones, whose original nature is radically different from his tutors', is unaffected. Perhaps Jones and Blifil inherit their characters from their fathers, although Fielding nowhere offers any theory about the process of heredity. Even though Fielding indicated in "Characters of Men" that original differences are apparent in very young children, Tom Jones gives only a very scant account of Jones and Blifil's childhoods. Fielding dramatizes his ideas about the importance of original nature by showing what kind of adults Jones and Blifil become rather than by showing what kind of children they were. Lois Gibson, in her unpublished study of children in Fielding's fiction, writes:

Though Tom Jones may seem immature when we meet him (he is called "little Jones," and he bursts into tears at Allworthy's goodness to him), he is most definitely more a young man than a child, and as his semi-picaresque adventures proceed, he rapidly becomes a mature adult.

In other works, however, Fielding creates fully grown characters who are more like children than adults. As this chapter will show there is something childlike about characters so apparently different as Parson Adams and Jonathan Wild. The childlike side of these adults offers a glimpse of their original natures. Fielding portrays both benevolent people and ill-natured villains as child-adults to demonstrate the extremes of human nature.

To the extent that he acts on impulse, the benevolent, or good-natured man is like a child. Fielding defines good nature as:

2Lois Gibson in "Attitudes Toward Children in Eighteenth-Century British Fiction," Diss. University of Pittsburgh, 1975, p. 166, states, "... it is surprising how many people have the mistaken notion that much of Tom Jones is about the hero's childhood."

3Gibson, p. 99.
that benevolent and amiable temper of mind, which disposes us to feel the misfortunes, and enjoy the happiness of others; and consequently, pushes us on to promote the latter, and prevent the former; and that without any abstract contemplation on the beauty of virtue, and without the allurements or terrors of religion."

The disposition of good-natured people is no less deserving of merit because it is unlearned. Fielding calls that disposition "a passion" and says it "seems to be the only human passion that is in itself simply and naturally good." In the poem "Of Good Nature," he defines that quality as "the glorious lust of doing good." Most eighteenth-century commentators would have all a child's passions and lusts strictly governed, but Fielding wishes that this "only good passion" were cultivated. He also recognizes that a benevolent disposition has to be combined with sound judgment in a good-natured man: "That as good nature requires a distinguishing faculty, which is another word for judgement, and is perhaps the sole boundary between wisdom and folly; it is impossible for a fool who hath no distinguishing faculty to be good-natured." In "An Inquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers," Fielding voices a concern about the harm awaiting the public if vicious criminals are encouraged by the indiscriminate compassion of well-meaning people: "To desire to save these wolves in society may arise from benevolence, but it must be the benevolence of a child or a fool; who from want of sufficient reason, mistakes the true objects of his passion, as a child

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4"Characters of Men," The Works, VI, 333-34.
5"An Inquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers," The Works, VII, 252.
6The Works, VII, 337.
doth when a bugbear appears to him to be the object of fear."

The benevolent man is especially like a child when his benevolence is not guided by reason. George Boncour, in Fielding's play The Fathers, or The Good Natured Man, is such a person. He has indulged every whim of his son and daughter while they have grown into ungrateful spendthrifts. His continual deference to his wife has turned her into a nag. Boncour is possessed of that imprudent liberality that Fielding has called the "benevolence of a child or a fool" that would mistake its true objects. A man's children, unlike hardened criminals, are fit objects for benevolence, but Boncour goes too far in satisfying their every extravagant demand on his purse. Boncour is childish in that he refuses to take on the responsibilities of a parent. Like Sir Geoffrey Wildacre in The Tatler, he treasures his children's affection more than their respect. He cannot bear to cross their will in anything to the constant exasperation of his brother Sir George, who warns him of his folly:

Mr. Boncour: Brother, thank you; but will it be a good natured thing to disappoint them, poor things.

Sir George Boncour: Good nature! Damn the word! 9

Boncour's generosity in a peculiar way is a form of selfishness. He admits to himself that by indulging his children he can vicariously experience the pleasures of youth once again: "I feel my children still a part of me; they are, as it were additional senses, which let in daily a thousand pleasures to me; my enjoyments are not confined to those which nature hath adapted to my own years, but I can in my son's

8 The Works, VII, 254.

9 The Works, X, 467. Subsequent references to The Fathers will be cited in the text.
fruition taste those of another age" (p. 435). Boncour is a good but weak man. He lacks the judgment Fielding thinks is necessary to guide good impulses. This weakness deters him from unpleasant confrontations with his wife and children. Despite his short-comings, however, Boncour's generosity stems from an admirable disposition to do good for others. In the Preface to the Miscellanes, Fielding differentiates between three characters of men: the great, the good, and the good and great. Boncour more than any other character in his works falls under the second heading: "I do not conceive my Good Man to be absolutely a Fool or a Coward: but that he often partakes too little of Parts or Courage."\(^{10}\)

Boncour is of interest because there is some question as to whether he is indeed a good-natured man or just a fool. The behavior of his children ultimately calls attention to all that is good in their father. Although they have become imprudent and self-indulgent, they have inherited Boncour's benevolent nature. When they hear their father is ruined, they offer their own scant resources to maintain their parents. While their sentimental gesture is perhaps a weakness in the play, because it has not been prepared for, it demonstrates an important notion in Fielding's thinking—a person's nature cannot be significantly altered by education.\(^{11}\) The Boncour children's upbringing has been mis-

\(^{10}\) Miscellanes by Henry Fielding, Henry Knight Miller ed. (Middletown, Conn.) Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1972), I, 12.

\(^{11}\) Carl R. Kropf in "Educational Theory and Human Nature in Fielding's Works," PMLA, 89 (1974), 133-20, claims that Fielding's thinking on the tractability of human nature changes from work to work. Kropf argues that in The Fathers, children are indeed molded by their education. This is an unsatisfactory reading of the play, I feel, because the children's behavior contradicts conventional expectations of how they should act given their particular educations. The Boncours are generous after they have been trained to be self-centered. The Valences are self-willed when their own wills should have been extirpated by a domineering father. Young
managed, and they are ill prepared for day to day adult responsibilities, but in a crisis they do the right thing. Two of Boncour's critics in the play expect Boncour's son and daughter to behave differently than they do. Valence, who is as severe a father as Boncour is an indulgent one, calls Boncour a "weak man" who has brought up his children to "hate and despise him" (p. 440). Even Sir George, who speaks for moderation in the training of children, is in error. He does not expect young Boncour to aid his father. When he hears the boy's offer, he thinks young Boncour has learned the news of the disaster is just a trick.

There is still ground, however, to suspect that Boncour's generosity is what Fielding calls "the benevolence of a child or a fool." Boncour is almost duped out of his fortune by his fake friend Valence. He seems to lack the "distinguishing faculty" or "judgement" that Fielding saw as a requirement for good nature. But as C.J. Rawson has pointed out, "the imprudence of the benevolent man is something Fielding often complains of in principle, while actually suffusing its manifestations in the novels with an overriding warmth of affectionate approval."¹² Both Parson Adams and Tom Jones show that a good heart is more important than a good head. It is, after all, the ill-natured Thwackum who uses Fielding's own argument about misguided mercy to criticize Allworthy's compassion towards Tom. Fielding, though a spokesman for moderation, is sympathetic to the impulsive generosity of Adams and Tom Jones; Goldsmith probably sensed this in his concern that young readers would not learn to appreciate the virtue of frugality by reading Joseph Andrews

Kemmel has refined feelings after having been raised as a boor.

and Tom Jones. Fielding is willing to condone deficiencies in good-natured people because he is convinced that they are precious and few. The good people in the novels are outnumbered by a host of selfish, avaricious and depraved characters.

Abraham Adams is Fielding's most affectionate portrayal of the benevolent man. Fielding does not arouse any suspicion that Adams's generosity is "the benevolence of a child or a fool" as he does in the case of Boncour. Adams is like a child in that he acts on the impulse of a predominant passion, the innate disposition to charity which Fielding singled out as the only human passion which of itself is absolutely good. This passion and his childlike exuberance are his strength. They endow him with a gusto that both Boncour and the well-meaning Squire Allworthy lack, and they prompt him to spontaneous actions promoting the well-being of others.

While Adams is childlike in the way he acts on the inclinations of his heart, his mind cherishes an ideal which had long been the crux of all theories of education—the need for reason to govern the passions. A person's ability to contain or direct his passions rationally was the measure of his maturity in the eighteenth century. Adams is a peculiar mixture, part child and part adult because of the struggle between his inclinations and his dearly held convictions about the office of reason. Leo Braudy considers Adams a man with a conscious commitment to

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14. Andrew Wright in Henry Fielding, Mask and Feast (Los Angeles: Univ. Of California Press, 1965), p. 34, states, "Most men, in Fielding's view are positively evil from birth: such a person is Elifil; or at best wicked through indifference, selfishness or ambition: such a person is Black George."
abstract principle and an unconscious commitment to spontaneous action.\(^{15}\)
The tension between these commitments is the battle in Adams between the impulsive child and the rational adult, and Fielding's sympathy is with the parson's impulses.

The best example of the conflict between Adams's heart and head is his impassioned outburst on hearing the false report of his son's drowning. The incident not only shows that Adams cannot live up to the ideal of Christian stoicism. Adams's behavior raises a question as to whether the passions can and should be always governed by reason. Just before receiving the news, Adams has been lecturing Joseph on imprudent excesses of feeling. The term of address he chooses is significant: "You are too much inclined to passion, child."\(^{16}\) A moment before this, Adams has called Joseph "child" when telling him a marriage solely undertaken to gratify carnal appetite is a "heinous sin" (p. 264). When Joseph suddenly becomes the counselor of the bereaved Adams and uses the curate's own arguments against the passions, Fielding makes a coy aside: "(for he [Adams] was a great enemy to the passions, and preached nothing more than the conquest of them by reason and grace)" (p. 265). Even after being caught in this contradiction of impulse and conviction, Adams continues to equate immoderate passion with childishness. Shortly after they learn Adams's son is safe, the parson answers Joseph's confession that he will love Fanny "without any moderation" with a familiar accusation: "You talk foolishly and childishlly" (p. 267).

Judged by his own standards, Adams often behaves like a child.


He preaches that even the benevolent passions require moderation, but his own actions violate his intellectual position. He acts on the impulses of feelings, without rational consideration. He can no more restrain himself from raising a fist to help his friends than he can refrain from an excess of grief for a lost son or refrain from throwing his beloved Aeschylus manuscript into the fire in empathy with his friends' joy. Fielding's limited endorsement of passion does not make him a child-adoring sentimentalist or romantic. Adams is not everyman; he is the apotheosis of a rare species, the good-natured man. His admirable and impulsive disposition, though, is evidence of Fielding's belief that the desire to do good for one's fellows is not something learned from religion or philosophy as Thwackum and Square argue. Parson Adams's childishness, his subservience to a passion, is an admirable trait, even though Fielding elsewhere suggests that even a good man has to restrain his impulses.

In the chapter of *Tom Jones* entitled "In Which the Author Himself Makes his Appearance on the Stage," Fielding does announce that good nature by itself is insufficient without prudence. He says of the "well-disposed youths" who will be his readers: "... goodness of heart and openness of temper, though these may give them great comforts within, and administer to an honest pride in their own minds, will by no means, alas! do their business in the world. Prudence and circumspect-

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17 Critics have recognized that this conviction is at the heart of Fielding's moral thinking. Ian Watt, in *The Rise of the Novel* (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1957), pp. 262-63, says Fielding conceives of virtue "as a natural tendency to goodness" and not a "suppression of instinct." Glenn Hatfield in "The Serpent and the Dove: Fielding's Irony and the Prudence Theme in *Tom Jones*," *MP*, 65 (1967), 21, explains that Joseph Andrews appears ridiculous in resisting the advances of Lady Booby because his chastity is a limited, passive virtue like that of Richardson's characters. Subsequent adventures show that active charity is the superior virtue.
tion are necessary even to the best of men. . . . It is not enough that your designs, nay, that your actions, are intrinsically good; you must take care they shall appear so. Prudence so defined is an adult virtue, because it requires one's reason to keep a watchful eye on one's impulses. It is incompatible with the childlike spontaneity of Parson Adams, who disregards possible appearances in joining the fray in Mrs. Slipslop's bedroom. There is a danger, however, in taking this self-conscious intrusion in Tom Jones too literally. The implication that appearance of an act is more important than its substance is an unmistakable indication of irony. The terms "prudent" and "discreet" in Tom Jones carry unfavorable connotations about three times more often than they carry neutral or favorable ones. If Tom Jones's imprudent disregard of appearances is childish or immature, it is interesting that Blifil's tag, "sober, discreet, and pious beyond his age," attributes adult virtues to him. Even a critic who argues that Fielding makes a case for a "good" kind of prudence feels that it is a secondary virtue which must be subservient to other good qualities. The source of Tom's difficulties is not so much his imprudence as it is the failure of others to perceive his good nature and good acts correctly.

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19 Wright, on p. 35, writes: "Again and again, Fielding as a narrator stands between his novel and a didactic interpretation of the course of the narrative, not least when he is pretending to be didactic. For as a preacher, he always goes too far, protests too much, and thus invites more and less than a straight response."


21 Leo Braudy in Narrative Form in History and Fiction reads Tom Jones more as a lesson in perception for the reader than a lesson in prudence for Tom. P.D. Edwards in "Education and Nature in Tom Jones and The Ordeal of Richard Feverel," MLR, 63 (1968), 25-26 concludes there is no real evidence that Tom acquires prudence and discretion at the end of
Adams, contrary to his creed as a teacher, gives vent to his passions like a child. Though Adams, with his trusting nature, is "as entirely ignorant of the ways of this world as an infant" (p. 17), he is not a fool who lacks common sense. Because there is no evil in his heart, he is slow to discover evil in others. Fielding recognizes that all good-natured people are apt to have a childlike naivete. In "An Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men," he notes that an "open disposition" renders someone liable to be imposed on by the craft of others. The novels show that the reverse of this is also true. Ill-natured people are unable to perceive goodness in others when they encounter it. Parson Trulliber is greedy and cunning, and he projects these failings onto Adams. Fielding's advice to the good man who would not be deceived is very pragmatic. Careful observation can discover the true self which the hypocrite hides behind a mask. "Characters of Men" recommends common sense ways of making this discovery, such as judging someone's behavior to others, especially his inferiors, against his virtuous professions. This kind of observation, however, takes time, and it is difficult to ascertain a person's true character at a first meeting. While Adams is easily taken in by people like the promising squire, he can, with further evidence, determine someone's true nature. He makes excuses for the promiser when the man disappoints his friends and himself, but he is convinced of the squire's depravity when he learns he has behaved so towards others.

In Fielding's estimation, Adams's childlike naivete is morally

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22 The Works, VI, 331.
superior to excessive suspicion. As incidents in *Joseph Andrews* show, suspicion is a sign of ill nature. When Adams, unaware that an ale house is in sight, asks a passer-by for directions to one, the surly fellow suspects he is being toyed with and tells Adams to "'follow his nose and be d--n'd'" (p. 78). This character is briefly introduced as an example of a temperament which is the exact opposite of Adams's. The chapter in which the parson meets the disguised Catholic priest also develops the trust-suspicion theme. Adams takes the priest's professed contempt of riches at face value, but the priest doubts the sincerity of Adams who, after offering charity, finds his pocket has been picked. While Adams's trust may be naive, the priest's suspicions arise from ill nature. When the innkeeper laments having trusted the priest to pay his bill, Adams tells him suspicion is not becoming a Christian. The evil characters in Fielding's fiction are always seeing something of themselves in others and are as blind to virtue in people as the good-natured are to vice. Adams can be deceived by hypocrites, but it is not because he lacks common sense. Given sufficient proof of someone's bad character, he can act accordingly. He does raise a clenched fist at the cursing passer-by.

Adams also has the impatient energy of a schoolboy. Fielding often shows the fifty-year-old cleric in the posture of a boy who can barely contain his feelings. When he meets a bookseller who might buy his sermons, Adams is so excited that "He snapt his fingers (as was usual with him), and took two or three turns about the room in an ecstasy" (p. 78).

