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## A Close Analysis into the Portrayal of Female Protagonists Through the Lens of Gendered Authorship: Specifically looking into the works of Jane Austen, Frances Burney, John Cleland, and Samuel Richardson

Isabella G. Beylouné  
*Colby College*

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A Close Analysis into the Portrayal of Female Protagonists  
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Specifically looking into the works of  
Jane Austen, Frances Burney, John Cleland, and Samuel Richardson

Honors Thesis

Isabella Beyloune

2023

Honors Advisor: Professor Aaron Hanlon

Second Reader: Professor Elizabeth Sagaser

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## Introduction

I will be analyzing the gendered authorship of eighteenth century British novels through Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Frances Burney's *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), John Cleland's *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748), and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740).<sup>1</sup> Austen, Burney, Cleland, and Richardson are authors who are famous for their use of the female voice, each pursuing a different approach to writing accurate portrayals of eighteenth century women.

I aim to break down these novels by conducting a close textual analysis of the authors' choices in depicting their characters, through dialogue and narrative style. Additionally, I want to determine the extent to which the protagonists' actions and experiences are weighted by the author's own personal background. Will this influence the authors' portrayal of their female protagonists in causing their fiction to be too "imaginary", or will they be just realistic enough? Lastly, I will be considering to what extent a female protagonist can be categorized as "accurate" to the eighteenth century British-aristocratic female.

Before diving right into comparing these novels, I want to lay out what "feminine writing" means in terms of its appeal and give context regarding eighteenth century English societal and marital standards. I also want to detail roles of women during this time, as well as to define and outline other relevant details needed in order for understanding my analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, (1871; Project Gutenberg, 2006), 49, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/17797/17797-h/17797-h.htm#startoftext>; Though *Pride and Prejudice* was published in 1813, the original manuscript was written between October, 1796 and August, 1797.

*Understanding Domestic Limits of the 18th century Female*

Jane Austen, Francis Burney, John Cleland (partially), and Samuel Richardson depict the stories of their respective female protagonists in an aristocratic environment. Since Austen and Burney are women who were raised in these aristocratic environments, it is reasonable to assume that their personal background would allow them to write a more accurate portrayal of their female protagonists.<sup>2,3</sup> However, this may not be the case. Being a part of the aristocratic “bubble” meant there were limitations and expectations on women. Austen and Burney are famously known for including critiques on society and satire into their stories which indicates the possible frustration they felt towards these limitations affecting both their personal and professional lives. Understanding these limitations will help understand the points I will make in the following chapters pertaining to Austen and Burney’s social critiques and the virtues of femininity Cleland and Richardson are trying to emphasize and claim.

Lawrence Klein discusses gender expectations of the eighteenth century and how gender distinctions presented themselves in respect to different social environments, referred to as modes of space, or spheres: the public and the private. Klein explains that the difference between the public and private spheres depended on the “perceiving modes of public life available.”<sup>4</sup> The public sphere referred to affairs of the State and the private sphere referred to the rest of society; women (except for royalty and courtiers) were usually excluded from the public sphere. However, there did exist a civic public sphere which was more inclusive and allowed men and

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<sup>2</sup> Biographical information and citations in Chapter 1

<sup>3</sup> John Wiltshire, *Frances Burney and the Doctors: Patient Narratives Then and Now* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 20.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence E. Klein, “Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 1 (1995): 103, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/30053810?searchText=Eighteenth-Century+Studies+gender&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3DEighteenth-Century%2BStudies%2Bgender%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2F5YC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A7e45d678d20b2b0a76e18770aa0889aa&seq=7](https://www.jstor.org/stable/30053810?searchText=Eighteenth-Century+Studies+gender&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3DEighteenth-Century%2BStudies%2Bgender%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2F5YC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A7e45d678d20b2b0a76e18770aa0889aa&seq=7)

women to label their actions as “public.” In contrast to our current perception of the terms “public” and “private,” the people of the eighteenth century meant “sociable” and “solitary,” respectively; public matters were exposed to the perception of people in general, while private matters were imperceptible and restricted from the accessibility of others. Interestingly enough, the public and private, like in modern terms, did not correspond to the distinction of “home” and “not-home.” So, even though women spent a lot of time at home (due to marital roles), women were not necessarily spending more time in private.<sup>5</sup>

Marital roles in eighteenth century England coincided with the evolution of women’s domestic roles. For quick reference, men: sought work, made deals with other men, were skilled in talk, and provided for the family; women: kept the house, remained publicly withdrawn, spoke with few, and preserved the goods the husband provided.<sup>6</sup> During this time, men had more agency, justifiably interpreted as being considered relatively “free,” while women were held within the confines of the institution of marriage and their image. Women had no independent legal rights, they could not sue their husbands for divorce (though extremely rare, some divorces did get granted), and they could not act upon their own desires if they conflicted with those of their husbands. All economic and legal powers were the responsibility of the men.<sup>7</sup> Aspects of the masculine responsibility towards the woman are prominent in Richardson’s *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. In the novel, Pamela is given an offer of marriage by Mr. B, a wealthy

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<sup>5</sup>Lawrence E. Klein, “Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 1 (1995), accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/30053810?searchText=Eighteenth-Century+Studies+gender&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3DEighteenth-Century%2BStudies%2Bgender%26so%3Drel&ab\\_se](https://www.jstor.org/stable/30053810?searchText=Eighteenth-Century+Studies+gender&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3DEighteenth-Century%2BStudies%2Bgender%26so%3Drel&ab_se)