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23 Leo Braudy in *Narrative Form in History and Fiction*, p. 212, says Fielding's purpose is "to foster a method for perceiving the varieties of the world rather than categories that can only reduce it." Characters who see others as acting like themselves are usually wrong in their assessment.
Adams is always impetuous in his physical actions. He walks through a deep puddle without taking time to discover a dry passage nearby. With Joseph and Fanny as his companions, he is ready to swim a river rather than look for a bridge. When Joseph tells him there might be a bridge nearby, he confesses, "I did not think of that" (p. 164). Just before this, he has rolled down a hill like a little boy. Adams is forgetful, but his forgetfulness is not like that of a senescent old man; it is another aspect of his impulsiveness. After Adams has left his horse at an inn, Fielding offers an explanation: "this was a fresh instance of that shortness of memory which did not arise from want of parts, but that continual hurry in which Parson Adams was always involved" (p. 77). The parson’s thoughts flow through his mind in hurried succession. Adams does not have the disciplined control of the conscious mind which Chesterfield considered to be a requirement of maturity. He demanded that his son learn to ward off aimless thoughts and to concentrate on what he was doing at each particular moment. Many of Adams’s actions, as well, violate Chesterfield’s rigid ideal of decorum. In a fit of joy, the parson absentmindedly casts his Aeschylus into the fire. Chesterfield, a man who claims he never laughed, might have considered this impulsive act as a "silly and idle suspension of thought" that others "would dignify with the name of ABSENCE and DISTRACTION."

Adams possesses a playful imagination which at times can transform reality (a trait shared by Partridge, another child-adult who confuses a stage play with real life). He can turn a mundane activity like walking into an enjoyable diversion. When the driver of Mrs. Slipslop's

coach tries to catch up with Adams, the parson makes a game of staying ahead of the horses. He increases his speed and cries out, "Ay, ay, catch me if you can" (p. 109). His imagination also leads him to mistake ordinary things for supernatural phenomena. He sees the lights of the sheep stealers as a ghostly apparition. During the night adventures at Booby Hall, he mistakes Mrs. Slipslop for a witch "whose breasts gave suck to a legion of devils" (p. 287). Another manifestation of Adams's powerful imagination is his absorption in stories people tell. He listens avidly to the histories of Leonora and Mr. Wilson, and the tales appeal to his moral preoccupations. His frequent interruptions show how he leaves his present surroundings behind and how he becomes totally immersed in the world of the narratives. He asks the lady in the coach to tell him what Bellarmine was wearing. He listens with a child's fascination rather than with an adult's detachment, and his groans over Leonora's conduct prompt the ladies in the coach to ask if he is ill. Frequent groans punctuate the story of Mr. Wilson's life as well. When he hears of the winning lottery ticket, he "snapt his fingers at these words in an ecstasy of joy" (p. 285). Adams has the active imagination of a child. Although Fielding, like Locke, recognizes that imagination can provoke irrational fears, he also sees, as does Sterne, that imagination can be an asset. An active imagination enables Adams to empathize with the fortunes of others. It also provides him with pleasures that the sober hypocrites and misers in the novel cannot share. In racing against coaches and listening to stories Adams uses his imagination to enhance his enjoyment of life.

The benevolent man like Parson Adams is not the only kind of character whom Fielding portrays as a child-adult. Fielding depicts the roasting squire of Joseph Andrews and Jonathan Wild as childish bull-
ies to suggest that the worst of men are like ill-disposed children who impose no restraint on their passions. The original nature of the roasting squire is the antithesis of the benevolent man's. Instead of having an instinctive concern for the welfare of others, he takes delight in publicly humiliating people. In The Champion, 13 March 1739/40, Fielding says such a temperament arises from either "a great depravity of nature, which delights in the miseries, and misfortunes of mankind, or from a pride which we take in comparing the blemishes of others with our own perfection." He then quotes Shaftesbury to explain the presence of that "depravity of nature" in children:

There is an affection nearly related to inhumanity, which is a gay and frolicsome delight in what is injurious to others, a sort of wanton mischievousness and pleasure in what is destructive, a passion, which, instead of being restrained, is encouraged in children, so that it is indeed no wonder if the effects of it are very unfortunately felt in the world: for it will be hard, perhaps, for any one to give a reason, why that temper, which was used to delight in disorder, and ravage when in a nursery, should not afterwards find delight in other disturbances, and be the occasion of equal mischief in families, among friends, and in the public.\(^{25}\)

In describing the disposition common to the worst of people, Fielding and Shaftesbury sound surprisingly like Hobbes and the Calvinists. Fielding sees the delight in misfortune, disorder, and ravage in adults as a continuation of the wildness of their childhoods.

The roasting squire is a child-adult in that he has placed no restraint on his native inclinations. As a boy, he had very little guidance and restraint. Like the country squires Defoe criticized, he has been reared by a doting mother to have a contempt for learning and discipline: "he had been educated (if we may here use that expression) in the country, and at his own home, under the care of his mother, and a

\(^{25}\)The Works, V, 369-70.
tutor who had orders never to correct him, nor to compel him to learn more than he liked, which it seems was very little, and that only in his childhood; for from the age of fifteen he addicted himself entirely to hunting and other rural amusements" (p. 208).

The roasting squire's behavior is more a product of his original nature than a mismanaged upbringing. Young Kennel in The Fathers is boorish and impudent because his education, like the roasting squire's, has not offered him the proper guidance. In the end, however, Kennel's benevolent nature asserts itself. Like other sons of the gentry, Kennel's principal concerns are the pleasures of the hunt and bottle. After his travels, he has replaced his country bashfulness with an impudence learned abroad that Hurd in his dialog on travel has Locke call a "perpetual boyism." He is disrespectful to his father whom he has found cannot legally disinherit him. C.R. Kropf says young Kennel remains "as close to a natural man as one can in civilization." Despite his rough manners and apparent greed for his father's estate, young Kennel's nature is good. He loves the "poor" Miss Boncour and refuses the hand of Miss Valence who is offered as a richer catch. He laments being deprived of "a rational education" (p. 1498) and agrees to be schooled before he marries. He is a crude boy-man, but his instincts are good. There is still time for him to acquire polish and social grace, qualities which are valueless without a good heart.

Although Fielding feels that original natures cannot be changed, he does believe that vicious inclinations can and should be curbed. In Fielding's mind this goal is best served by an appeal to a person's passions rather than his reason. It makes no difference whether the

person is a child or adult. In the case of a child who delights in ravage and disorder, Fielding urges parents to whip this spirit out of children with a "wholesome severity." Amelia's children are essentially good, but as a precaution she "so strongly annexed the ideas of fear and shame to every idea of evil of which they were susceptible, that it must require great pains and length of habit to separate them." Fielding suggests a similar appeal to the feelings of adult malactors like the roasting squire. Since the delight such people take in debasing others arises from pride, Fielding recommends shaming such tormentors with their own blemishes as the best way to restrain them. In Amelia, Dr. Harrison answers Booth's claim that people act solely on the basis of their predominant passions by saying, "it would be fair to conclude that religion to be true which appeals immediately to the strongest of these passions, hope and fear" (p. 629). Booth's conversion to orthodox Christianity is some proof that the author himself shares Harrison's views. While Fielding has elsewhere stated that benevolence is an inborn quality independent of the teachings of religion and philosophy, Booth's conversion does not indicate a renunciation of that belief. It is, however, further evidence of his conviction that few mortals possess unalloyed good nature.

Jonathan Wild is Fielding's most interesting and thorough portrayal of the incorrigible villain as a child-adult whose "delight in disorder and ravage" has persisted from his nursery days to his adult years. Judged in moral terms, Wild is the direct opposite of Parson Adams.

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ams has dedicated his life to helping others whereas Wild believes that other people exist only to serve his needs. On the privileges due the great, the latter says: "we are born only to devour the fruits of the earth; and it may be as well said of the lower class that they are born only to produce them for us." Both Adams and Wild, however, are peculiar mixtures of adult and child. Adams, with his insistence that the passions be subservient to the reason, is a spokesman for the creed of most eighteenth-century educators even though he cannot contain his natural exuberance. Wild, as a confidence man, seems a master of self-control. He tries to be a Machiavellian politician who can manipulate appearances to dupe others. To succeed in this role he has to contain or at least to disguise his passion, but his success is always incomplete. When Wild is waiting to see Laetitia Snap and discovers that Molly Straddle has robbed him, Fielding describes Wild's mastery of his anger as follows: "However, as he had that perfect mastery of his temper, or rather of his muscles, which is as necessary to the forming of a great character as to the personating it on the stage, he soon conveyed a smile into his countenance, ... concealing as well his misfortune as his chagrin at it" (p. 79).

The key phrase in this passage is the parenthetical aside "rather of his muscles." For all his composure, Wild lacks a true control of his passion. He is, in essence, an ill-natured child who is always on the edge of a tantrum. When his frustrations prove too much he does give in to fits of anger. Discovering that Count la Ruse, as well as Molly, has robbed him, he can no longer restrain himself. He pounds on the Count's door with "more impetuosity" than "the highest fed footman"

or "highest bred woman of quality." Not content with a servant's denial that the Count is home, Wild breaks in and searches the house, then "ransacks all the gaming-houses in town in a fruitless search" (pp. 80-81). Wild has difficulty maintaining his composure because his limitless desires can never be satisfied. His statement that ordinary people exist only to serve the great is symptomatic of his infantile nature. Like the Hobbesian man in the state of nature, Wild feels he is entitled to all things. His conviction that others exist only to serve him is like the love of dominion that Locke saw in children. His greed is compulsive and not limited just to things he needs. A "rational" criminal only steals when there is hope of useful gain. Wild picks the Count's pockets when he knows they are empty and steals a corkscrew on the way to the gallows.

The imprisoned Heartfree, stripped of his wealth and separated from his family, consoles himself by comparing the lot of man to that of a child. His soliloquy is a set piece of Stoic wisdom, but it is peculiarly applicable to Wild:

How like the situation of this child is that of everyman! What difficulties in the pursuit of his desires! What insanity in the possession of most, and satiety in those which seem more real and substantial! The delights of most men are as childish and as superficial as that of my little girl; a feather or a fiddle are their pursuits and their pleasures through life, even to their ripest years, if such men may be said to attain any ripeness at all. (p. 116)

Wild has these childish characteristics Heartfree describes. His desires are unlimited, but their fulfillment brings him little real satisfaction. The narrator remarks that the "truest mark of GREATNESS is insatiability" (p. 75). Alexander's tears at having run out of kingdoms to plunder are proof of such greatness, as is Wild's compulsive thieving...
even when he knows there is little to gain. For all his craft and effort Wild meets with little satisfaction. Not only does his career end on the gallows, but he derives small reward from particular criminal endeavors. He loses sixty-five stolen guineas at the gaming table and only manages to recover eighteen pence by waylaying the winner.

After his tantrum following the discovery of Molly Straddle's theft and the Count's doublecross, Wild, like Heartfree, tries to console himself in a soliloquy. He too realizes that the efforts of mortals to attain happiness are often thwarted. He reasons that he should not lament his misfortunes like "a woman or a child," and he concludes that the only real satisfaction a great man can enjoy is "an inward glory" (pp. 82-83). On the surface, Wild's reasoning is a very adult and philosophical response to vicissitude. But as is often the case with Fielding characters, his subsequent actions give the lie to his profession. The pursuit of material wealth has made Wild an unhappy man, yet he concocts a new scheme to extract the remainder of Heartfree's wealth as soon as the chance presents itself.

In other instances Wild perverts conventional adult wisdom. He appears in the posture of a teacher giving lectures on the necessity for moderation and subordination to the social order. Wild calls on Fireblood to perform a murder, and the choleric fellow wants to kill everyone in the coach with the intended victim. Wild objects, and the text reads: "Wild, whose moderation we have before noted, would not permit him." In the previous chapter, however, Wild decided to impeach a gang member who would not go so far in crime as to murder. When Blueskin claims his right to a stolen watch, Wild denies his right on the basis of a peculiar interpretation of the social contract. According to Blue-
skin the watch is his, not Wild's, because the head of a society is appointed only to serve the interests of its members, not his own. Wild answers that a gang needs a leader for its collective safety, but justifies his claim to the watch by asking, "who would be at the head of a gang, unless for his own interest" (p. 155).

These ironic appeals to moderation and subordination emphasize that Wild has no commitment to either of these virtues. He is, as his name implies, a wild man convinced of his right to as many things as he wants regardless of to whom they belong. He can no more learn to curb his desires than he can learn to respect the property of others. His frustration and unhappiness are like the discontent of a spoiled child who cannot remain contented long with each new toy. Heartfree moderates his wants and willingly accepts social restraints. As a result, he has, even in his misfortune, a peace of mind which eludes Wild. He rejects Wild's offer of help in a prison escape which would involve a murder by saying, "There is one thing the loss of which I should deplore infinitely beyond that of liberty and of life also—I mean that of a good conscience, a blessing which he who possesses can never be thoroughly unhappy" (p. 127). Wild's sense of "inward glory" never does bring him adequate consolation for his disappointments.

Wild's sexuality, perhaps more than anything else about him, points to his childish nature. His strong desires are a metaphor for rapaciousness, and Fielding equates his amorous instincts with other appetites.

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31 David L. Evans in "The Theme of Liberty in Jonathan Wild," Papers on Literature and Language, 3 (1967), 302-13, sees a subtle liberty-slavery theme in Jonathan Wild as being more important than the more obvious goodness-greatness theme. Wild has no moral self-control and moves toward physical confinement and bondage to his passions. Heartfree, the honest man, has true liberty by surrendering certain personal interests (e.g. the right to others' lives and property) in observing rules designed to promote the common good. He has spiritual freedom and moves from physical confinement to liberty.
Wild's lust for Mrs. Heartfree's person is equated with the desire "a lusty divine is apt to conceive for the well-dressed sirloin or handsome buttock" (pp. 97-98). Fielding sometimes gives the impression that a strong sex drive is concomitant to a good nature. Such seems the case with Tom Jones and with Betty the chambermaid. Even the grotesque Mrs. Slipslop's lust for the attractive Joseph, because it is understandably human, wins her some sympathy. Wild's lust is particularly vile because it is aroused equally by the beauty of Mrs. Heartfree and the ugliness of Laetitia Snap. Even though Wild can concoct elaborate schemes to defraud the Heartfrees he cannot execute a seduction or even a rape. Fielding gains a calculated effect by giving Wild this clumsiness. It reduces him to the stature of an inexperienced but dirty minded schoolboy, and it shows him as driven by passions he cannot control. The same kind of insatiable desire that draws him to crime draws him to Laetitia. In a mock heroic pose, Fielding praises Wild's skill as a criminal, but the details of the narrative show him as a bungler. Wild's sexual misadventures parallel his public failure. The great manipulator of men is unable to control himself. Laetitia controls Wild because he has "so ungovernable a desire for her person that he would go to any length to satisfy it" (p. 78). His unbridled avarice brings him to the gallows, but his unbridled lust brings him to a worse fate, a hellish marriage.

C.J. Rawson, in a perceptive reading of Jonathan Wild, has noted that Fielding's mock heroic style reduces the sinister villain to a misbehaving schoolboy. He points to Wild's humiliation when his advances to Laetitia Snap are forcibly rejected: "the hot blood of Mr. Wild

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soon began to appear in several little spots on his face, and his flow
blown cheeks to resemble that part which modesty forbids him to turn up
anywhere, but in a public school, after some pedagogue, strong of arm,
hath exercised his talents thereon" (p. 50). In Wild's adventure at
sea, Rawson discovers a plucky determination which has "distinct over-
tones of the schoolboy adventure-story of a later age." Rawson sees
Wild's nonchalance at the gallows as the "gallantry of the schoolboy
hero" and the theft of the corkscrew as a "last prank." These observa-
tions lead him to an interesting but questionable conclusion. He sees
Fielding as an unconscious forerunner of amoral black humorists like Al-
fred Jarry, the author of Ubu Roi, because "there is an element of gen-
ial tolerance, or of delight in the compulsive doings of the clownish
criminal and in the quirkiness of the situations he creates for himself." 33
Fielding does take Wild's vices seriously and the ironic praise of his
"greatness" is a condemnation. Making Wild appear as a schoolboy is part
of Fielding's subtle, but conscious design. It is not a result of a sub-
versive impulse in the author's mind which would make the criminal hero
attractive despite Fielding's professed morality. The black humor of
Ubu Roi does have roots in the eighteenth century, but, as we shall see,
they are in Vathek, not Jonathan Wild.

Jonathan Wild is a satire intended to make its readers change
their ways, but it is not aimed at people so wicked as Wild. Fielding
does not think their conversion is possible. He is trying to reach peo-
ple who place moral consideration aside and admire the achievements of
the great man, be he Alexander or Walpole. To do this he diminishes the
stature of his great man. Wild's actual achievements fall far short of

33Rawson, pp. 186, 203.
the praise lavished on them. He is just a small-time criminal. By making him analogous to a misbehaving child, Fielding further diminishes him.

Fielding employed the same strategy in *Tom Thumb* to ridicule a previous generation's taste for foolish stage heroes. *Tom Thumb*, which was expanded into *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731), burlesques the bombastic diction of heroic drama and physically reduces the noble hero to a midget. The praises and taunts of other characters also liken Tom Thumb to a child. His rival in love calls him a "Worthless Baby," and his king calls him "the little Hero, Giant-killing boy." The play shows more than Fielding's distaste for inflated language, ridiculous metaphors, and foolish plots. In creating Tom Thumb he recognized the childishness of ranting heroes like Tamburlaine and Almanzor. Their impassioned, undisciplined and boasting temperaments are carried to an extreme in Tom Thumb. He brags of his prowess and moves quickly from one emotion to another. While enraptured over his beloved Huncamunca, he kills two bailiffs who present his friend with a tailor's dun. Princess Huncamunca herself is less a fine lady than a sister of Sycorax with uncontrolled appetites and lusts. She can eat two fowls and half a pig at a sitting and is willing to have two husbands at once. *Tom Thumb* and *The Tragedy of Tragedies* mock bad drama by showing that glories of its heroes and heroines are little removed from the vices of unruly children.

By purposely making Jonathan Wild like a small boy, Fielding is exposing the greatness of his villain for what it is—the greed and cunning of an ill-natured child. He is not trying, even unconsciously, to

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render Wild more charming. Fielding, the magistrate, objected to public executions because spectators could be harmfully impressed by criminals' false heroics on the gibbet. By making the worst of men appear as a childish dolt rather than a clever rogue, Fielding can trace Wild's villainy to its source, his original nature. During his schooldays, Wild was nasty and deceitful, but was so in very ordinary ways. Someone like Wild would be present in almost any group of eighteenth- or twentieth-century schoolboys. By insinuating that the adult Wild is still very much a schoolboy, Fielding comments on the banality of evil even in the most wicked. There is nothing in the fictional Wild to elicit even the most reserved admiration.

Fielding's skill as a novelist enabled him to place something of the child in both his benevolent and wicked characters to call attention to their original natures. Fielding's thoughts about children depart from the received opinion of his time. He does not accept the Calvinists' notion that all children are innately depraved because of original sin. At the same time he does not hold the Lockean idea that each child is a tabula rasa. Fielding believes that each child's character is determined by inborn traits and that education cannot significantly alter a child's original nature. He does not judge his characters as good or bad simply because they are like children; original natures are too varied to justify such a distinction. Fielding's attitude toward childlike behavior is analogous to the Augustan attitude toward poetic license expressed in Pope's couplet:

Great Wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true Critics dare not mind.

Fielding condones the childlike impulsiveness of the benevolent man whom he grants the same liberty that Pope would extend to a poetic genius. Pope, however, does not recommend complete license to all poets:

The winged courser, like a generous horse,
Shows most true mettle when you check his course.  

Fielding, likewise, does not recommend that everyone behave like a child. The good of society requires that most people must accept some check on their natural inclinations. But in the next chapter, we shall see how Sterne suggests that everyone might benefit by remaining like a child forever.

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CHAPTER IV

STERNE AND THE "AGE OF PITY"

Parson Adams, as we have seen, is a good man because he is like a child in some ways. He is emotional, and he places no restraints on a passionate disposition to do good for others. Acting on the impulse of his feelings despite his creed of Christian stoicism, Adams possesses a child's spontaneity and exuberance. George Lillo, in The London Merchant, evidenced a distrust of such apparently innocent emotions as pity, but Fielding shared with the latitudinarian clergy of his time the belief that tender feelings are an indispensable trait of the virtuous. R.S. Crane, who argues that the latitudinarians contributed to the popularity of sentimental fiction, sums up their teaching: "there can be no effective benevolence, they declared again and again, that does not spring from the tender emotions of pity and compassion, and so far from suppressing these emotions we ought rather to look upon them as the marks which distinguish men of genuine goodness from those who are merely righteous or just."¹

The heroes of sentimental fiction in the later part of the eighteenth century are indeed people of tender feelings who are easily moved to tears by the misfortunes of others. Harley, the hero of Henry Mac-
kenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), is such a person, and Mackenzie quite explicitly equates the virtues of the good man with the innocent simplicity and tender feelings of a sensitive child. The anonymous narrator who writes Harley's history calls him "a child in the drama of the world," and Harley himself on his deathbed looks forward to entering into "the society of the blessed, wise as angels, with a simplicity of children."²

The vision of childhood that emerges in *The Man of Feeling*, however, is limited and is "sentimental" in the worst sense of the term. Mackenzie sees children almost exclusively as pathetic little creatures who are easily hurt in an uncaring and corrupt world. The passive and overly sensitive Harley is childlike in this way. He lacks the energy and capacity for joy that is so much a part of Abraham Adams. While both men can be touched by the tribulations of their friends, the grave and sedentary Harley could never throw a beloved book into a fire in a moment of empathy with a friend's happiness.

Harley is out of place in adult society largely because he has not outgrown the bashfulness natural to children. The narrator speaks of two kinds of bashfulness; one is "the awkwardness of a booby, which a few steps into the world, will convert into the pertness of a coxcomb," and the other is a "consciousness, which the most delicate feelings produce and the most extensive knowledge cannot always remove" (p. 9). Harley's shy demeanor, of course, is of the latter kind. His anticipation of death as a release into a paradise where the blessed are like children indicates a nostalgia for the simplicity of childhood.³


³Jean H. Hagstrum in his essay, "'Such, Such Were the Joys':
Harley wants to be buried next to his mother, and the narrator, recalling Harley's burial request, remarks: "There are times and places when I am a child at those things" (p. 132).

The nostalgia for childhood that permeates *The Man of Feeling* reflects a desire to escape from the sorrows of adult life. Mackenzie seems to argue that since society is corrupt virtue can only reside in misfits like Harley who preserve the innocent heart of a child. For those who have a distressing knowledge of the world, the company of children provides some comfort. The "Introduction" informs us that the melancholy narrator was often seen playing te-totum with the village boys and girls on a stone in the churchyard. The misanthrope whom Harley meets has a moment's happiness with his host's three-year-old daughter dangling on his knee. His mood is dispersed when a jealous, slightly older sister intrudes, and the man orders her away because "she has woman about her already" (p. 38).

Harley also sees growing up as a fall from grace. In one of the book's most provocative passages, he expresses sympathy for an impractical boy who moons over poetry instead of learning accounts:

Perhaps . . . we now-a-days discourage the romantic turn a little too much. Our boys are prudent too soon. Mistake me not, I do not mean to blame them for want of levity or dissipation; but their pleasures are those of hackneyed vice, blunted to every finer emotion by the repetition of debauch; and their desire of pleasure is warped to the desire of wealth as the means of procuring it. (p. 82)

The Boyhood of the Man of Feeling" included in *Changing Taste in Eighteenth-Century Art and Literature* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1972), p. 49, writes: "The hero's divorce from life, his frightened rejection of London, his longing for death and a grave near his mother's, his tormented fear of the opposite sex, his conception of love as tears and tales of woe, with death and swooning at the slightest physical contact—surely all this suggests the prolongation of boyhood into manhood."
This regret that the young are prudent too early seems a radical departure from the conventional wisdom of the eighteenth century. The above passage, like Gray's "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," looks back toward childhood as an idyllic time free from the trials of adult life. Both Mackenzie and Gray wistfully acknowledge the distance separating childhood and adult life.

Laurence Sterne, on the other hand, is able to penetrate the barrier between adults and the direct experience of a childlike mentality. Like Mackenzie, Sterne sees children as more tender-hearted than adults. Tristram Shandy, recalling the "pleasurable sensation" he felt when his Uncle Toby spared a fly's life, reminds us that he was only ten years old, a time of his life he calls "that age of pity." Trim in praising Toby's generosity says Toby has "a heart as soft as a child for other people" (V, 10). Toby himself speaks of the strong sympathy he felt for the victims of war in his readings as a schoolboy: "Did any one of you shed more tears for Hector? And when king Priam came to the camp to beg his body, and returned weeping back to Troy without it,—you know, brother, I could not eat my dinner" (VI, 34). Tristram remembers the generous feelings of a very early time of his boyhood.

Looking back to the accident of the falling window sash, he says: "I was old enough to have told the story myself,—and young enough to have done it without malignity" (V, 26). Mackenzie and others who followed Sterne showed children as small "men of feeling," but Sterne had a more complete vision of childhood. Tristram, Yorick, Toby, and Trim are essentially children despite their ages. These characters not only have

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4 Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925), p. 88. Subsequent references to Tristram Shandy will be cited in the text by book and chapter.
the exquisite feelings of children, but also their sense of play, their appetite for pleasure, and their active imagination. Sterne questions the unrealistic expectations his century placed on reason, and he misses no chance to mock gravity and decorum. He lived in an age when Lord Chesterfield instructed his nine-year-old son to leave off childish levity and to take on a man's serious bearing.⁵ Behind Sterne's celebration of child-adults lies a conviction that adults are no better, and perhaps worse, equipped to live amid life's mysteries and riddles than are children.

Laurence Sterne, the forty-six-year-old author of *Tristram Shandy* who came to London in 1760, delighted and sometimes outraged society with his levity and whimsey. At least one of his contemporaries saw Sterne as an overgrown child. Boswell in a poem addressed to Sterne, Yorick and Tristram wrote: "Permit me, Doctor, then to show / A certain Genius whom you know / Not old enough to have a Wife, / At different periods of his life."⁶ Thomas Gray enjoyed the childlike levity and exuberance which Sterne brought to his sermons. Writing to Thomas Warton, Gray gave his mental picture of Yorick in the pulpit: "you see him tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of his audience."⁷ This playful side of Sterne may have won him the affection of Boswell and Gray, but it provoked a contrary re-

⁵"You must now commence a different course of life, a different course of studies. No more levity; childish toys and playthings must be thrown aside, and your mind directed to serious objects. What was not unbecoming to a child, would be disgraceful to a youth." Letter LXX in *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son*, ed. Oliver H. Leigh (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., n.d.), II, 398.


⁷Quoted in *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 89.
sponse in many Victorians. Thackeray, for example, in his well-known attack, characterizes Sterne as a childish jester who will do anything to get attention: "[Sterne] never lets his reader alone" and "turns head over heels, or sidles up and whispers a nasty story."

This tendency to see Sterne as a child-adult has persisted among sympathetic biographers and critics in the twentieth century. Wilbur Cross's assessment of Sterne is particularly interesting because it corresponds with what we have seen to be the prevalent eighteenth-century ideas about children: "'Reason,' Sterne once said, 'is half of it sense,' and he thereby described himself. For his was a most abnormal personality. Exceeding sensitive to pleasure and to pain, he gave way to the emotions of the moment, receiving no guidance from reason, for he had none. Himself aware of this, he said variously, 'I generally act out from the first impulse' or 'according as the fly stings.'" A. D. McKillop pays attention to whim and impulse in distinguishing Sterne from other eccentric eighteenth-century men of letters. In Tristram Shandy "the actions of the novelist become unpredictable for the immediate future like the actions of the characters; whim or impulse is raised the second power." Margaret Shaw, while disagreeing with Cross's contention that Sterne had no reason, argues that our ability to enjoy Sterne depends on how much the child is still in us because Sterne himself preserved "the child's keen faculty for enjoyment that in so many of us grows dull with age."

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People living in the eighteenth century also recognized that children loved pleasure. The Calvinists condemned this love as an outright proof of original sin. Even the disciples of Locke and the humanistic tradition of education saw that the love of pleasure could lead to vice. Locke, and others before and after him, saw an advantage in exploiting the child's love of pleasure to make his studies more enjoyable to him and thus to prepare him for the serious business of life. Richard A. Lanham in a recent study of Tristram Shandy argues that Sterne held pleasure itself as the serious business of life. Each man, after all, derives pleasure from his hobby horse. Language cannot always communicate reliably, but it does serve as a play thing for a rhetorician like Walter Shandy. Lanham believes we should admire Tristram, and Sterne himself by implication, "not for his success in reenacting the blooming and buzzing confusion of an absurd world but for his success, as a precocious child in the garden of Western culture, in pleasing himself." 

Laurence Sterne, of course, is not Tristram, Yorick or any other of his characters, and it would be a mistake to base any conclusions about Sterne's characters on the author's personality. Sterne, how-

12 Lanham, p. 126.
13 Overton Philip James in The Relation of Tristram Shandy to the Life of Sterne (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1966), tackles the problem of separating fiction and biography in Tristram Shandy. He concludes that Sterne modeled Yorick's character on his own so as to free Tristram to write in character. Lodwick Hartley in "'Tis a Picture of Myself': The Author in Tristram Shandy," Southern Humanities Review, 4 (1970), p. 313, states: "Like Rousseau, he [Sterne] delightfully exploited his private life both as a man and artist. But while the great Frenchman shouted from the housetops, 'I am different,' the Yorkshire parson gaily sent about showing why all people, including himself, are different by dramatizing the popular philosophy of his day."
ever, liked to pose as Yorick and encouraged people to see him as being like his light-hearted fictional parson. Yorick, in the first book of *Tristram Shandy* appears as a man who is a child in many ways. It is Yorick's careless gaiety, Tristram tells us, which has prevented his rise in the church. Although Yorick is twenty-six when first introduced, he "knew just about as well how to steer his course in the world as a romping, unsuspicuous girl of thirteen" (I, 11). He is an enemy to the affectation of gravity, and he lacks the prudence to restrain himself from laughing at it in company. Yorick is on the side of spontaneous feeling and he disdains gravity because its essence is "design, and consequently deceit" (I, 11). He refuses to adopt a solemn bearing for the sake of appearing to go about life as a serious business. He remains like a child in that he does not assume the polite forms of clerical life and does not restrain his natural feelings. His friend Eugenius speaks to Yorick on this point the way a tutor might speak to a child. He cautions Yorick on the consequences his levity and want of discretion might have on his career. Yorick responds to these repeated warnings of what might happen in the future like a frolicsome child who lives only for the moment. He answers wordlessly "with a hop, skip, and a jump at the end of it" (I, 12). Tristram, after relating Eugenius's advice to Yorick, goes on to warn his reader of the dangers a man like Yorick faces. He chooses to address the reader as "dear lad" as if this advice were particularly relevant for young people.

Sterne shares Yorick's distaste for gravity and solemnity, and these qualities are under attack throughout *Tristram Shandy*. Doctor Slop is the apotheosis of gravity and solemnity who wanders into the playful world of Shandy Hall like an adult spoil sport. Cross sees
Sterne's treatment of Slop as being almost satirical.\footnote{Cross, p. 523.} Sterne, however, ridicules Slop in the spirit of a schoolboy poking fun at a humorless and pompous adult. Tristram seems to assume we share his feelings toward Slop by the pains he takes in giving us a vivid picture of the accident which strips Slop of his dignity and leaves him "with the broadest part of him sunk about twelve inches deep in the mire" (II, 10).

Slop takes himself too seriously and cannot enjoy life. As Walter and Toby prepare to amuse themselves by listening to Trim read Yorick's sermon, Slop is uneasy and expects an attack on his church. He has no use for Yorick's levity and criticizes the parson's "snappish manner" toward the sermon's text and runs on in praise of the Inquisition.

Tristram pokes fun at gravity in others besides Slop. He enjoys telling the story of the hot chestnut in Phutatorius's breeches. Tristram also mocks the bows and grave good breeding of the French commissary who duns him in Lyons. He especially enjoys taunting grave readers who are not amused by his levity. He frequently refers to the beards, the trappings of a wise maturity that such readers are likely to have. This figurative beard pulling and the flippant tone of his remarks suggest that Tristram is a young boy lashing out at the constraints his elders have placed upon him. In defending his proposed chapter on button-holes, he tells those who might object that he is going to do just what he wants and have a good time: "You gentry with great beards—look as grave as you will—I'll make merry work with my button-holes" (IV, 15). He is not merely apologetic for playing the wag. At the end of the book, he announces an impish intention to continue such abuse in subsequent volumes: "I'll have another pluck at your beards, and lay open a story to
the world you little dreamed of."