<sup>6</sup>Armstrong, 110

<sup>7</sup>Mary Poovey, “Mary Wollstonecraft: The Gender of Genres in Late Eighteenth-Century England,” *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 15, no. 2 (1982): 115, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1345219?searchText=mary+wollstonecraft+in+eighteenth+century+england&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dmale%2Bgender%2Bin%2Beighteenth%2Bcentury%2Bengland%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2F5YC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A78bf6dff42770443d17687e9cdb093f5&seq=7](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1345219?searchText=mary+wollstonecraft+in+eighteenth+century+england&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dmale%2Bgender%2Bin%2Beighteenth%2Bcentury%2Bengland%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2F5YC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A78bf6dff42770443d17687e9cdb093f5&seq=7)

landowner and her employer. With the offer comes a list of conditions that he has drawn out should she accept. Many of these rules require her to not question him, obey him, and facilitate her behavior throughout the marriage (discussed further in Chapter 2).<sup>8</sup>

### *Sexual representation of Eighteenth Century Women*

Frances Burney, and her release of *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, paved the way for authors such as Jane Austen to write complex-minded and sensible female characters.<sup>9</sup> Using the first person perspective, some female authors were able to depict the growth of the female protagonist through the growth of intellect and work life experience, a lot of times meeting a male love interest who challenges the other's intellect and social norms, as seen much in Austen's works. Some male authors, such as Cleland and Richardson, tend to highlight women in a more sexual manner, often depicting female protagonists understanding social experiences as a series of sexual encounters.

In Richardson's *Pamela*, Pamela consistently struggles with the idea of physically maintaining her virtue. Pamela's journey through Mr. B's sexual advancements, as well as her rejection of these advancements throughout the novel, is used to show how well her virtue is maintained, and the repetition of the praise she receives from her parents, and even Mr. B, is used to reinforce how impressive Pamela is as a "role model." Furthermore, John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* narrates the story of Fanny Hill who works in prostitution for much of her young life due to being impoverished. However, Fanny eventually is able to retire from prostitution after

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 173-177.

<sup>9</sup> Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 73.



being left an inheritance as a result of her involvement with an older and wealthy man.<sup>10</sup> This new chapter in her life is what we are told prompts her intellectual development and her letters reflect back on all that she learned from the experiences of her young life. In both Richardson and Cleland's novels, and even slightly in *Evelina*, the female protagonist must endure a multitude of male advancements and seductions as part of their journey to grow.

There are many cases where naivety is a main characteristic of young female protagonists, like in *Evelina* and *Pamela*, where intellectual development was the product of "appropriate" or "inappropriate" responses to their respective situations. In novels, the author gets the say in the "what" that the protagonist responds to. With cases involving male authorship, many choose their protagonists to respond to situations involving seduction while female authors seem to choose responses to the protagonist's own incorrect assumptions and observations.

### *The "Mental Afflictions" of Women*

Jane Austen tends to incorporate characters who are afflicted by nervousness or some sort of mental afflictions. In particular, Mrs. Bennet, in *Pride & Prejudice*, is labeled as being "nervous" when she was discontent as well as subtly hinting at this "nervousness" through her short emotional outbursts, gossipy tendencies, and feelings of melancholy.<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Bennet acts as a juxtaposition to more poised characters such as Mr. Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine, and she often serves as an embarrassing figure for the family, driving away potential suitors for her daughters, including Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley, originally. The inclusion of Mrs. Bennet, to the modern reader, indicates the affliction of a mental illness, yet in the eighteenth century such a concept would not have been entertained. During this time, the term "hysteria" had a different

<sup>10</sup> John Cleland, *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (New York, NY: Biblioness, 2017), 193.

<sup>11</sup> Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Barnes and Noble Classics, 2004), 7.; In this edition, page 1 is actually page 5.

meaning than our modern day definition. “Hysteria” was used as the term for when women became “too emotional.”

Anita Guerrini states, “over the course of the century, the medical definition of the female changed from being primarily physical to being primarily emotional: from body to spirit.”<sup>12</sup> Guerrini’s article focuses on the studies of the eighteenth century Bath physician George Cheyne who specialized in the characterized complex disorders of “hypochondria” or “hysteria.” Although both disorders referred to the same group of nervous ailments, hypochondria was the affliction of men and hysteria was the affliction of women, creating a further separation between male and female.<sup>13</sup> Cheyne wrote to Samuel Richardson in 1742 (just after the publication of *Pamela*) stating,

I am sufficiently apprized of and have felt the Grief, Anguish, and Anxiety such a Distemper must have on a Mind of any Degree of Sensibility...it is happy for Mankind that they [women] cannot feel but by Compassion and Consent of Parts the Misery of their Fellow Creatures of their Acquaintance; else Life would be intolerable.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Anita Guerrini, “The Hungry Soul: George Cheyne and the Construction of Femininity,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 3 (1999): 279, accessed October 29, 2022,

[https://www.academia.edu/8012207/The\\_Hungry\\_Soul\\_George\\_Cheyne\\_and\\_the\\_Construction\\_of\\_Femininity](https://www.academia.edu/8012207/The_Hungry_Soul_George_Cheyne_and_the_Construction_of_Femininity)

<sup>13</sup>Anita Guerrini, “The Hungry Soul: George Cheyne and the Construction of Femininity,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 3 (1999): 281, accessed October 29, 2022,

[https://www.academia.edu/8012207/The\\_Hungry\\_Soul\\_George\\_Cheyne\\_and\\_the\\_Construction\\_of\\_Femininity](https://www.academia.edu/8012207/The_Hungry_Soul_George_Cheyne_and_the_Construction_of_Femininity)