All the theories of education we have examined sought to teach children to control their irrational impulses. Infant swaddling bands, which were still used in the early eighteenth century, represented an extreme attempt to prohibit even the child's random bodily movements. Laughter is a kind of exuberant outburst, and as such it was suspect. Chesterfield warned his son that "there is nothing so illiberal, so ill-bred, as audible laughter" and advised that "laughter is easily restrained, by a very little reflection." Chesterfield disdained laughter because it indicates a breach of self-control, and self-control was the primary virtue that the English gentleman had to acquire. Free indulgence in laughter, Tristram argues, will "drive the gall and other bitter juices from the gall-bladder, liver, and sweet-breads of his majesty's subjects" (IV, 22). Tristram's argument here is placed in physiological terms, but what he is really writing about is the psychological damage done to the spirit by gravity and inhibitions. The true wise man is not solemn; he is one who gives free vent to his wit. In his eccentrically placed Preface, Tristram denies the conventional notion that wit must be thoroughly subjugated by judgment. This erroneous idea, he charges, is "one of the many vile impositions which gravity and grave folks have to answer for hereafter." Even "the great Locke," he admits, was "bubbled" on this point (III, 20).

After defending laughter and Shandeism in the last chapter of

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15 Chesterfield, I, 57-58.

book four, Tristram indulges in a fanciful speculation: "Was I left, like Sancho Panza, to choose my kingdom, it should not be maritime—or a kingdom of blacks to make a penny of;—no, it should be a kingdom of hearty laughing subjects." There is an element of the Peter Pan fantasy in this wish. In rejecting the first two possible kingdoms, Tristram is rejecting the serious business of adult life, the exercise of power, and the pursuit of profit. Ruling the first two kingdoms would be work; ruling the laughing kingdom would be play. Tristram's wish expresses a desire to live in a realm where the joys of childhood will last forever. Yorick in A Sentimental Journey feels the same longing as he joins the festivities of the French peasant family in which old and young become equals in joy and mirth. In suggesting that adults would be happiest if they would preserve children's capacity for joy, Sterne is a forerunner of the romantic poets. Blake's Songs of Innocence give a glimpse of the merry kingdom. In "The Ecchoing Green," an old man looking on children at play is able to "laugh away care," and a child's voice in "Laughing Song" issues an invitation to "Come live and be merry join with me." Tristram Shandy's convoluted narrative structure with its digressions and sudden flights of fancy appears to be the product of a whimsical intellect. Regardless of the apparent chaos of Tristram Shandy, the narrative is carefully controlled and structured as has often been pointed out. That Sterne wishes us to think otherwise is signifi-

17Margaret Shaw, p. 18, writes of Sterne's fascination with Cervantes: "as if prolonging a fantasy of adolescence, he constantly saw himself as the hero of this story, attacking inhibitions of his age as rashly as the knight of La Mancha tilted at windmills."


19Lodwick Hartley, Laurence Sterne in the Twentieth Century (Chap-
cant, however. Tristram says "my pen--it governs me, I govern not it" (VI, 6). In describing his method of composition, Tristram admits "I begin with writing the first sentence--and trusting to Almighty God for the second" (VIII, 2). Tristram writes with the caprice of a person who lacks mental discipline and who is diverted from his purpose by the attractions of a stray idea. He has what modern educators call a short attention span, a trait Locke also recognized in children. In Concerning Education he saw a need to "teach the mind to get the mastery over itself; and to be able upon choice to take itself off from the hot pursuit of one thing, and set itself upon another with facility and delight; or at any time to shake off its sluggishness, and vigorously employ itself about what reason, or the advice of another shall direct." Tristram's mind is hardly sluggish, but his turns of thought are certainly not directed by conventional logic or the dictates of authoritative literary critics.

Tristram frequently offers glimpses of himself as an unruly and energetic child. At one point he confesses to the reader: "I have carried myself towards thee in such a fanciful guise of careless disport, that right sore am I ashamed now to intreat thy leniency seriously" (IV, 22). At another he confides to himself, and to us, how he writes at his desk like an excited and messy schoolboy: "dropping thy pen--spurting thy ink about thy table and thy books--as if thy pen and thy ink, thy books and furniture cost thee nothing" (III, 28). Tristram's acknow-


ledgement that he will tell his story his own way may be an important eighteenth-century manifesto of the expressive theory of art, but it is couched in the language of a wilful schoolboy, fed up with rhetorical dogma: "I should beg Mr. Horace's pardon;—for in writing what I have set about, I shall confine myself neither to his rules, nor to any man's rules that ever lived" (I, 4). English schoolboys in the eighteenth century were not a docile lot. Oppressed by the harsh discipline of public schools, they often rebelled against authority in violent rioting. George III, on meeting some boys from Eton, asked them, "Have you had any mutinies lately, eh, eh."21

Tristram's fondness for teasing the reader is another of his childish traits. He toys with our curiosity about his relationship with the mysterious Jenny. He also plays with our expectations by having Toby begin to speak a sentence which is interrupted by a digression several chapters long. He taunts the hypothetical reader he calls "Madam" for not reading with enough care to see the absurdly subtle clue which shows his mother was not a Papist. While discussing children's love of "power and dominion," Locke claims that children "would have their desires submitted to by others; they contend for a ready compliance from all about them."22 Locke's comment aptly describes Tristram's demands on his readers. Tristram desires our complete attention and delights in the power this concession brings him. He admits of this power in making a hollow promise not to abuse it: "'tis enough to have thee in my power—but to make use of the advantage which the fortune of the pen has now gained over thee would be too much." It is interesting that just

21 Aries, pp. 318-19.

22 The Educational Writings of John Locke, p. 207.
after this passage a voice, presumably a reader's, addresses Tristram as follows: "So put on, my brave boy! and make the best of thy way to Boulogne" (VII, 7). Just as Tristram wants liberty, he also wants an audience for his antics. In this respect, he is like a child wishing to show off before admiring adults.23

Tristram is also fond of teasing his audience with sexual innuendo. He lulls his reader into accepting a suggestive meaning and then accuses him, or more often her, of prurience in misreading his intention.

The short noses of the Shandy males and the magnificent nose of the stranger in Slawkenbergius's tale may be obvious euphemisms for sexual inadequacy in the one and sexual prowess in the other, but Tristram protests: "where the word nose occurs—I declare, by that word I mean a nose, and nothing more or less" (III, 31). This kind of teasing has an adolescent character. Tristram, despite his disclaimer of innocence, knows all the "dirty" words, and he knows how people's minds work.

While pretending to be innocent, he playfully exploits verbal ambiguity. Richard Lanham has pointed out that Tristram's "aim is not sexual titillation but primal, childlike verbal pleasure, and the first is primarily the means to the second."24 Lanham's characterization of Tristram's verbal pleasure as childlike can be carried one step further. He discusses sexual matters in a disguised language designed to tease and ultimately to deceive censorious eavesdroppers. The same impulse occurs in children when they use a special code like pig latin to discuss for-

23A.R. Towers, in a slightly different vein, compares Tristram to a child story teller in "Sterne's Cuck and Bull Story," ELH 24 (1957), 17: "One might compare Tristram as narrator to a clever but weak schoolboy in the company of young ruffians. Since he cannot escape the attention of these real or potential bullies, he does the next best thing: he ingratiates himself by playing the buffoon."

24Lanham, p. 119.
hidden subjects or when they invent special terms to replace taboo
words.

There is, moreover, something adolescent about all the sexuality
in Sterne's writings. There is more concern with the anticipation of
fulfillment than with fulfillment itself. Sterne in the Journal to
Eliza assumes the role of an older man in love with a younger woman,
but he seems more like a young virgin in awe of consummating his love.
Safely separated from the beloved, he can indulge his romantic fantas­
ies in love letters he knows she may never read. Yorick in A Sentimen­
tal Journey is drawn to women but is reluctant to carry out his physi­
cal yearnings. He confesses that he has "been in love with one princess
or another almost all [his/7 life,"25 and he looks on women with a boy­
ish mixture of desire and reverence. He moons over the Parisian shop­
keeper's wife, but he retreats from a possible consummation of his flir­
tation with Madame de L***. If he did indeed follow up on his flirta­tion with the Marquisina di F***, the "connection" that gave him "more
pleasure" than any other he made in Italy, her persistence was the
cause as the conversation after their encounter in the doorway sug­
gests: "And I made six efforts, replied she, to let you enter—I wish
to heaven you would make a seventh, said I—With all my heart, said she,
making room—Life is too short to be long about the forms of it" (SJ,
pp. 57-58).

As we have seen, Tristram is an enemy to gravity. His refusal
to write by the established rules is a violation of literary decorum,
and his playfully antagonistic attitude towards his reader is, in its

25 A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy, ed. Ian Jack
way, a violation of social decorum. He presents himself as a writer who is controlled by childish caprice and who does not care what the world thinks. The need to restrain such impulsiveness, as we have seen, was part of the eighteenth century's education doctrine. The Methodists, like earlier Calvinists, saw original sin in the child's whimsical desires and antics. Educators in the tradition of Ascham and Locke called for a program in which the child's reason would learn to govern impulse and passion. Even Rousseau was committed to the same end although he recommended more indirect means for achieving it. Sterne, however, questions both the possibility and the desirability of having reason fulfill all the offices expected of it. Perhaps Tristram speaks for Sterne in his reference to "the weakness and imbecility of human reason" (V, 5).

First of all, Sterne does not regard reason, or judgment as an effective monitor of the passions or other irrational impulses. The sermon, attributed to Yorick and included in book two of Tristram Shandy, grants that conscience would be a reliable moral guide if only the mind could detect all the hidden influences at work in rational deliberations. Yorick fears that this cannot be:

> Did this never happen; or was it certain that self-love would never hang the least bias upon the judgment;--or that the little interests below could rise up and perplex the faculties of our upper regions, and encompass them about with clouds and thick darkness;--Could no such thing as favour and affectation enter this sacred Court--Did Wit disdain to take a bribe in it;--or was ashamed to shew its face as an advocate for an unwarrantable enjoyment: Or, lastly, were we assured that Interest stood always unconcerned whilst the cause was hearing--and that Passion never got into the judgment-seat, and pronounced sentence in the stead of Reason, which is supposed always to preside and determine upon the case. (II, 17)

Tristram is aware of this problem in regard to the workings of his own
mind. He tells us he is reluctant to enter heated disputes over religion and politics because "so often has my judgment deceived me in my life, that I always suspect it right or wrong" (V, 11).

Sterne doubts that reason can function as an impartial policeman keeping watch over the passions because he shares Locke's awareness that the mind and the body are intimately involved. Tristram uses the simile of a jerkin and a jerkin's lining to demonstrate the relationship of the mind and the body: "rumple the one,--you rumple the other." Locke in Concerning Human Understanding also uses a simile to show the powerful sway that emotions can have over thought: "... sometimes a boisterous passion hurries our thoughts as a hurricane does our bodies, without leaving us the liberty of thinking on other things." Sterne pursues the implications of this idea further than Locke does, however. In the practical matter of child rearing, Locke stresses that the child be taught "to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations, and purely follow what reason directs as best." He also advocates the development of a mental discipline that will discourage listless daydreaming and that will aid the young scholar in concentrating on his studies without distraction.

Sterne's writings convey an implicit disagreement with Locke on these issues. Whereas Locke largely disapproves of daydreaming and imagination in children, Sterne gives a hearty endorsement to these pro-

26 Ernest Tuveson in "Locke and Sterne" in Reason and the Imagination, Studies in the History of Ideas, ed. J.A. Mazzeo (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1960), p. 260, sums up Locke's influence on Sterne by noting that both men know how "sense impressions, emotional drives and reflection are all not separate operations of a soul and body, but ultimately components of an organic process."

27 Quoted by Cash in "The Lockean Psychology of Tristram Shandy" to argue that Sterne "did not contradict Locke's psychology when he created a narrator whose thoughts were often prompted by emotions," p. 132.
pensities which are present in his child-adult characters. Sterne's treatment of the imagination will be considered more fully later in this chapter. As for Locke's stress on mental discipline, Sterne doubts that anyone has the ability to concentrate exclusively on what he or she is doing at the moment. As Charles Goodin points out, Sterne, in having Tristram accuse his mother of not keeping her mind on what she was doing at his begetting, questions whether or not such concentration is possible. The innumerable distractions of immediate experience cannot be instantaneously processed by reason which depends on a logical train of ideas passing through the mind one at a time.28

Sterne also celebrates the impulsiveness of his characters as the example of Yorick in A Sentimental Journey will show. Early in the account of his travels the parson says of himself, "I generally act from the first impulse" (SJ, p. 22), and the description is certainly accurate. His decision to travel abroad was made on the spur of the moment. Yorick trusts his impulses because he trusts his feelings. He reacts to others on emotional promptings rather than on rational considerations. When taken with the beauty of the lady in the coach yard at Calais he remarks: "When the heart flies out before the understanding, it saves the judgment a world of pains" (SJ, p. 25). Locke was highly critical of this kind of impulsiveness. In Concerning Education he asserts that the root of all vicious actions is the natural tendency to indulge immediate pleasures and to avoid immediate pains without forethought. One of Yorick's actions, at first, seems to be a vindication of this idea. After making an apostrophe to charity, he refuses to give alms to the monk who suddenly appears at his inn. Despite this initial

niggardliness, however, Yorick's innately generous feelings triumph. He is moved finally, not by rational considerations, but by the promptings of his heart. Yorick is not a man who believes that the passions need to be governed by reason. The lesson for young people in *The London Merchant* is that Barnwell got into trouble because he gave way to the seemingly innocent emotion of pity and thus opened the way for bestial lust. Yorick realizes that his sentimental feelings for women are closely akin to sexual feelings, but he sees no danger in this association: "If nature has so wove her web of kindness, that some threads of love and desire are entangled with the piece—must the whole web be rent in drawing them out" (*SJ*, p. 94).

The character of Walter Shandy is a key element in Sterne's argument showing the limitations of reason. Walter is the author of spurious, but painstakingly logical systems designed to understand the world and to govern his conduct as a parent. His obsessions with erudite authorities and his habit of distorting evidence to fit his theories provide Sterne with the opportunity to mock the absurdities of scholasticism.29 Sterne, however, does not use Walter solely to make fun of outdated scholasticism, for the elder Shandy is also a parody of the rational eighteenth-century adult. He is an extreme opponent of passion and emotion and calls for the strict government of the irrational parts of the self. Walter as a parent and educator is concerned with the proper process for preparing his son for adult life. He believes that birth trauma damages the infant's cerebellum or the seat of his understanding—this is why "so many of our best heads are not better than a puzzled skein of silk,—all perplexity, all confusion within-side" (II, 19).

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Although Walter devotes more attention to the details of his son's birth and rearing than most eighteenth-century gentry fathers did, he shares a belief, common in his age, that children are creatures who must be saved, molded or changed radically if they are to become successful adults. The disasters surrounding Tristram's begetting, birth, and christening compound the difficulty of this task. Walter's efforts to write and implement the *Tristra-paedia* are doomed to failure because what Walter sees as the perplexity and confusion in the mind of the traumatized infant, Sterne sees as the inescapable fate of all men. Tristram, after telling a reader "madam, we live amongst riddles and mysteries" goes on to say "even the clearest and most exalted understandings amongst us find ourselves puzzled and at a loss in almost every cranny of nature's works: so that this, like a thousand other things, falls out for us in a way, which tho' we cannot reason upon it—yet we find the good of it, may it please your reverences and your worships—and that's enough for us" (IV, 17). Walter, with his systematic theories about names and noses, is no better able to understand the world than a newborn child.

Even though Walter advocates the adult ideal of reasoned government of the self, he too acts at times, like an impulsive child. Tristram's father goes to absurd lengths to impose controls on his emotional outbursts. Walter admires Ernulphus, who sat down at his leisure to compose "fit forms of swearing suitable to all cases" (III, 10), which he could keep handy when the need for them arose. Swearing, for most people, has always been an occasion to give way to emotion with no forethought, yet Walter would like to rationalize and control what is by nature the most spontaneous of human behavior. Lord Chesterfield, a master of self-control, assuming that his son would need only scant coun-
sel on swearing, told him that swearing "is as silly and as illiberal as it is wicked." Tristram may not be given to swearing but he reacts to vexation with spontaneous outbursts nonetheless. After mistakenly tossing a page of his manuscript into the fire, Tristram recounts how tossing his wig in the air "with all imaginable violence" gave him "such immediate ease" (IV, 17).