<sup>14</sup>John Mullan, “Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians,” *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 145-146, accessed October 29, 2022,

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

In the eyes of several eighteenth century physicians, the melancholy symptoms of hypochondria were described as types of susceptibility which can be evidence of refinement and “sensibility” which is considered debilitating.<sup>15</sup> The use of the term “sentimental” suggested feelings of rationality and this “sensibility” was deemed too overwhelming for women, who were never encouraged to discipline their feelings through reason nor provided with constructive outlets for such feelings. However, men considered such “weaknesses” attractive qualities in women.<sup>16</sup> Hypochondriacs (men) were typically described as being studious and removed from the world of trade and business. In fact, frequently many writers, poets, and philosophers found themselves subject to melancholy, not just the ill-minded.<sup>17</sup> However, women remained under male scrutiny as they were “supposed” to lead these sedentary lives, unlike men. Physician Robert Whytt in his 1765 book, *Observations on the nature, causes, and cure, of those disorders*, writes that women experience hysteric symptoms (working off the assumption that hypochondria and hysteria are two different diseases) more frequently, violently, and suddenly than hypochondriac men as they were believed to be more susceptible to “passions” resulting in a breakaway from their normal, natural functions. Whytt notes that distinctions of the disease are women being susceptible to fainting or seizing in the presence of emotionally stressful situations.

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<sup>15</sup>John Mullan, “Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians,” *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 146, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

<sup>16</sup>Mary Poovey, ““Mary Wollstonecraft: The Gender of Genres in Late Eighteenth-Century England,” *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 15, no. 2 (1982): 117, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1345219?searchText=male+gender+in+eighteenth+century+england&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dmale%2Bgender%2Bin%2Beighteenth%2Bcentury%2Bengland%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2FSYC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A78bf6dff42770443d17687e9cdb093f5&seq=7](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1345219?searchText=male+gender+in+eighteenth+century+england&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dmale%2Bgender%2Bin%2Beighteenth%2Bcentury%2Bengland%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2FSYC-6398%2Ftest&refreqid=fastly-default%3A78bf6dff42770443d17687e9cdb093f5&seq=7)

<sup>17</sup>John Mullan, “Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians,” *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 148, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

John Mullan states that,

The very vocabulary which [Samuel] Richardson, for instance, uses in his delineation of this femininity and this resilient virtue is, at points, exactly the vocabulary characteristics of eighteenth century description of hysteria: tenderness, sensibility, delicacy, and disorder.<sup>18</sup>

Referring to Richardson's novel *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady* (1748), Mullan explains that the deployment of these terms allows for the woman to be perceived as "both the appalled and yet titillated scrutiny and as the impossible paragon of virtue."<sup>19</sup> Mullen is claiming that Richardson is able to perfectly capture the mental afflictions of women and portray that in his novel. This could possibly be because of Richardson's past correspondence with Cheyne (referenced above) about the misery of such afflictions. However, Richardson lacked a character of representative hysteria in *Pamila*, further mainly focusing on how Pamila is able to maintain her virtue and how she is not influenced or afflicted by such a disease. Mullen also mentions how "sensibility" was exercised through suffering, the misfortunes of others, and through the exercise of virtue. Authors, such as Richardson, would structure their narratives "according to the excitement of sensibility by that which would seek to destroy it (male desire, acquisitiveness, and

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<sup>18</sup>John Mullan, "Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians," *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 148, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

<sup>19</sup>John Mullan, "Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians," *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 154, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

worldly ambition).”<sup>20</sup> These authors, commonly male, tend to invest in characters who are young, unmarried women that are put into vulnerable positions, yet emerge triumphant over “sensibility” and retain composure.

Eventually, perceptions of the hysteria gradually started to be associated with the brain, making it a neurological etiology.<sup>21</sup> Physicians began to implement regimental medicine and concluded that one must control their environment to avoid disease. However, there came a rise in the intertwining of medical terminology and politics which led to the idea of the right of self-management (a result of such ideas coinciding with the scientific revolution).<sup>22</sup> Therefore, with the correlation between violent behavior and disease, and the responsibilities husbands have over their wives, the neurological aspect floating around hysteria led to those afflicted to be admitted to asylums for the study and treatment of the “female centered” disease.<sup>23</sup>

### *Taking the female perspective in writing*

Between male and female authors, who takes a more “accurate,” or in some ways worded, more “true,” representation of the eighteenth century British-aristocratic female character? Authors such as Jane Austen, Frances Burney, John Cleland, and Samuel Richardson

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<sup>20</sup> John Mullan, “Hypochondria And Hysteria: Sensibility And The Physicians,” *The Eighteenth Century* 25, no. 2 (1984): 162, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41467321?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A835e03eccf36ee8f9ef98f01b91d6b52&seq=22)

<sup>21</sup> Cecilia Tasca, Mariangela Rapetti, Mauro Giovanni Carta, and Bianca Fadda, “Women And Hysteria In The History Of Mental Health,” *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*, no. 8 (2012): 114, accessed October 29, 2022, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3480686/>

<sup>22</sup> Karen Harvey, “The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century,” *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 4 (2002): 903, accessed October 29, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3133533?seq=5>