Walter also feels that the sexual passions, which are the most dangerous of all passions, need to be kept under a close restraint. He regards lust as the cause of "every evil and disorder in the world" (IX, 32) since the time of Adam. A.R. Towers rightly explains Walter's contempt for sex as the total distrust of the area of human experience that falls least under the sway of reason. This fear of sexuality even prompts Walter to utter "grave" sentiments more befitting Dr. Slop. He warns Toby not to let Widow Wadman look into Rabelais, Scarron, or Don Quixote because "They are all books which excite laughter; and thou knowest dear Toby, that there is no passion so serious as lust" (VIII, 34). Walter is fond of using the metaphor borrowed from Hila- i on the hermit that likens the mind and the body to an ass and its ri- der. Sterne chooses this terminology to parody the more conventional metaphor of the horse and rider. As is the case with Ernulphus's book of fit forms for swearing, Sterne is portraying Walter's attempts to keep the passions in check as a comic obsession. Tristram speaks in a mocking tone while differentiating Walter's ass from his own innocent hobby-horse: "—But for my father's ass—oh! mount him—mount him—mount him—(that's three times, is it not?)—mount him not:—'tis a

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30 Chesterfield, I, 130.
beast concupiscent—and foul befall the man, who does not hinder him from kicking" (VIII, 31).

Sterne uses Walter to poke fun at educational theorists offering pat systems for turning boys into men. The elder Shandy fears that many people grow up without acquiring the skills they should have mastered as children. He harangues Yorick with a list of worthies who did not complete what should be a child's studies until middle life. The parson is surprised to hear that a "Northwest passage to the intellectual world" (V, 42) could be implemented if only children were properly drilled in auxiliary verbs which permit their minds to entertain new propositions, speculations and hypotheses. He plans to have Tristram conjugate every word in the dictionary because it is the surest method of "opening a child's head" (VI, 2). Walter's obsession with logic leads him to believe that a child's mind is some rational machine needing only the right fuel to set it in motion. Sterne does not contradict Locke's notion that the human mind at birth is a blank slate, but as Howard O. Brogan points out, Sterne believes that the way in which that slate is filled up cannot be precisely controlled. Tristram's mind has not been formed by the never finished Tristre-paedie's systematic exercises, but by chance experience and random associations.32

Walter is impressed by child prodigies who reason like men while still in their cradles. He and Yorick exchange a series of anecdotes about the precocity of great men which concludes with the example of Sipsius, who composed a work on his first day of life. Toby's remark, "They should have wiped it up and said no more about it" (VI, 2), comes

as a sensible rejoinder. Walter himself seems to realize that an opposite phenomenon, the adult who remains as child, is much more common. Why else would he pay such attention to childish actions in enumerating the things which the perfect tutor should not do: "He shall neither strike, or pinch or tickle,—or bite, or cut his nails, or hawk, or spit, or snuff, or drum with his feet or fingers in company;—nor (according to Erasmus) shall he speak to anyone in making water, nor shall he point to carrion or excrement" (VI, 5).

Walter may not be guilty of such breaches of decorum, but he is like an impulsive child. Despite all his talk about reason, he does not really have self-control. 33 While Walter is "one of the most regular men in everything he did, whether 'twas matter of business, or matter of amusement" (I, 4), he himself is regulated by his fixed ideas and theories. Hypothetical speculation is Walter's hobby-horse, and hobby-horses are after all a child's plaything, no matter who rides them.

Tristram defends his own and everybody else's right to ride the one of their choice, but he attaches a warning: "When a man gives himself up to the government of a ruling passion,—or, in other words, when his Hobby-Horse grows headstrong, farewell cool reason and fair discretion" (II, 5). In Walter's case, ironically, reason and logic have become ruling passions. Walter's ideas on the influence of Christian names began as an intellectual pasttime but ended as a compulsion "to move both heaven and earth, and twist and torture everything in nature, to support

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33Michael V. DePorte in Nightmares and Hobbyhorses: Swift, Sterne, and Augustan Ideas of Madness (San Marino, Cal.: Huntington Library, 1974), p. 123, has pointed to the psychological determinism that Sterne found to be implicit in Locke's chapter on the association of ideas. After Walter's fixed ideas take possession of his mind, he loses control of his behavior. For this reason he is compelled to hurt his brother's feelings by bringing up Aunt Dinah's elopement as a proof for his theory of names.
Walter is stubborn and at times spiteful in a childish way. He is petty in drawing up and enforcing the laying-in provisions of his marriage agreement. Tristram tactfully comments on his father's obduracy on the issue: "Tis known by the name of perseverence in a good cause,—and of obstinacy in a bad one" (I, 17). Walter's hobbyhorse is the cause of his contrariness. He is, as Tristram tells us, someone who looks "upon everything in a light very different from all man kind" (III, 12). While this stubbornness is not a virtue in Walter, he avoids the solemn joylessness that taints Dr. Slop. He loves oratory and his eloquence is a form of play bringing him pleasure. When teasing Toby about not knowing "the right end of a woman from the wrong," Walter is like an adolescent badgering a younger brother who is still ignorant of the facts of life. The frustration of trying to communicate his ideas and hypotheses to Toby bring Walter to the brink of childish tantrum. On one such occasion he leaps from his chair, walks about in agitation and finally bites into his wife's satin pin cushion to avoid uttering a curse. At other times, a childlike outburst of spontaneous fellow feeling for Toby quells his vexation. Tristram, in recalling his own boyhood, speaks of his generous and sympathetic feelings as traits of that "age of pity" (II, 12). Once, after raging over the foolishness of Toby's military hobbyhorse, Walter is "penetrated ... to his heart" by the look on Toby's good-natured face. The sudden display of emotion which follows brings Walter the same ease that wig tossing brings the impulsive Tristram. Walter in his efforts to make sense of experience with his logical systems and his efforts to subdue his pas-

34 See Lanham, pp. 72-79.
sions aspires to the ideal of the thoroughly rational adult. He does not succeed because he still is too much a child. His doomed attempts to turn whims into hypotheses and to suppress his emotions show that the ideal to which he aspires is both unattainable and mistaken.

Sterne, as we have seen, questions whether reason can, or even should, restrain impulses and passion. He also assigns positive value to unrestrained imagination. His characters become happier people by creating fantasies and by indulging in daydreaming and make-believe. In the last chapter we saw how Parson Adams's active imagination added excitement to his life and enhanced his ability to feel for others. Other eighteenth-century writers made a less sanguine appraisal of imagination than did Fielding and Sterne. Swift, for example, saw un-Hettered imagination as a source of madness. In Johnson's Rasselas, the astronomer who at first amuses himself with the fantasy that he can control the weather eventually loses all contact with reality. The educational theorists examined in the first chapter distrusted imagination and urged that the child be taught to keep his imagination in check along with his appetites and passions. Locke and Chesterfield both discourage listless daydreaming and wool gathering. The bias against romance literature as something that draws the child's thoughts away from the real world dates back at least to Roger Ascham. Locke cites the dangers involved in allowing children to listen to ghost stories and fairy tales. Sarah Fielding's The Governess offers an apology for including giants and magic in a moral fable because such fantastic things could make a child miss the point. In Emile, Rousseau raised the same objection about the talking animals in LaFontaine's fables. All of these

35 See DePorte, Nightmares and Hobbyhorses, pp. 71-72.
educational theorists assumed that children have active imaginations and feared that indulging in fantasy would have undesirable consequences.

Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim benefit from their active imaginations which enable them to become absorbed in the make-believe world of their miniature sieges. Their retirement allows them to enjoy a second childhood, and they are the most childlike of Sterne's characters. Their responses to Yorick's sermon are analogous to the responses which educators suspected children would have to fairy tales. The mention of the watch tower turns their minds from the sermon's argument to considerations of military life just as surely as the mention of a giant's castle would divert the attention of a child. Sterne, however, realizes that while Toby and Trim's imagination inhibits their understanding of the sermon's logic, it brings about a different kind of moral understanding. An allusion to the ravages of war spurs Trim's imagination to assail his mind with vivid images of human suffering. Walter is moved by Trim's emotion, but he has to remind the corporal that "this is not a history, -- 'tis a sermon thou art reading" (II, 17). Parson Adams has the same kind of emotional response to stories because his imagination makes him a direct witness to the events described. When Trim reads of the "helpless victim" he does not merely think of his brother Tom; he actually sees him languishing under the tortures of the Inquisition.

Sterne recognizes that the imagination has a key role in the experience of sympathy. Kenneth MacLean points to a similarity between Sterne and Adam Smith on this point. In his Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759) Smith claimed that imagination, not the senses, creates

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36 Kenneth MacLean, "Imagination and Sympathy: Sterne and Adam Smith," Journal of the History of Ideas, 10 (1949), 399-410.
images in the mind which trigger sympathetic feelings. People are moved by such feelings because they tend to substitute the image of themselves for the sufferer in their minds. Smith also felt that this kind of imagination was most active in the "weakest bodies" and was particularly common in women. Smith might have well included children with women in this category because Chesterfield was certainly not the only eighteenth-century man to consider women as "children of a larger growth." MacLean then argues that Sterne is ironic about sentiment because he realizes there is something selfish about displays of sympathy which pleasantly excite the emotions without bringing an obligation to act. Sterne, however, is not an enemy of pleasure. Lanham makes the point that pleasure and virtue are closely connected in Sterne's thinking: "The root of the ethic of fellow-feeling in Tristram Shandy is indeed a spontaneous goodness in the heart of man. But that is not all that is at the heart of man. Self and desire share the place and must be satisfied. What satisfies is pleasure." Sterne, as we have seen, associates childhood with kind-hearted feelings. Perhaps the reason why children are good is that they are able to be happy.

Sterne's childlike adults all have strong imaginations. The promptings of Yorick's imagination exert a greater power over his actions than does his reason. When he is confronted with the prospect of imprisonment in the Bastille, he responds like a stoic. The "conceit" of his "reasoning" convinces him that the hardships of the Bastille are only illusions that a philosopher can see beyond. Yet after he hears the caged starling repeatedly shriek "I can't get out," Yorick's imagi-

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37 MacLean, pp. 407-409.
38 Lanham, p. 85.
oration conjures up a vivid picture of the miseries of confinement. The shriek, he claims, "overthrew all my systematic reasonings." Sitting down to contemplate the misery that awaits him, he says "I gave full scope to my imagination." Yorick's imagination serves him better than his reason does in this case. The failure to be resigned to possible hardships may be undignified and childish, but Yorick's gentle temperament is ill-suited to prison life. As long as he thinks otherwise he is deceiving himself. In other instances Yorick's active imagination provides a release from difficulties he is actually confronting. He is able to forget his worries over his passport by picking up a copy of Much Ado About Nothing. While reading the play he is able to "transport" himself from his chair to Sicily. Yorick admits that he welcomes this kind of escape: "when my way is too rough for my feet, or too steep for my strength, I get off it, to some velvet path which fancy has scattered over with rosebuds of delights; and having taken a few turns in it, come back strengthen'd and refresh'd—. When evils press sore upon me, and there is no retreat in this world, then I take a new course—I leave it—" (SJ, p. 87). During these forays into the illusionary world of literature, Yorick immerses himself in the sorrow of others and once again feels the splendid sympathy he experienced as a child. He weeps for the characters of the Aeneid just as Toby did when a boy. Yorick can see the shade of Dido in his imagination and it moves him to say "I lose the feelings for myself in hers—and in those affections which were wont to make me mourn for her when I was at school" (SJ, p. 87).

Tristram Shandy also has an active imagination, and he implies that this is one reason for his digressive method. He opens a chapter with a frank admission: "I have a strong propensity in me to begin this chapter very nonsensically, and I will not baulk my fancy" (I, 23). The en-
suing flight wends its way from Momus's glass, to the planet Mercury, to methods of reading a man's character in his evacuations, and to portrait-painting. The happiest interlude in Tristram's life is the time he spends on the plains of Montpelier with its piping and fiddling peasants and the "nut-brown maid," Nanette. He describes it as a place of youth and exuberance where with "every step the judgment is surprised by the imagination." Tristram looks forward to composing his next volume in a place where his imagination can have free rein "in this clear climate of fantasy and perspiration, where every idea, sensible and insensible, gets vent" (VIII, 1). Tristram's imagination permits him to enjoy himself and to feel sympathy for other beings. His child-like capacity for make-believe allows him to transform the world into a magical place. He diverts himself in Lyons by carrying on a conversation with an overworked ass. Through imagination he can change himself into someone else. Thinking about Uncle Toby, he almost becomes Uncle Toby: "For my uncle Toby's amours running all the way in my head, they had the same effect on me as if they had been my own--I was in the most perfect state of bounty and good-will" (IX, 24).

Tristram's book is intended to instruct as well as to delight us; he wants to educate his readers' imaginations so they can better enjoy life. Tristram frequently writes about his designs on the reader's imagination: "I . . . do all that lies in my power to keep his imagination as busy as my own" (II, 12); "I would go fifty miles on foot . . . to kiss the hand of that man whose generous heart will give up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands--be pleased he knows not why, and cares not wherefore" (III, 12). Tristram is asking us to become like himself, to eschew gravity, and to give fancies and impulses their vent. If we cannot conjure up a "clear conception" of
the garden where Toby spent "so many of his delicious hours," Tristram tells us the fault lies not with him but with our "imagination" (VI, 21).

Toby and Trim's imaginations also help them to overcome the burden of their misfortunes. As invalided soldiers both men are excluded from the mainstream of adult life. Trim was wounded long before Toby and had given up his place in his regiment to become a valet. Both men have been forced into a premature retirement which provides them with no opportunity for purposeful activity. They are in middle life, but they share the lot of elderly men, whose active careers are finished, and young boys, whose careers have not begun. Tristram, incidentally, refers to old age as a time of "second childishness" (II, 19). Trim and Toby have become children again in their efforts to turn the empty hours of retirement into "delicious" hours. Like children who play with toy soldiers, Toby and Trim in their minds are able to transform their bowling green and garden into the battlefields of Europe.

The sexual immaturity of Uncle Toby and his servant makes them seem all the more like children. Toby's emasculating wound has left him like a pre-adolescent who is not interested in the opposite sex. His fascination with military engineering is a substitute for sexual expression. When boys become interested in girls, they let their toy soldiers gather dust. Adult sexual passions often lead to vexing problems, but Toby's alternate passion for military lore brings him peace of mind that Towers characterizes as "the serenity of a happy child." Towers recognizes that Toby's fascination with military affairs replaces sexuality and notes how Sterne has "regularly sexualized and feminized" the nomenclature and descriptions of Toby's fortifications.39 With regard to wo-

39Towers, p. 21.
men, Toby has the bashfulness and modesty of a little boy. He has no idea of the Widow Wadman's predatory guile. According to Tristram, Toby looked in that lady's eye "with as much innocency of heart, as ever child looked into a raree-show-box" (VIII, 24). If he had not been tricked, he would not have looked at all because he tells Walter that looking straight into a woman's eye is "as bad as talking bawdy" (IX, 3). Trim has a stronger libido than Toby does, but Trim's sexual feelings are more infantile than adult as his encounter with the young Beguine shows. She feeds him in bed and changes his dressing, and he enjoys being mothered. When her massaging hands move higher up on his injured leg, he is surprised by the sudden passion he feels. Tristram does not say what happened after Trim seized her hand, but Trim is too devoted to Toby, his master and playfellow, to become a woman's constant lover. After the incident with Bridget on the broken bridge, Trim quickly returns to Toby.

Trim is even more childlike than Toby. He loves his outlandish Montero cap the way a child loves his most treasured toy. Even though no one else would value such a cap, Trim ingenuously uses it as his wager in disputes where he is convinced he is in the right. It is for him the most precious thing he has to give. Tristram, in his fond memories of Trim, refers patronizingly to the corporal's love for his cap: "how would I cherish thee! thou should'st wear thy Montero-cap every hour of the day, and every day of the week,—and when it was worn out, I would purchase thee a couple like it" (VI, 25). Trim's behavior is frequently that of a well-intentioned but thoughtlessly impulsive child. When he cuts up Walter's favorite boots to make siege mortars for Toby, Walter cannot stay angry for long. Walter also loves Trim as he would a little boy. While making a point in support of his theory about auxiliary verbs,
Walter quite naturally addresses Trim as a surrogate child. Trim is always eager for attention. He loves to hold the floor either by reading a sermon, executing the manual of arms, or reciting his catechism, and to receive admiration from his audience for his efforts. Sterne takes pains to make the reader of Tristram Shandy genuinely admire Trim's child-like virtues and not merely laugh at his foolishness. When Trim recites the commandments which he can only do in their proper order, Walter accuses him of learning them by rote without understanding their essence. Walter asks what Trim means by "honoring thy father and mother," and the corporal in the simplicity of his heart responds, "Allowing them, ... three halfpence a day out of my pay when they grow old" (V, 32). Walter is chagrined, and Sterne designed the incident to trap any reader who looks on Trim, the child-adult, with too much condescension.

In his fiction, Sterne attacks the values inherent in the educational theories current in his age. He admires the child's whimsy, his spontaneous feelings, and his free imagination and does not believe that they should be discouraged as the child grows older. To be thoroughly grown up is to be like Doctor Slop, joyless and unsympathetic to the feelings of other people. The Shandys, Yorick, and Trim are overgrown children, and Sterne implies that they are fortunate to be so. By keeping the child within themselves alive they are able to salvage some happiness amid the misfortunes of life.
CHAPTER V

CLELAND AND BECKFORD'S CHILDREN OF PLEASURE

Sterne's fiction is subversive in that it questioned contemporary notions of proper adult behavior by celebrating the child's spontaneity and love of pleasure. Sterne's attack on adult values is subtle, however. His characters were intended to charm rather than to scandalize his readers. Some may have accused Tristram of gratuitous obscenity, a charge which Tristram anticipates and tries to refute, but his conduct, while eccentric, is above moral reproach. Yorick is amorous but not libertine; his erotic impulses are exquisitely sublimated into sentiment. Toby and Trim act and think like little boys, but they are never petulant or wilful. This chapter will discuss John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* (1749) and William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786). Both are novels with childish protagonists, and both writers criticize the expectations that eighteenth-century adults generally imposed on children more blatantly than Sterne does. Fanny Hill is a female libertine because she is a child with no developed moral sense whatever. She indulges her sexual appetite without restraint and comes to no harm. Vathek, a thoroughly wilful child, comes to harm only when he follows the advice of an evil and repulsive mother who claims to know what is good for him. Fanny and Vathek meet opposite fates, but both novelists, in their different ways, make a virtue of their protagonists' childishness.

Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, more commonly known as
Fanny Hill, was published in 1749, eleven years before the first volumes of Tristram Shandy appeared. Fanny recounts in two long letters her experiences between the ages of fifteen and eighteen as a London prostitute. Although she becomes adept in her trade, Fanny remains a little girl in significant ways. The phrase "woman of pleasure" in Cleland's title is a euphemism for whore, but the choice of words is apt because Fanny's behavior is governed not by reason but by her desire for physical pleasure. Fanny Hill is more than a charming example of period pornography; it is, like Tristram Shandy, an attack on the fundamental values of the Age of Reason. Stanley J. Solomon has observed that "reason disappears as a controlling approach to life /In Fanny Hill/ and is replaced by the unrestrained cultivation . . . of physical passion." He then points out quite rightly that "no excuse is offered for the absence of reason and its various associated qualities such as common sense, self control and moderation." ¹

Common sense, self-control and moderation, the qualities that Fanny lacks, are what Locke and other educators wished to instill in the young. Locke held that the "natural propensity to indulge corporal and present pleasure, and to avoid pain at any rate" is the source of "all vicious actions." He believed that it was the educator's "business to root out and destroy" this tendency. ² Fanny Hill acts on the basis of this pleasure principle which Locke attributed to children who have not yet developed moral understanding and a capacity for self-denial. She does not consider the future consequences of her actions, and she is en-


tirely controlled by whims and impulses that promise the reward of pleasure. All eighteenth-century theorists of child rearing, and particularly the Calvinist ones were dismayed by children's natural craving for physical pleasure. Both John Locke and Susanna Wesley said they would deny a child's request for a food it was particularly fond of as a matter of principle. Fanny Hill, with her unabated willingness to gratify any impulse toward pleasure, is the antithesis of what eighteenth-century educators would have the child turn out to be.

A fear of the child's sexuality is implicit in all the advice to teach a child to deny the promptings of his body. There is almost no discussion of pre-pubescent sexuality in the eighteenth century, yet the Scottish clergyman, Robert Wallace (1697-1771), did broach the subject in an unpublished and undated tract titled, "Of Venery." Wallace calls for radical reforms in the marriage laws to allow couples to enter short term marriages which can either be dissolved or be renewed with mutual consent. At the same time, he would discourage premarital experiments with sex and urges that boys and girls be kept apart as much as possible, never be allowed to share a room or bed, and not be instructed too early about sexual intercourse because: "being instructed too early in the Theory, they are tempted to begin the practice too soon and become guilty of many dangerous and enervating practices."\(^3\) Wallace's advice shows that he, and probably many of his contemporaries, was aware of the sexual impulses and curiosity of young children. Until age fifteen Fanny is ignorant of the theory and innocent of the practice, and she allows herself sexual liberty because she has never learned self-

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restraint as a child. Unconcerned with abstract concepts of right and wrong, she does what feels good. She fights off the old man who has purchased her maidenhead not because she is committed to chastity but because she finds him hideously ugly.

Fanny Hill is a literary descendant of Margery Pinchwife. Both are ignorant, pleasure-loving country girls who come to London. Neither of them is bound by the maxims of conventional sexual morality, and each is willing to have sex with attractive men without feeling the least guilt or shame. Both girls elude the control of adult figures seeking to exploit them. Margery cuckold Pinchwife, and Fanny escapes from the bordello of Mrs. Brown who would sell her to a lover she does not want. The two girls have similar natures even though their circumstances differ. Margery, after all, has a rich old husband whereas Fanny is poor and is forced into prostitution. The necessity compelling Fanny is as much a part of her nature as it is an economic expedient. After being discharged as a private mistress, Fanny looks forward to becoming a public one "rather with pleasure and gaiety, than with the least idea of despondency." Wycherley's attitude to Margery differs from Cleland's attitude to Fanny, however. As I have pointed out earlier, Margery's inhibition provides a touchstone by which to judge Alithea's reticence and the other ladies' sexual hypocrisy, but the outcome of the play shows there are limitations to Margery's approach to life. She remains stuck with Pinchwife and it's altogether likely that in time she will become a skillful but unhappy deceiver like Mrs. Fidget. The outcome of Fanny Hill, on the other hand, proves that Cleland judges his heroine's disposition more approvingly. She makes the best of her lot and enjoys her-

self without retribution. She is reunited with the one man she truly
loves and gains financial independence as well.

Moll Flanders would seem to be a closer literary ancestor of
Fanny Hill than would Margery Pinchwife; but Defoe's and Cleland's
prostitutes are significantly different. As a small child, Moll wor­
rries about how she will support herself and maintain respectability.
Fanny is content to let the future take care of itself. At the riper
age of fifteen she "could not conceive of the possibility of running
out" of her patrimony of eight guineas and seventeen shillings. For
Moll, prostitution is a way to survive and make money. Fanny gets her
living the same way but it's more than a job for her--she goes about
sex as if it were play. J.H. Plumb, who has written about children in
eighteenth-century England, makes a perceptive remark about women in
Cleland's novels in his introduction to the Signet Fanny Hill: "They
are as obsessed with the sexual act as a group of schoolboys. And here,
perhaps, there may be a key to Cleland himself, if not to the cause of
the novel's continuing popularity. . . . it may not be too farfetched
to suggest that Cleland's own nature was able to identify itself with
Fanny and her pleasures in such a way that the springs of his unconscious
fantasies were released" (pp. xiii, xiv). Fanny Hill is a subversive
book glorifying the libidinous energy of a child who grows up without
acquiring the restraints of the superego.

At the start of her adventures, Fanny is only fifteen years old.

5 John Hollander describes Fanny as follows in "The Old Last Act:
Some Observations on Fanny Hill," in Encounter, 21 (Oct. 1963), 7n: "In
her entrepreneurial energy she seems a daughter of Moll Flanders. But
in her exuberance and curiosity, her undeviating devotion to nature she
is an ancestor to Molly Bloom."

6 J.H. Plumb, "The New World of Children," The Listener, 26 Febru­
ary 1976, pp. 232-34.
During the eighteenth century, children of Fanny's class frequently left home by this age to become servants or apprentices. Fanny, who has just reached puberty a few months before her departure for London, seems very young for her age. She may finally have a woman's body, but she has no idea of the sexual morality that convention imposes on young adults. Her poor and overworked parents neglected to give her any moral instruction, and the older Fanny reflects on its absence:

... all my foundation in virtue was no other than a total ignorance of vice, and the shy timidity general to our sex, in the tender stage of life when objects alarm or frighten more by their novelty than anything else: but then this is a fear too often cured at the expense of innocence, when miss, by degrees, begins no longer to look on man as a creature of prey that will eat her. (p. 16)

Fanny's initial fear and ignorance of men is similar to the feelings of the daughters of Dryden and Davenant's Prospero. Fanny's rural homestead is analogous to their desert island. Unlike Miranda and Dorinda, Fanny does not have the guiding influence of a Prospero to ease her transition into the adult world when the passage becomes necessary. Fanny finds herself alone on the streets of London.

Esther Davis's stories of London's sights arouse what Fanny calls her "childish curiosity" (p. 17). The same curiosity later plays a role in her sexual adventures. Eager to lose her virginity, she first becomes a voyeur spying on other people's lovemaking. Once she is initiated into the art of love her curiosity does not abate. It leads her to witness another girl's encounter with the half-wit, good-natured Dick, and to peek through a pinhole at a homosexual tryst. Fanny suffers misfortunes but she is never thoroughly crushed. She herself feels that the ability to recover from grief quickly is a child's gift. Her parents' deaths are a heavy blow but she says, "A little time, and the gid-
diness of that age, dissipated too soon my reflections on that irreparable loss" (pp. 16-17). The likelihood of going to London helps to drive away her sadness. Later, shortly after she suffers a sudden separation from Charles, her true lover, Fanny's reaction is quite similar: "There are not, on earth at least, eternal griefs; mine were, if not at an end, at least suspended: my heart which had been overloaded with anguish and vexation, began to dilate and open to the least gleam of diversion or amusement" (p. 83). Fanny's curiosity and her resilience are both outgrowths of her hedonism. The pleasure promised by new experiences, particularly sexual experiences, captivates her attention and comforts her misfortunes. Looking back on her life, Fanny feels that her love of pleasure is quite natural in a girl of fifteen. Recalling her early sexual stirrings, she says, "the inflammable principle of pleasure, so easily fired at my age, made strange work within me, and all the modesty I was brought up in the habit (not the instruction) of, began to melt away like dew before the sun's heat" (p. 37). Fanny, like a child indulging a whim, gives into her sexual impulses because they promise new pleasure. She has no idea that doing so is either harmful or morally wrong.

Cleland invested his heroine with a very simple psychology. Recognizing that she is ruled by her genitalia, she unabashedly describes herself as one "whose natural philosophy all resided in the favorite centre of sense, and who was ruled by its powerful instinct in taking pleasure by its right handle" (p. 103). Fanny, who gives in to every impulse, is the direct opposite of Samuel Richardson's Pamela, whose reason and virtue successfully war against temptation. Cleland may have had Pamela (1740) in the back of his mind as he wrote Fanny.
Before Fanny departs for London, Esther Davis tells her stories about servant girls who had preserved their virtue and won their masters in marriage. The two novels, moreover, tell the story of girls in analogous situations. Fanny and Pamela are approximately the same age, and each leaves home for an unfamiliar situation holding out both promise and danger. Each girl by the end of her adventures manages to rise higher in the world than she ever could have hoped for. The two poor country girls become gentlewomen. Further comparison of the books, however, shows the differences of the characters and the different attitudes of their authors.

Pamela is an innocent servant girl who sees little of the world beyond her village and Mr. B's households. Fanny, on the other hand, is an experienced prostitute who comes into contact with a wide range of London society, from a lord to a flower seller. Despite these differences in their experience, Fanny remains childlike and Pamela is precociously adult in her self-government and her adherence to virtue. She not only fends off Mr. B's advance, but contains her own passion as well. Pamela is not asexual and her letters describing her duties as the custodian of his linen and her description of his person gives hints of the physical attraction she feels. She has, however, overcome any lingering propensity to indulge "corporal and present pleasure," because her judgment tells her that a momentary lapse will bring a future of misery and shame. Fanny as we have seen does not have the capacity to act that way.

Pamela's method of telling her story shows that she always has

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a rational control of herself. She coherently assembles her thoughts and reactions to experience in letters written immediately after, and sometimes during, moments of emotional stress. Fanny lacks Pamela's rational control. She surrenders herself entirely to the experience of the moment and postpones reflection. She can only write the letters telling the story of her youth after a lapse of time.\(^8\) In the first paragraph of her memoirs, Fanny claims she has been a keener observer of "the characters and manners of the world" than others of her profession who, "looking on all thought or reflection as their capital enemy, keep at as great a distance as they can, or destroy it without mercy" (p. 15). This statement accurately describes Fanny's curiosity, but the account of her life which follows shows her talent for keeping troublesome thought and reflection at bay. Cleland may have Fanny make this comment to justify the ease with which she tells all the details of her story. She becomes a philosopher only when she sits down to write. Fanny concludes her second letter with a "tail-piece of morality," but, as we shall see, it is not a repudiation of her past.

Fanny, throughout her experiences, finds sex to be an outlet for strong feelings that overwhelm thought. She frequently describes sexual pleasure as a flood of bliss drowning out her rational faculties. In masturbation she discovers "a tumult that robbed \[her\] of all thought" (p. 27). In a characteristic description of sexual arousal she says, "I did not now enjoy a calm of reason to perceive, but I ecstatically,

indeed, felt the power of such rare and exquisite provocatives" (p. 151). Fanny is not afraid of the surrender to the promptings of the non-rational part of the self that sexual passion involves. At Mrs. Brown's house, Fanny is envious of the "frolic and thoughtless gaiety" (p. 39) of the other girls. Her only sexual reticence is her shortlived worry over the pain that a huge penis might inflict on her untried vagina. She outgrows her fear of the possible physical pain, but she never loses her longing for the transcendent moment of pleasure that sex affords.

Fanny's longing for a pleasure that surpasses understanding makes her trust her impulses and act without forethought. The language she uses in describing how she decides to run away from Mrs. Brown's establishment with Charles reveals how she has abandoned self-control and yielded herself to the sway of passion. She describes his offer as "rash, sudden, undigested and even dangerous" and adds how her feelings for him are so compelling that "there was no resisting." She is "blinded . . . to every objection." She credits Charles with all the charms needed to make a girl "set all consequence at defiance" (p. 54). In eighteenth-century novels, girls who rashly and thoughtlessly run off with men intent on seduction usually come to a bad end. A further comparison with Richardson will shed light on Cleland's attitude toward Fanny's behavior. Clarissa Harlowe and Fanny find themselves being offered up to suitors they detest and each one is urged to elope by a man more to her liking. Clarissa anguishes over Lovelace's offer, elopes with him in a moment of confusion, and consequently suffers degradation and death. Fanny, on the other hand, accepts Charles's offer without mental struggle, finds undreamed of sexual fulfillment, and eventually enters a happy marriage with her lover. The two novelists offer antithetical models for behavior. Cleland implicitly approves of
the youthful impulsiveness against which Richardson cautions.