<sup>23</sup> Amy Mallory-Kani, “‘A Healthy State’: Mary Wollstonecraft’s Medico-Politic,” *The Eighteenth Century* 56, no. 1 (2015): 26-27, accessed October 29, 2022, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/24575124?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3Ae3cbb46d042ed84d4d72f8ed893f406a&seq=7](https://www.jstor.org/stable/24575124?searchText=george+cheyne&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dgeorge%2Bcheyne%26so%3Drel&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3Ae3cbb46d042ed84d4d72f8ed893f406a&seq=7)

each incorporate their own stylistic convention to portray their respective female protagonists. Austen followed a late eighteenth century format by mainly focusing on the interiority of her characters with descriptions through a subjective narrative. John Cleland followed an early eighteenth century style by focusing on exterior descriptors, focusing on observations and objective fact. Both Burney and Richardson used the then popular epistolary format of the mid-eighteenth century which included a mix of objectivity and subjectivity (this coincides with the transition of novelistic style in the mid-eighteenth century from Cleland's objective perspective to Austen's subjective). However, what all these authors have in common is that each tries to mimic the "female voice," but what is the "female voice?" In *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, Nancy Armstrong uses the term "female writing" to describe this voice. She defines "female writing" as,

*Writing that was considered appropriate for or could be written by women—in fact designated itself as feminine, which meant that other writing, by implication, was understood as male. But female writing was not only responsible for the gendering of discourse; it was also responsible for representing sexual relations as something entirely removed from politics.*<sup>24</sup>

Armstrong uses the term "female writing" to describe a technique to translate the feminine voice into literature. Female writing is seen as its own entity, allowing the separating of the gendered voice of the author that comes through the writing. Armstrong further states that "by adopting the voices of women, such authors as Defoe and Richardson deliberately renounced what Walter

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<sup>24</sup> Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 28.

Ong has described as ‘a sexually specialized language used almost exclusively for communication between male and female’.”<sup>25</sup> “Female writing” creates the ability for authors to narrate using emotional intent behind a character’s actions rather than just external circumstance which pushes aside any critical and satirical intentions of the work. This stylistic form of writing allows the author to hide their political affiliations and not receive ridicule for certain claims, simply because a woman’s voice held no political claim nor power.

Though these male authors “renounce” an active political voice by writing outside of the dominant class, this is as a result of their ability to choose to do so, thus exerting another power. While some authors may use these deceptive strategies to solely market their political opinion, other authors also choose to simultaneously use the “female voice” to further emphasize the imbalance of power between genders. Authors John Cleland and Samuel Richardson, are good examples of this. Both include politics and speak on the sense of morality, but both also include the pursuit of male ownership over women, either through marriage or sexual advancements. Therefore in the fictional world, as well as the real world, Cleland and Richardson hold the power to exert their own dominance through their status as part of the male gender. Novels like *Fanny Hill* and *Pamela* not only claim a “female voice”, but bear a woman’s name for its title, “own” a woman’s experience, intend to teach an audience of young women, and even find themselves criticized by female reviewers. The “female voice” is a powerful tool that male authors have used to play with both power dynamics and politics.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Armstrong, 28

<sup>26</sup> Armstrong, 28-29

*Representation of the Female Character*

When comparing the concept of accuracy between the works of Austen, Burney, Cleland, and Richardson, all four write with values corresponding to expectations upon women of aristocratic status. So when referring to “accuracy” of the female protagonists, I am referring to the accuracy in regards to standards and expectations of the aristocracy.

Courtship and marriage, especially in English families of aristocratic rank, was also a political tool for the uptake of wealth and status. However, most domestic fiction was used to “represent an alternative form of political power without appearing to contest the distribution of power that it represented as historically given.”<sup>27</sup> “Domestic fiction mapped out a new domain of discourse as it invested common forms of social behavior with the emotional values of women” and allowed for readers to engage in fantasies of political power that were more acceptable because they were played out within a domestic framework where female subordination was affirmed.<sup>28</sup> Social fiction offered that framework for exploring what the limits of such a structure in fiction could mean for “ascriptive ties that bind characters to their properties” and sought to separate the language of sexual relations from politics.<sup>29,30</sup> The difference in fictional works came from the differing intentions between men and women, especially through the use of novels as a platform for the author’s own social and political critiques and they respectively believed to be true of their surroundings.

Depending on the period during this time, authors would use different forms of writing to lay out what the reader would perceive as “believable.” The “minute particular” was a writing technique used for narratives in the early eighteenth century and relied on minute details in order

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<sup>27</sup> Armstrong, 29

<sup>28</sup> Armstrong, 29

<sup>29</sup> Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 86.

<sup>30</sup> Armstrong, 3



to portray realism.<sup>31</sup> Daniel Defoe's writing of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) used the "minute particular" in the form of lists and excessive detailing of day to day tasks in order to be more convincing of the truth behind the story. The "minute particular" served as an effective tool to portray realism as seen with Defoe who originally released the novel as an autobiography of Robinson Crusoe (a fictional character), which many people believed to be a real person. In the later eighteenth century, authorship transitioned to include descriptors that focused on the character themselves, with depictions being more psychological rather than task oriented. Authors like Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë are known to focus on describing their characters' internal states rather than physical appearance. Austen's Emma Woodhouse, from her novel *Emma* (1815), is naive, yet playful and dignified as she tries to play matchmaker with her friend Harriet Smith where Emma is seen on many occasions to make incorrect assumptions when it comes to matchmaking. Brontë's Jane Eyre, from her novel *Jane Eyre* (1847), is smart and rational, and is able to make her own decisions in order to eventually find herself in a happy marriage as well as her own independence. Each of these women are characterized through their interpretations and rationale during different situations rather than only responding to external circumstances. The agency of Austen's Woodhouse, and Brontë's Eyre, is given through the bildungsroman genre as they journey to become mature women capable of having contempt finales, whereas the agency of Defoe's Crusoe is given through his need to survive as a castaway on a tropical island and his quest for power while in isolation.