Fanny's impulsiveness leads to happiness, not her downfall. She offers no repentance for her self-indulgence and continues to be a pleasure-loving child-woman. *Fanny Hill* does not contain a lesson on the value of reason and self-control that one critical study has read into it. Slepian and Morrissey argue that Fanny changes from the impulsive girl who runs off with Charles into a self-controlled and mature young woman. They see the bordello keeper Mrs. Cole as a rational influence teaching her girls to keep their passions in check. In their view, the lesson Fanny learns from the older man who calls himself a "rational pleasurist" represents a radical change in her outlook. This reading, however, is not supported by the novel itself. Mrs. Cole teaches Fanny not to check her passions but to indulge them in ways that bring a more refined satisfaction. Fanny does learn something important from the "rational pleasurist" who becomes her last lover before the reunion with Charles, but she does not learn either to despise her strong sexual appetite or to regard it as a necessary, but unfortunate, concession to the animal side of her nature. She says of her mentor:

He it was who first taught me to be sensible that the pleasures of the mind were superior to those of the body; at the same time, that they were so far from obnoxious to, or incompatible with, each other that, besides the sweetness in the variety and transition, the one served to exalt and perfect the taste of the other to a degree that the senses alone can never arrive at. (p. 206)

When Fanny becomes a spokeswoman for virtue at the end of her memoirs, she does so without any shame of her sexuality. In fact, her strongest praise of virtue is a mention of its capacity to heighten pleas-

"Even PLEASURE has not a greater friend," she writes, than "the so delicate charms of virtue" (p. 219). In comparing vice and virtue, she restates the point using the food metaphor she has often used before in describing sexual delight: "Mark how spurious, how low of taste, how comparatively inferior its joys are to those which Virtue gives sanction to, and whose sentiments are not above making even a sauce for the senses, but a sauce of the highest relish; whilst Vices are the harpies that infect and foul the feast" (p. 220). These comments are not a cynical concession by Fanny or Cleland to conventional morality. While she has grown up some and is ready to abandon complete sexual liberty and to enter into marriage, the essence of her nature has not changed. If she has come to impose some restraint on her impulses, she does so only to add greater relish to her pleasure. She does not become an adult who distrusts her sexuality or who thinks of it as a bucking ass as Walter Shandy does. She is, in the end, a wiser child; pleasure is still her path to happiness, and the discretion she acquires makes her pursuit of pleasure safer and ultimately more satisfying.¹⁰

Fairy tale motifs in Fanny Hill also suggest that Fanny is a child who comes to a good end because she follows her instinct for pleasure. The novel is the story of a lost child who finds comfort and deliverance amid dangers. Separated from home and parents like Hansel and Gretel, Fanny wanders through London's demimonde rather than a threatening forest. Mrs. Brown is a witch figure who preys on young country

¹⁰Leo Braudy in "Fanny Hill and Materialism," ECSC, 4 (1970), 21-40, finds a relation between Cleland's treatment of sexuality and the view of human present by La Mettrie in L'Homme Machine. Both Cleland and La Mettrie realize "that the body can make demands on the mind that the mind cannot resist." Cleland feels that "instead of being a threat to the mind, the body, when its nature is properly understood, joins with the mind in the total human character" (pp. 30-31).
girls like Fanny. She tells Fanny that if she is "a good girl" she will "do more than twenty mothers" for her (p. 23). She is, of course, a false mother wishing to exploit Fanny as a commodity, yet she is like a conventional mother in so far as she imposes her will on Fanny's desires. The jaded old man who expected to ravish Fanny at Mrs. Brown's is an ogre ready to receive the sacrifice of Fanny's youth. Charles is the prince who rescues Fanny and he is as much a child as she is. After their first tryst Fanny remembers, "We supped with all the gaiety of two young giddy creatures at the top of their desires" (p. 69).

Charles, who has been spoiled by a doting grandmother, has no more self-control than Fanny does. She calls him "a young gentleman who had no ideas of stint or economy" (p. 72).

After her separation from Charles, Fanny eventually finds herself in the care of Mrs. Cole, who is a fairy godmother figure. This woman is a bawd and a substitute mother like Mrs. Brown, but she is everything that a girl of Fanny's disposition could want in a mother. Fanny frequently remarks that Mrs. Cole treats her girls as though they were her daughters. She tells Fanny that she in particular reminds her of her own child who died young (p. 116). Fanny makes a significant remark about the "little family" formed by Mrs. Cole. In her household Fanny finds "a rare alliance of pleasure and interest, and of a necessary outward decency with unbounded secret liberty" (p. 117). This alliance is no simple hypocrisy. Mrs. Cole provides Fanny with security and parental affection, and at the same time encourages her instinctual desire for pleasure that an ordinary mother would try to repress. She is a pragmatic instructress who teaches Fanny how to accommodate herself to the forms of polite society and how to provide for her security and physical safety. Mrs. Cole criticizes Fanny for going with the sailor as
a street trollop would because following such a whim can be a danger
to a girl's health. She is not opposed to pleasure on principle, how­
ever. She urges Fanny to do what she likes with well-screened customers
at her establishment. As Fanny puts it, Mrs. Cole preached "very pathet­
ically the doctrine of passive obedience and nonresistance to all those
arbitrary tastes of pleasure" (p. 120).

In Fanny Hill, Cleland himself preaches an ethic of pleasure that
runs counter to the ethic of self-discipline and rational control which
was taught to children in the eighteenth century. The sympathetic char­
acters in Fanny Hill are the people who can truly enjoy pleasure. The
good people are usually young or young at heart like Mrs. Cole and the
rational pleasurist. Fanny values this capacity in people more than
rank or artificial refinements. She offers no apology for her affair
with Will the young servant who she calls "an artless, natural stripling"
(p. 99). She tells her correspondent, "so exalted a pleasure ought not
to be ungratefully forgotten, or surpressed by me, because I found it
in a character in low life, where by the by, it is oftener met with,
purer, and more unsophisticated, than among the false, ridiculous re­
finements with which the great suffer themselves to be so grossly cheated
by pride" (p. 107). Fanny discovers that pleasure is an antidote to
pride. She initiates the affair with Will to avenge her injured pride
after she discovers Mr. H. making love to her maid. She later finds
that Will's virgin efforts "drowned all thoughts of revenge in the sense
of actual pleasure" (p. 99). The characters who can best enjoy pleas­
ure are often artless and self-indulgent as children. Emily, Fanny's
companion at Mrs. Cole's, is a girl "who knew no art but that which na­
ture itself, in favour of her principal end, pleasure, had inspired her
with, the art of yielding" (p. 200). Good-natured Dick, the half-witted
flower seller, who has not rational understanding and who will never be an adult, is momentarily ennobled during the sex act.11

The unsympathetic characters are usually impotent, old, and ugly or otherwise incapable of attaining physical pleasure. To deny oneself pleasure for the sake of making money is a perennial middle class virtue, but it is a vice in *Fanny Hill*. While Mrs. Cole profits from her profession, she is in the trade "for the sake of the trade itself" (p. 112). Mrs. Jones, one of Fanny's landladies and a bawd, is one of the novel's most unattractive characters. She has sufficient money, but acquiring more is her only passion. She never indulges herself because she is "indifferent . . . by nature or constitution to every other pleasure" (p. 71). She sold her own daughter for profit and tries to exploit Fanny as Mrs. Brown tried to do.

*Fanny Hill*, we have seen, becomes a happy adult but she does not repress her childlike curiosity and love of pleasure. Far from being an obstacle to her happiness, the preservation of the childish part of herself is the cause of her happiness. Reunited with Charles, she becomes committed to virtue, but it is not a cold and dutiful chastity. She does not learn to distrust her body or her instincts. She embraces virtue because she has discovered it will enhance her pleasure and accommodates herself to the expectations society places on a married gentlewoman, while remaining true to the child within her. The protagonist of William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) is a child-adult like Fanny Hill. *Fanny Hill*, as we have seen, contained elements of a fairy tale, but *Vathek* is an actual fairy tale with its exotic and supernatural setting. *Vathek* is like a little boy whose first priorities are physical comfort

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11 See Braudy, "*Fanny Hill* and Materialism," pp. 34–35.
and sensual pleasure, and he has no inclination to deny himself anything he wants. He also shares Fanny's curiosity, but his curiosity embraces more than an eagerness to discover new sexual experience. He longs to possess secret knowledge that will extend his power and dominion. Whereas Cleland's portrayal of Fanny Hill is focused almost exclusively on her sexuality, Beckford's Vathek displays a wider range of passion. He is given to tantrums, rages, and outbursts of violence. His selfishness and cruelty make him a less attractive personality than Fanny, and he meets a different fate. Fanny finds earthly satisfaction and Vathek is consigned to eternal torment. Vathek is not damned for being an unruly child, however; his perdition comes as a result of growing up. He is a child-adult in that he has the "natural propensity to indulge corporal and present pleasure, and to avoid pain at any rate." His mother Carathis urges him to overcome this tendency and consider the future consequences of his actions so that he might improve himself. When he does so, he comes to harm. Vathek's accusation blaming his mother for his damnation echoes the theme of the novel. "The principles by which Carathis perverted my youth," he charges, "have been the sole cause of my perdition."\(^\text{12}\)

Vathek's curiosity and endless wants lead him to desire power and knowledge forbidden to mortals, but his journey to the Halls of Eblis to acquire the treasures of the pre-Adamite sultans is arduous. By himself he lacks the discipline necessary to accomplish it and requires his mother's prodding. His curiosity and appetites repeatedly divert him from the quest. While both Carathis and her son are equally desirous of forbidden things, she has an adult capacity that he lacks. Unlike

Vathek, she is thoroughly rational, and she uses her reason to form ruthlessly cunning schemes. Carathis is constantly reminding Vathek of the rewards contingent on his perseverance and upbraiding his sensual indulgence and his profitless anger over momentary frustrations. With bourgeois efficiency she scorns immediate gratification for the sake of future benefit. Vathek, left to himself, would be incapable of reaching the promised treasure because of his bondage to immediate sensual gratification and his propensity for irrational tantrums. To achieve damnation he needs the encouragement of Carathis who continually urges him to repress spontaneous emotion, to restrain sensual appetites, and to deny himself present gratification for the sake of more distant goals.

Carathis and Vathek are a satiric version of a traditional parent-child relationship. Eighteenth-century parents often urged their children to work hard, to avoid dissipation, and to control their passions, especially their sexual passions so that they might become virtuous adults and lead the good life. Chesterfield's Letters and Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography are eighteenth-century examples of this advice. Carathis gives Vathek the same counsel but with a different end in view. She tells him to behave himself so that he can become as wicked as possible in order to enter triumphantly the Halls of Eblis, the realm of subterranean fires. Vathek may be as wilful and irrational a child as any eighteenth-century or modern educator could imagine, but he is less evil

12Jean Hagstrum in "Such, Such Were the Joys: The Boyhood of the Man of Feeling," in Changing Taste in Eighteenth Century Art and Literature, Hagstrum and Robert E. Moore, eds. (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1972), pp. 41-61, discusses the peculiar mother-son relationship of Carathis and Vathek. "This hell /Eblis/ is one created by a chaste and diabolical mother for a son who disobeys her command to win Satanic wealth because he has been diverted by the love of a beautiful woman" (p. 50).
than Carathis, the adult figure who tries to dominate him and mold him into a version of herself.

Reading *Vathek* as a satire on adult values and conventional standards of maturity lends coherence to Beckford's bizarre oriental tale. The novel's peculiar tone and Beckford's seemingly confused attitude towards its hero pose a critical problem. \(^{14}\) *Vathek* is all at once a Faust desirous of forbidden power and knowledge, a cruel tyrant, and a clown. The final twenty pages present one of the most frightening pictures of damnation in all of English literature and represent a shift in the book's tone. Up to that point, the plot is a series of catastrophes and horrid cruelties, but the narration of these grotesque events is undercut by coy ironies. The following account of *Vathek*'s sacrifice of the fifty most beautiful children in his realm is an example of this unusual tone:

This declaration was received with reiterated acclamations; and all extolled the liberality of a prince, who would thus strip himself, for the amusement of his subjects, and the encouragement of the rising generation. The Caliph, in the meanwhile, undressed himself by degrees; and raising his arms as high as he was able, made


Kenneth Graham in "Beckford's *Vathek*: A Study in Ironic Dissonance," *Criticism*, 14 (1972), 243-52, uses the term "ironic dissonance" to describe the mixture of magnificence and absurdity in the tale's images, tones and motifs. Graham sees *Vathek*'s pursuit of the treasure as an ironic version of the romance quest in which vice and virtue are confused: "*Vathek* is easily satisfied with sensual pleasures and must be spurred by his mother before he can discover his own perdition ... Beckford's sense of human inadequacy mollifies the extremes of virtue and vice found in most romances. A dualism of good and evil, clearly perceptible and separate at the cosmic level but confusingly intermixed at the mundane, is the source of Beckford's consciousness of ironic dissonance" (p. 251).
each of the prizes glitter in the air; but, whilst he delivered it, with one hand, to the child, who sprung forward to receive it; he, with the other, pushed the poor innocent into the gulf; where the Giaour, with sullen muttering, incessantly repeated; 'more! more!' (p. 27)

Beckford, who was twenty-one when he wrote Vathek, displays an almost adolescent delight in the impropriety of the Caliph's nakedness. The narrative here does not seek to arouse our pity for the innocent victims. Instead, the passage emphasizes the foolishness of the parents who will applaud any action by their sovereign to advance their ambitions for their children. Even when Vathek performs his worst outrages, he seems mischievous rather than evil. In Vathek Beckford shows the "genial tolerance . . . or delight in the compulsive doings of the clownish criminal and in the quirkiness of the situations he creates for himself," that C.J. Rawson too readily attributed to Fielding as the author of Jonathan Wild.  

Beckford portrays Vathek as thoroughly childish. In the opening pages, he lavishly describes the five palaces the Caliph uses for the indulgence of each of the senses. Even though Vathek is a ruler, he finds the pursuit of pleasure more attractive than the business of government. His subjects found "that a sovereign giving himself up to pleasure was as able to govern as one who declared himself an enemy to it" (p. 31). The wording here is significant. In the eyes of all but the most severe Calvinist, the love of pleasure was not in itself considered childish in the eighteenth century, if it were accompanied by sufficient self-restraint. Self-government, not the annihilation of pleasure, had been the goal of Locke and the humanist educators. Vathek, however, gives himself up to excesses of pleasure and is not able to govern himself at

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all. He loves food and daily sits down to a meal of three hundred dishes. In a classic understatement he describes himself as "not over-fond of resisting temptation" (p. 102). He is a spoiled child with absolute power over his kingdom and is used to having his own way. He is fond of theological disputes, but he forces his opponents to accept his position by either bribing or punishing them. The magnificent tower he builds expresses his desire to have dominion over everyone around him. No mortal except his mother ever dares to cross his will, and Vathek feels he has the right to do anything he wishes. Angered by the Giaour who demands that he enter no house on the way to Eblis, Vathek asks, "Who shall prescribe laws to me?" (p. 53).

Beckford uses Vathek, the spoiled child, to ridicule adult virtues such as industry, sobriety, politeness, and piety. All the adults Vathek encounters are either evil, like Carathis, or pompous and boring. The caliph is fond of childish pranks at the expense of the grave, the devout, and the learned. In a fit of laughter he seizes the sacred bessom from his mollahs and dusts away the cobwebs in his harem while they stand by in tears. Just before arriving at Eblis, Vathek scatters the holy men and sheiks, who ceremoniously greet him, sending them off riding backwards on their asses. The details of these scenes are so ludicrous that it is clear that Beckford is not trying to horrify us with Vathek's impiety. He is making a jest of adult piety. Bababalouk, the eunuch, is a pompous buffoon who brags to Vathek that he has instilled reserve and decorum into the harem. Nouronihar takes the same delight in tormenting Bababalouk that Vathek takes in scandalizing holy men, and when the eunuch reports his dunking to Vathek, "instead of sympathizing with the miserable sufferer, [Vathek] laughed immoderately at the device of the swing, and the figure of Bababalouk mounted on it" (p. 61). Fak-
redden, Nooronihtar's father, is a gracious and hospitable man who sends two scripture reciting dwarfs to welcome and entertain Vathek. Despite his virtues, Fakreddin is unbearably tedious: "The good emir, who was punctiliously religious, and likewise a great dealer in compliments, made an harangue five times more prolix and insipid than his little harbingers had already delivered" (p. 54).

Vathek does not have the patience to endure such windbags. Because he expects to have all his wants immediately gratified, he is prone to tantrums when he meets with any frustration. The evil eye he struggles to control lest he kill off all his subjects is an emblem of his infantile rage. The Giaour tries Vathek's patience to the breaking point. This representative of the infernal powers does not offer a straightforward compact such as Mephistopheles offers to Faustus. He teases Vathek as he would a child. He appears and disappears, presenting the caliph with teasing promises that are not immediately fulfilled. The gift of oracular hieroglyphics describes the treasures of Eblis as an ultimate toyland, but it does not tell how to get there. The Giaour first arouses Vathek's curiosity and then provokes his anger. When the Giaour escapes from Vathek's prison and slays his guards, Vathek spends an entire day kicking their carcasses. He throws another tantrum after receiving nothing in return for the sacrifice of the fifty children.