The eighteenth century was a period where forms of character writing reexamined established forms of social integration allowing for a new perspective on social inequalities.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Tita Chico, "Minute Particulars: Microscopy and Eighteenth-Century Narrative." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 39, no. 2 (2006): 143–61. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44030191>.

<sup>32</sup> Susan Manning, *Poetics of Character: Transatlantic Encounters 1700-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 104.

Deidre Lynch argues that in the instance of male characterization, specifically in the case of Tobias Smollett's character Roderick Random in *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748), Smollett can be described as weaving in between under-characterizing and over-characterizing Roderick in order to challenge the concept of the "characterless character."<sup>33</sup> Lynch explains that Roderick's "division between the characterlessness, mobile gentleman and the excessive characterized and fixed world" is evident because Roderick's claim to gentlemen status is clearly fictional.<sup>34</sup> The separation of fiction and reality for male protagonists can be clearly seen and argued whereas for female protagonists, their characterization is rooted in generalized standards and reputation. In general, there was a desire to have portrayals of women be more "accurate" than "imaginative," and much of these accuracies are possibly fueled by the misconception of men wanting to have power over the female narrative.

At a first glance, it is possible to think that some male authorship could fail to make the claim to realism in its female characters, Susan Manning states, "where there is a struggle in moral philosophy in how people should behave, the rhetoric of character evokes 'people' behaving well and badly in ways that attach the reader to the moral dilemma they metonymically perform."<sup>35</sup> Basically, the aristocratic female perspective is different from that of the aristocratic male. However, literature has the power to allow readers to feel the existence of a character, and a human dilemma, in which they share through an ethical bond, and sometimes that bond depends on who is reading the literature.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Lynch, 104

<sup>34</sup> Lynch, 104

<sup>35</sup> Manning, 101

<sup>36</sup> Manning, 101

*Criticism on a Woman's Ability to Portray Realism*

Women authors in the later eighteenth century aimed for more realistic portrayals of relationships. The assumption that “romantic” fiction would cause women readers to become too irrational and imaginative loomed as a societal pressure for authors, like Jane Austen, to focus on realism in their fiction, a concern not present for male authors. However, where is the tangential line of realism for both authors such as Austen and Cleland? Ros Ballaster in *Seductive Forms* (2007) writes about the twentieth century discourse regarding feminist criticism on the ability of eighteenth century women writers to depict female experiences faithfully.<sup>37</sup> Ballaster mentions that Elaine Showalter in *A Literature of their Own* (1979) dismisses female eighteenth century women writers saying, “they refused to deal with a professional role, or had a negative orientation towards it...they did not see their writing as an aspect of female experience, or as an expression of it.”<sup>38</sup> Ballaster counters this argument with explaining that late eighteenth century authors like Jane Austen and Frances Burney were actually able to imagine the modest and amateur eighteenth century woman, a feat “born out of a reaction to the high level of professionalism and blatant eroticism practiced by women writers earlier in the century.”<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, Ballaster adds that Sandra Gilbert, and Susan Gubar carry Showalter’s point in their *Mad woman in the Attic* (1979) which produces a linear account of female literary history being “a series of increasingly sophisticated aesthetic responded to the restrictions imposed by a ‘patriarchal poetics’,” or in other words, “formal change in women’s narrative fiction...is caused by the inability of previous forms to maintain an effective resistance to, or protection from, the

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<sup>37</sup> Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 19-24.

<sup>38</sup> Ballaster, 19

<sup>39</sup> Ballaster, 20

energies of patriarchal power.”<sup>40</sup> Gilbert and Gubar viewed women’s narrative fiction as being “strategic” rather than a “straightforward reflection of female experience,” finding that women’s narrative fiction repeatedly falls into the “truth” that rage towards patriarchal oppression is behind every woman’s fiction.<sup>41</sup>

These critiques connect the idea that the intent of the eighteenth century female author varies in their writing, whether it be political, fantastical, or strategic. But what these critiques do not claim about “female writing” is that it is “true” and “accurate” to the female experience of the time. With the rise of the novel, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, a shift to “realistic” writing occurred. Novels shifted to be descriptive, depicting everyday actions of everyday people. What made these actions and events “realistic” is the likely probability that such events could occur, Clara Reeve puts this well in *The Progress of Romance* (1785):

The Novel gives a familiar relation to such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friends, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it, is to represent every scene, in so easy and natural a manner, and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses, of the persons in the story, as if they were our own.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ballaster, 19

<sup>41</sup> Ballaster, 20

<sup>42</sup> Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance: And the History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt* (New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 1930. <https://doi.org/10.7312/reev94020>), 111.

Reeve, an eighteenth century English novelist, satisfyingly captures the meaning of “realistic,” so how have these eighteenth century female authors not been able to accurately portray the “female experience?” The answer to this question could be one of two: female authors do understand the meaning of realism and choose to ignore it to serve their own agenda, *or* female authors simply have a different grasp of what they perceive to be “real.”

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In the following chapters, I will perform case study comparisons in order to satisfy the aims I have set out to write about. All chapters will include a close textual analysis of the authors’ use of dialogue and narrative style for depicting their characters. Chapter 1 will focus on the comparison between Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and Cleland’s *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. I will look at how Austen and Cleland create “realistic” depictions of women (if they do so at all) through their respective protagonists, Elizabeth Bennet and Fanny Hill. Through Austen and Cleland, I will determine to what extent the actions and experiences of the protagonists are weighted by the author’s own personal background, and whether this will influence the author’s approach to the meaning of “realism” through their portrayal of Bennet and Hill. Chapter 2 will focus on the comparison between Burney’s *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady’s Entrance into the World* and Richardson’s *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. This comparison will look at the extent to which *Evelina* and *Pamela* can be categorized as “accurate” to the eighteenth century British-aristocratic female. Both *Evelina* and *Pamela* are young women navigating young adulthood, and are taught to uphold specific moralities and propriety in order

to be respectable. This chapter aims to analyze the differences in how Evelina and Pamela uphold their virtues, and are these characterizations transferable to the real life female.

Overall, I aim to see if gender of the author matters in giving a realistic portrayal of eighteenth century female protagonists, and if there actually is a difference depending on whether the author is male or female. In the end, I will use my findings to create a comparative “ranking” in how believable Austen, Burney, Cleland, and Richardson’s respective female protagonists are. Also as a reminder, I will *not* be commenting towards the accuracy of other female characters in these novels, only the featured protagonists.

## Chapter 1: A Comparison of Jane Austen and John Cleland

Does Austen stray from the “truth” of eighteenth century female characterization, purely with the intent of political and societal critiques, or is her “truth” simply different? Taking the perspective of critics like Gilbert, Gubar, and Showalter, one can infer that Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* is actually more “imaginative” and “intentional” than Cleland’s *Fanny Hill*, which would be deemed more “realistic” due to the assumed political nature of Austen’s authorship.

This chapter intends to tackle this question and deal with the depiction of “realism” in how overarching relationships and mannerisms are displayed, *not* perception (spoken about in the Chapter 2), which is how the characters react to situations and interpret interactions. Realism is the aspect of truth in fiction and its accuracy to the respective period specifically in regards to authors Jane Austen and John Cleland. When using the word “true” and “truth,” as in “Austen’s truth” for example, I am referring to an individual’s scope of cognitive grasp on reality influencing their external perspective. This is the perspective which is able to influence novelistic “world building” for the reader, construct societal opinions, and influence actions.

I have previously written about the roles of men and women in specific social spheres. To reiterate, the public sphere took place in government sectors where politics were discussed, this sector being exclusively for men; the private sphere included all other spaces and discussions, this being a space allowed for women. Unlike Austen, Cleland had access to both social spheres. Access to the public sphere allowed Cleland to be more informed on political conversations occurring in the governing sector, conversation that Austen never had the opportunity to partake in, even if she had the intellectual capacity to contribute to such concepts. Understanding the differences between Austen and Cleland’s backgrounds is useful in understanding the basis of their writing and possibly the inspiration behind particular stories and characters, like *Fanny Hill*

and *Pride and Prejudice*, both seemingly reflective of each other's respective perceptions of their point of views of the society.

### *John Cleland's Life of Politics*

Though not much is actively known about Cleland, we do know that he lived with minimal wealth despite the fact that his father, William Cleland, a soldier and government official in Scotland and England, had connections to members of nobility and was a friend of Alexander Pope. From 1728 to 1740 (between the ages of 18 and 30), Cleland served at the East India Company in Bombay as a soldier, and later as a civil administrator. It is only because of Cleland's time at the East India Company that we know about his life before his literary career. After Cleland's return to London in 1741 (shortly before his father's death), again, nothing is known of his life for six years until 1748 when he landed himself in Fleet prison for debt until 1749. It was during this year-long imprisonment in which Cleland wrote *Fanny Hill*.<sup>43</sup>

The release of *Fanny Hill* caused a public scandal which, not long after, led to the arrest and threatened prosecution to those involved in the novel's publication, including Cleland himself. Roger Lonsdale writes that Cleland expressed taking responsibility for the novel, "Cleland referred to it [*Fanny Hill*] as 'a book I disdain to defend, and wish, from my Soul, buried and forgot', and complained of his own 'present low abject condition, that of a writer for Bread'. He was prepared to take full personal responsibility for the obscene *Memoirs*..."<sup>44</sup>

Later the same year of the release of *Fanny Hill*, Cleland released *The Case Of The Unfortunate Bosavern Penlez* (1749), a fifty-five page pamphlet criticizing the sentencing and

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<sup>43</sup> Roger Lonsdale, "New Attributions to John Cleland." *The Review of English Studies* 30, no. 119 (1979): 268–90; 268. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/514321>.

<sup>44</sup> Lonsdale, 272



execution of Bosavern Penlez, a British wig maker, for his involvements in sailors' brothel riots (originally published anonymously, the pamphlet is ascribed to Cleland due to notes of his publisher, Ralph Griffiths).<sup>45</sup> Roger Lonsdale details,

That Cleland was aware of the political implications of his pamphlet is clear from his immediate disclaimer of any intention 'to arraign, or reflect, on a public judgment, or on the Wisdom of the executive Power in his extended reconsideration of the Penlez affair'.<sup>46</sup>

Penlez's sentencing garnered widespread sympathy and the pamphlet had short term appeal to those concerned about Penlez's fate at Tyburn. These pamphlets are assumed to be intended to discredit the main evidence against Penlez, as Cleland seems to morally justify the riots.