The Giaour imposes a difficult condition on Vathek's journey to the site of the treasure in demanding that Vathek enter no habitation along the way. This demand calls for Vathek to acquire self-denial in order to become worthy to enter hell. The trap laid by the supernatural agent requires the efforts of Carathis to change Vathek, to make him grow up to seal his damnation.

Where Vathek is passionately distracted, Carathis is coolly self-
possessed. She provides rational ego control over the impulses of his
naked libido. The interaction of her maturity and his childishness is
the fuel that moves the plot. After kicking the guards slain in the Gia­
our's escape, Vathek realizes how his impatience and his desires for
greatness are at cross purposes. He then takes Carathis's counsel to
heart:

'Alas!' said the Caliph as soon as he could speak, 'what a fool I
have been! not for having bestowed forty thousand kicks on my
guards, who so tamely submitted to death; but for never consider­
ing that this extra-ordinary man was the same that the planets had
foretold; whom, instead of ill-treating, I should have conciliated
by all the arts of persuasion.'
'The past,' said Carathis, 'cannot be recalled; but it behooves
us to think of the future . . .' (p. 8)

In this conversation the mother is giving her son a lesson in controlling
his temper. Variations of the same incident recur, showing that Vathek
needs his mother's help in surmounting the difficulties, which his child­
ish nature creates, on the road to perdition. When the Giaour delays
his second appearance, Vathek, afflicted with great thirst, passively
retires to the inner rooms of his harem. Carathis, however, reacts to
the disappointment quite differently and searches for a plan of action:
"In the mean time the Princess Carathis, whose affliction no words can
describe, instead of confining herself to sobbing and tears, was closeted
daily with the vizir Morakanabad, to find out some cure, or mitigation,
of the Caliph's disease" (p. 13).

Carathis is a woman "whose presence of mind never forsook her"
(p. 35). Vathek, lacking her power of concentration, is easily dis­
tracted from thoughts of future glory by the demands of present need.
When Carathis burns mummies and rhinoceros horns to obtain an instruc­
tive prophecy from the Giaour, the hideous residue of the sacrifice is
transformed into a table covered with delicacies. Mother and son respond differently to this miracle:

He availed himself, without scruple of such an entertainment; and had already laid hands on a lamb stuffed with pistachios, whilst Carathis was privately drawing from a filagree urn, a parchment that seemed to be endless; and which had escaped the notice of her son. Totally occupied in gratifying an importunate appetite, he left her to peruse it without interruption; which having finished, she said to him in an authoritative tone, 'Put an end to your gluttony, and hear the splendid promises with which you are favored!' (pp. 35-36)

Late eighteenth-century children's books like Sanford and Merton warn against the vice of gluttony. In Vathek, however, the protagonist's gluttony and sensuality are positive virtues.

Once he sets out on the actual journey, Vathek is temporarily devoid of his mother's encouragement. At first he is determined to go on without violating the injunction of never entering a habitation no matter how pleasant the offer of hospitality may be: "Though he began to regret the palace of the senses; yet, he lost not sight of his enterprise, and his sanguine expectation confirmed his resolution." Fatigue and hunger soon erode his resolve, and Vathek accepts Fakreddin's hospitality. During this interlude, Beckford introduces two characters, Nouronihar and her cousin Gulchenrouz, who are thematically important. Like Vathek, they are children who delight in physical pleasure and impish play. Nouronihar joins Vathek in his quest and like him is damned; Gulchenrouz remains as a child and is translated to paradise.

Nouronihar is practically the caliph's second self. When they first meet, Vathek is monomaniacally obsessed with his quest, and Nouronihar is living in carefree innocence under her father's protection. The outcome of the plot, however, shows that this initial difference is only circumstantial, for the progress of her corruption is a commentary on
Vathek's career. The parallels between the two characters are so apparent that they must be intentional. The innocent Nouronihar is a mischievous sensualist like Vathek. Her invitation to Vathek's sultanas indicates that she presides over luxuries like those in the caliph's pleasure palaces:

'Charming princesses, everything, everything is ready: we have prepared beds for your repose, and strewn your apartments with jasmine: no insects will keep off slumber from visiting your eyelids; we will dispel them with a thousand plumes. Come then, amiable ladies, refresh your delicate feet, and your ivory limbs, in baths of rose water; and, by the light of perfumed lamps, your servants will amuse you with tales.' (p. 55)

Nouronihar, like Vathek, finds pleasure in tormenting the pompous and the grave. She takes the same delight in dunking Bababalouk that Vathek takes in scandalizing the holy men by dusting the harems cobwebs with the sacred besom.

Nouronihar, when Vathek meets her, is on the verge of adulthood. At first, she is content with childish pleasures and dalliance with her cousin Gulchenrouz, and she has no adult ambition to better her station in life. Her quick rejection of Vathek's first overtures is to the point: "I had rather that his Gulchenrouz's teeth should mischievously press my finger than the richest ring of the imperial treasury" (p. 60). Her nature, however, is as corruptible as Vathek's. She commits herself to Vathek after she has been granted a vision of the carbuncle of Gianschild awaiting her as Vathek's paramour in the halls of Eblis. To attain this vision, she has to overcome her childish fear of darkness and spirits to follow a strange light up a mountain. She momentarily regrets leaving her cousin, and thinking of him, says: "Dear child! how would thy heart flutter with terror, wert thou wandering in these wild solitudes, like me!" (p. 70), but she presses on nonetheless.
The two supernatural voices which discuss Nouronihar in the sky above show that this night adventure is a turning point in her life. One spirit calls her a "trifler, who consumes her time with a giddy child," but the second spirit convinces the first that Nouronihar "will be wise enough to answer that passion alone, that can aggrandize her glory" (p. 71). The vision of the carbuncle corresponds to the Giaour's temptation of Vathek. Nouronihar is no longer content with the freedom to indulge her physical appetites alone; and she is eventually more resolute than Vathek about sacrificing present comfort for future benefit.

Gulchenrouz is a child in the way Vathek and Nouronihar are, but he does not develop the ambitions they do, and he is saved. At thirteen he is more a boy than a man, and he remains among the ladies of the harem, who dote upon him, beyond the usual age. The harem provides him with the security of a womb, and when he has to venture out of it, he does so with the "bashfulness of a fawn." Gulchenrouz, who is "wanton enough to mock the solemn old grey-beards" (p. 66), has no desire to accommodate himself to the demands of adult life. He remains content with physical comfort and sexual play and is deaf to the moralizing of his tutor, Shaban, "a wrinkled old eunuch of a surly disposition." Gulchenrouz is a big, sensual infant who mirrors a side of Vathek, yet he is afraid to follow a will o' the wisp up a dark mountain. As a reward for not growing up, he is transported to paradise and receives the "boon of perpetual childhood" (p. 98).

For Nouronihar, her meeting with Vathek is the first step in her damnation. For Vathek himself, the same event is one more instance where his immediate surrender to his impulses interrupts his concern for the promised treasure to such an extent that he undergoes a renewal of piety on hearing the false report of his beloved's death: "Perfidious
Giaour! I renounce thee forever! it is thou who hast slain my beloved Nouronihar! and I supplicate the help of Mahomet; who would have preserved her to me had I been more wise!" (p. 81). Even after Nouronihar has been restored to him, Vathek continues to renounce his former goal in favor of immediate gratification with his new love. He tells her:

"Your lovely little person, in my estimation, is far more precious than all the treasures of the pre-adamite sultans; and I wish to possess it at pleasure, and, in the open day, before I go to burrow, underground, like a mole" (p. 84).

Once again, Vathek has displayed that irresponsible neglect of future gain that so irks his mother. With Carathis absent, there is no one to impose any control over Vathek's desires. He is capable of mischievous trickery, but he lacks his mother's steadfast cunning. When her influence is absent, he grows indolent. Pleased with Nouronihar, he turns his imperial pavillion into a pleasure dome that brings him more content than dreams of the treasure can. While Nouronihar is anxious to press on, she is not Carathis and is unable to devise any scheme to arouse Vathek: "She only wished the amorous monarch had discovered more ardour for the carbuncle of Giasmchild: but flattered herself it would gradually increase; and therefore, yielded to his will, with becoming submission" (p. 95).

Carathis, who is "chastity in the abstract, and an implacable enemy to love intrigues and sloth" (p. 92), intervenes as the dutiful parent once again to prod Vathek along. Her first response on discovering the two lovers is that of an enraged mother finding her son in a match with a girl who will prove a detriment to his career. Calling Nouronihar a "little simpleton" (p. 93), she commands Vathek to drown her. After Nouronihar expresses her eagerness for Vathek to push on to
the infernal treasure, Carathis speaks of her in a different way: "We have here then a girl both of courage and science" (p. 94). Carathis, the long suffering mother, has finally found a girl she hopes will make a man of her son. Carathis's encouragement of Vathek to behave himself and thus become as wicked as possible is the central irony of Beckford's tale. Just as Vathek is starting the last leg of his journey Carathis gives him a bizarre reassurance. Even though Vathek has violated the Giaour's rules, she tells him he has nevertheless sinned admirably in seducing his host's daughter. As her last advice, she adds, "... if, on thy march, thou canst signalize thyself, by an additional crime; all will still go well" (p. 99).

Vathek, along with Nouronihar, lives up to Carathis's expectations, fulfills the ambitions she has nurtured, enters Eblis, and suffers eternal torment. The final paragraph of Vathek begins with a pat moral explanation of Vathek's fate: "Thus the Caliph Vathek, who, for the sake of empty pomp and forbidden power, had sullied himself with a thousand crimes, became a prey to grief without end, and remorse without mitigation," and concludes with a reference to Gulchenrouz's life in the hereafter: "whilst the humble, the despised Gulchenrouz passed whole ages in undisturbed tranquility, and in the pure happiness of childhood" (p. 120). What point could Beckford be making by contrasting Gulchenrouz's virtues to Vathek's crimes? Vathek is not a conventional moral tale with Vathek the bad boy who is lost and Gulchenrouz the good boy who is saved. Gulchenrouz has none of the traditional virtues that didactic fables recommend. He is amoral, indolent, disrespectful of authority and thoroughly self-indulgent, living only for physical pleasures. He differs from Vathek in only one important way; he does not follow the bidding of an adult who claims to know what is good for him.
In the eighteenth century the oriental tale was a genre used for both satire and moral instruction. Beckford used it to satirize the conventional virtues that adults preached to children. Vathek's sensuality, his longing for immediate gratification and his failure to pursue adult ambitions are traits that Carathis sees as vices to be eradicated. These same traits are the virtues that bring Gulchenrouz to paradise. Beckford is not a sentimentalist who idealizes children. Vathek, after all, is a selfish tyrant, and Gulchenrouz is a pampered and spineless little hedonist. The moral of Beckford's fairy tale is not really the biblical message: "Unless thou becomest as a little child, thou shalt not enter the kingdom of heaven." Beckford's true moral is "If thou becomest as an adult, thou shalt enter the kingdom of the damned."

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In this study, I have used the term "child-adult" to describe a wide range of characters. It is a useful term because however different Margery Pinchwife, Tristram Shandy, and Vathek may seem, they are all impulsive and they lack self-control. They abandon themselves to feelings and instincts, and they have not learned to guide their actions by reason. The properly reared person in the eighteenth century was expected to govern his non-rational impulses for two reasons. First of all, if a person always behaved like a child he would be unhappy. Appetites demanding immediate gratification had to be controlled to prevent a self-indulgence that would be destructive of future well-being. Imagination, likewise, had to be controlled by reason lest it provoke irrational fears and possibly madness. Ultimately, if a person imposed no restraint on his natural inclinations he would selfishly ignore the rights of others and become a threat to society.
Most of the writers I discuss use child-adults to raise questions about the ideal of the thoroughly self-controlled man or woman. Only Lillo unreservedly sees the child-adult as a danger to himself and others. Barnwell thoughtlessly indulges feelings of pity which bring pleasure. He then surrenders to emotion, becomes a murderer, and suffers mental anguish. While Fielding recognizes that most people need constraint on their natural inclinations—Jonathan Wild is both an overgrown, ill-natured child and an unhappy villain—he regards the benevolent man as an exception to the rule, and endorses the childlike impulsiveness of good-natured people. Parson Adams's feelings are easily moved. He can sympathize so strongly with others because he feels their joys, as well as their misfortunes, as if they were his own. The Restoration playwrights who preceded Lillo and Fielding admire impulsiveness while they uphold the value of self-control. The struggle between reason and passion is the theme of a characteristic tragedy like All For Love. Anthony, who could have controlled the world, is doomed when he loses control of his heart. The subtitle, The World Well Lost, suggests Dryden's awe for Anthony's grand passion. In a characteristic comedy, The Country Wife, Wycherley encourages sympathy for the impulsive child-adult, Margery Pinchwife. Her future may be in doubt after the final curtain, but for five acts she seems to enjoy life more than any other character.

Sterne is an important figure in my study because he is the first writer to approve fully of child-adults. In Tristram Shandy he celebrates the child-adult's lack of inhibition and implicitly denies the need for self-control. He argues that children and people who remain like children are good because they are happy. Their happiness is the source of their tender fellow feeling. Cleland makes a more explicit attack on assumptions about self-control by recommending hedonism. Fan-
ny Hill's excesses do not leave her jaded or miserable. She embraces virtue because she discovers it heightens pleasure. Beckford has perhaps a grimmer view of human nature than any other writer in this study. Compared to Sterne and Cleland's characters, Vathek is a thoroughly repulsive child-adult. But Beckford does not suggest that self-discipline would be a good thing for Vathek. When allowed to indulge his whims, Vathek pursues pleasure, and while he may not be virtuous, he is at least relatively harmless. When he follows his mother's advice and acquires self-control, he fulfills his potential for evil and becomes a threat to himself and his subjects.

The prevailing educational theories of the eighteenth century implied that virtue and happiness depend on restraint. A person acquired virtue by mastering his passions and appetites. Only then could he experience true pleasure. Locke held that children's actions are motivated entirely by the desire to gain immediate pleasure and to avoid immediate pain. He urged children to overcome this tendency, which he saw as the cause of all "vicious actions." Writers who use child-adults recognize that pleasure and pain are strong motives in everyone's behavior and that many adults are no more rational or self-controlled than children. The sympathetic treatment of child-adults, most clearly evident in Sterne and Cleland, suggests that pleasure is a precondition for virtue. The concern with pleasure and virtue in the fictional works I have discussed becomes a central issue in nineteenth-century utilitarianism. Jeremy Bentham's pleasure principle incorporates assumptions that playwrights and novelists had been making for over a hundred years. After categorizing various pleasures and pains, Bentham observes: "These pleasures and pains--the obtaining the pleasure, the avoidance of the pain--are the sole motives of human conduct." He then
The world has, indeed, seen men who have imagined that, by the infliction of misery on themselves, they were acting wisely and virtuously. But their motives, after all were the same as those of the rest of mankind, and they scourged themselves or starved themselves, on the same calculation of a result of happiness. But they reasoned, that the harvest of future pleasure was to grow out of the soil of present pain, and in the anticipation of that harvest bountiful and boundless in their eyes—they found the result of enjoyment.16

What Locke regards as a deplorable tendency in children who have yet to cultivate reason, Bentham accepts as an objective fact of human behavior. Bentham also recognizes that pleasure and virtue are intimately related. In The Rationale of Reward (1825) he considers it the task of legislators "to unite interest with duty"17 in the minds of the public. He argues that this end is best served if governments provide rewards as well as punishments. These rewards and punishments are not the promises and threats of the nursery applied to society as a whole. If a government expects its citizens to be virtuous it must first assure them of some means to pleasure. Bentham recognizes that a man has to be happy and secure from pain to be virtuous. His definitions of happiness and virtue are closely associated: "What is happiness? It is the possession of pleasure with the exemption from pain. . . . And what is virtue? It is that which most contributes to happiness,—that which maximizes pleasures and minimizes pains. Vice, on the contrary, is that which lessens happiness, or contributes to unhappiness."18 These remarks


18Bentham, Deontology, I, 17.
recall Fanny Hill's observation that "even PLEASURE has not a greater friend, nor vice a greater enemy" than "the so delicate charms of virtue."
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