Lonsdale mentions that there could be a correlation between the release of the Penlez pamphlet and the *Fanny Hill* arrests because a warrant was issued for the arrest of the author, printer, and publisher of *Fanny Hill* the day after the pamphlet's publication. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence to link the two, leaving this fact up to coincidence. However, coincidence or not, the legal issues Cleland faced attributed to the vulgarity of *Fanny Hill* and the implications that a women involved in prostitution and having that final happy reunion with her first true lover, would be dangerously misleading to young women, that it would be unbelievable that Fanny could eventually be thought of as a virtuous wife, a happy mother, and an ornament of society.<sup>47</sup>

Cleland was not arrested on the grounds for any political critique from *Fanny Hill* itself, and he

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<sup>45</sup> Lonsdale, 271

<sup>46</sup> Lonsdale, 272

<sup>47</sup> Lonsdale, 273-274

was not reprimanded for any opinions that may be presented in the novel. It does beg the question, though, if reactions would differ to the pamphlet if it had been written by a woman or from the “female voice” instead. If that correlation existed between the pamphlet and the arrests, would having that “female voice” have made a difference? Well, it could have. Speaking from this perspective, if the anonymous author turned out to be a woman instead, Cleland may have only been socially scrutinized instead of legally, with his association to *Fanny Hill* probably being ignored, due to the lack of political weight a woman's opinion held. Furthermore, the existence of the pamphlet leads to another speculative conversation of whether Cleland's arrest for *Fanny Hill* is an indirect persecution for the pamphlet with the state not being able to directly prove that Cleland wrote the piece as a result of its anonymous publication.

Ultimately, the scandal surrounding Cleland's publication of *Fanny Hill* provides the most documentation of Cleland's life. Aside from his other publications and his brief role in the *Monthly Review*, a highly influential periodical launched in 1749 reviewing books of novelists including Tobias Smollett and Henry Fielding (Fielding interestingly being the person to respond to Cleland's pamphlet justifying the Penlez's sentencing), the next 40 years after *Fanny Hill's* publication is for the most part, minimal.<sup>48</sup> Though Cleland's personal history is minimal, based on his work with writing political critiques and reviewing the works of other writers, Cleland is clearly no stranger creatively making his voice and opinions heard.

Since little is also known about Cleland's intention or inspiration behind *Fanny Hill*, we can only speculate about its origins. Cleland was already in debtors' prison when he wrote the novel, so there could be a number of reasons why he actually chose to write it. One reason Cleland wrote *Fanny Hill* could be because he was presented with the opportunity, and time, to write profitable political statements in order to pay back his debt, or it was simply a novel

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<sup>48</sup> Lonsdale, 269

conjured from his imagination, the vulgarity and detail stemming from isolation and boredom. Lonsdale mentions that Griffith may have been responsible for Cleland's release from Fleet Prison because since he gained some profits from the novel for publishing it, Cleland indirectly paid back some of his debt to Griffith.<sup>49</sup> Due to this fact, the former is probably the most feasible explanation. Cleland was clearly smart, he saw an opportunity to express the components of a failed system, the system that left him poor and incarcerated, and project those failings through the lens of a young woman who, similarly, was failed the same way. Using that “feminine voice” and perspective softens the content in the novel and allows Cleland to project some of his anger and disappointment towards his own misfortunes. By choosing to have the narrative be told from the “weaker sex,” the sensibility of Fanny can be clearly understood, where that kind of sensitivity (referring to the belief of “hysterical feelings”), could not be translated over to men. *Fanny Hill* may have allowed for an outlet for Cleland to air his frustrations with the overlooking of any intentions or possible offenses while also earning a profit to pay back his debt. Well, *Fanny Hill* was overlooked for months before the release of the Penlez pamphlet.

### *The Unassumed Life of Jane Austen*

In contrast to John Cleland, Jane Austen’s life is well documented and with minimal scandal. Though Austen herself was not born (officially) to the aristocracy, her family was fairly wealthy and lived among members of the aristocracy. Austen’s family was also quite close. Not only was Austen one of eight siblings (six brothers, James, George, Edward, Henry, Frances, and one sister, Cassandra), her family lived with a strong “cousinage” which extended over many counties and even beyond England; there existed a large numbers of cousins, uncles and aunts,

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<sup>49</sup> Lonsdale, 269

and repeated names, since maintaining familial histories and connections on both parental sides were very important.<sup>50</sup> James Edward Austen-Leigh, Austen's nephew who published *A Memoir of Jane Austen* in 1870, describes this "middle class" (though middle class did not technically exist, the Austens lived fairly close to this modern day distinction of the term) as,

The smaller landed proprietors, who seldom went farther from home than their county town, from the squire with his thousand acres to the yeoman who cultivated his hereditary property of one or two hundred, then formed a numerous class—each the aristocrat of his own parish; and there was probably a greater difference in manners and refinement between this class and that immediately above them than could now be found between any two persons who rank as gentlemen.<sup>51</sup>

Her father, Reverend George Austen, was a part of the clergy, and rural clergy were compared to the higher section of country gentlemen, who went into parliament and mixed with London society.<sup>52</sup> The Austens themselves (referring to Austen's paternal family), however, had no connections to the aristocracy.<sup>53</sup> Claire Tomalin describes the Austens as being "meritocrats," power bestowed upon individuals based on ability and talent (merit), rather than wealth or rank.<sup>54</sup> Elizabeth Austen, Austen's great-grandmother, after her husband left the family poor when he died, worked to pay off her late-husband's debts, put her sons through school, saw her daughter

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<sup>50</sup> Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 13.

<sup>51</sup> Austen-Leigh, 10

<sup>52</sup> Austen-Leigh, 10

<sup>53</sup> Tomalin, 14

<sup>54</sup> Tomalin, 15

married, and saw her sons launch respectable careers.<sup>55</sup> Tomalin goes on to label Elizabeth's life as "heroic," since she single-handedly saved the Austen family.<sup>56</sup>

Jane's mother, Cassandra Leigh, had a proud family history that included links to the aristocracy; the Leighs were descendants of the Lord Mayor of London who proclaimed Elizabeth I the Queen. Since then, some Leighs were ennobled, some became owners of Stoneleigh Abbey in Warwickshire, and married to aristocrats.<sup>57</sup> Leigh's brother, James, eventually came into fortune, but left none to her. After moving to Bath, and the death of her father, Leigh decided to marry George Austen and took to a tough life as the wife of a country parson.<sup>58</sup>

Rev. Austen's success as a teacher at the family run boys' school and his work with the parish, allowed for the family to have enough to afford a good education, for his children to mix with the best society in the neighborhood, and to exercise liberal hospitality to both family and friends.<sup>59</sup>

Overall, the Austen family was known to embody an abundance of "love and esteem" which led them to be socially agreeable and attractive (potentially a direct result of Austen's father being a clergyman for the Church of England). The Austens had very little disagreements, always displaying a firm union and were known to have strong family affection. Towards the end of Austen's life, she felt all the company and abundance she needed with her large family. Austen-Leigh adequately sums it up,

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<sup>55</sup> Tomalin, 15

<sup>56</sup> Tomalin, 16

<sup>57</sup> Tomalin, 13

<sup>58</sup> Tomalin, 14

<sup>59</sup> Tomalin 25, 29

This was the small circle, continually enlarged, however, by the increasing families of four of her brothers, within which Jane Austen found her wholesome pleasures, duties, and interests, and beyond which she went very little into society during the last ten years of her life. There was so much that was agreeable and attractive in this family party that its members may be excused if they were inclined to live somewhat too exclusively within it. They might see in each other much to love and esteem, and something to admire. The family talk had abundance of spirit and vivacity, and was never troubled by disagreements even in little matters, for it was not their habit to dispute or argue with each other: above all, there was strong family affection and firm union, never to be broken but by death.<sup>60</sup>

Furthermore, Austen-Leigh adds, “It cannot be doubted that all this had its influence on the author in the construction of her stories, in which a family party usually supplies the narrow stage, while the interest is made to revolve round a few actors.”<sup>61</sup> These strong family ties are evident in *Pride and Prejudice*. Though the Bennets are not portrayed as an agreeable family, there is clearly a sense of unity depicted. This unity, though difficult to be seen at face value, is felt through Austen’s skill of narration and voice that brings the reader to feel genuine attachment to the family, even when evident character flaws arise (e.g. Lydia Bennet’s rashness, Mrs. Bennet’s nervousness, etc.).

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<sup>60</sup> Austen-Leigh, 17-18

<sup>61</sup> Austen-Leigh, 18

Austen-Leigh includes how Austen would use her external environment as inspiration for her stories. He points out similarities to the Bennet family and their use of horses for farm work when not used for the carriages. Coincidentally, the name Elizabeth has held much symbolic significance to Austen in her early life and future— Elizabeth (Eliza) Hancock, Austen’s older, first cousin of 14 years, who was a central figure in Austen’s life, influencing Austen with her “fluent pen” and enjoyment of the art and, as mentioned before, Elizabeth Austen, Austen’s great-grandmother, though.<sup>62</sup> To Austen, these women served as strong influences of independence and intelligence. Tomalin describes Eliza as being “different” from the other Austen cousins, and unlike Austen,

Eliza was always an exotic, a bird of bright plumage with a story that might have come from one of the romances Jane liked to mock [a marriage for money rather than love]...she was incautious in marrying, and could write frivolously of her feelings or lack of them; and yet she was always a most loving daughter, and become a tenderly attentive mother. <sup>63</sup>

Austen and Eliza were very close, with Austen dedicating her later novel *Love and Friendship* to her.<sup>64</sup> Though not meant as a direct comparison, it is a reasonable thought that: (1) Eliza’s free spirit and character, attributes of which Austen seemingly admired, could hold influence in her more headstrong characters, such as Elizabeth Bennet; (2) The death of Eliza’s father during her youth became a concern of Austen’s father which in turn warranted Rev. Austen contemplates

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<sup>62</sup> Tomalin, 11

<sup>63</sup> Tomalin, 11

<sup>64</sup> Tomalin, 76

the future of his own family, specifically his wife and daughters, in the event of his own death (similar to the urgency Mr. Bennet feels for his daughters to get married).

Additionally, in Austen's novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, written alongside *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen-Leigh specifically pointed out that those who knew the Austen family surmised that the two Dashwood siblings were representative of Austen herself and her sister, Cassandra.<sup>65, 66</sup> However, Austen-Leigh addresses that there is only a partial truth in these assumptions, saying that while the "sense" of Elinor could possibly reflect Cassandra, Austen lacked the "sensibility" of Marianne. However, these assumptions from those who knew the family supports any claim that Austen is capable of drawing aspects of her personal life and incorporating them into her novels. So, the fact that close relations to the Austen family drew possible connections between Austen and Cassandra, and Marianne and Elinor leaves room to assume that she has done this in other works, specifically in *Pride and Prejudice*, not just in overall family dynamics, as mentioned above, but in Elizabeth Bennet herself.

Tomalin mentions that in 1797, the year Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice*, was a bleak time for the Austens. During this time, Tom Fowle, Cassandra's husband, died, and Austen was fighting her affections for Tom Lefroy (similar to Elizabeth's situation with Mr. Darcy). Unfortunately, during this year, there were no surviving letters in which to read about Austen's mind at the time, except the manuscript of *Pride and Prejudice*. The joyous, good-humored novel was, in context, detached, "creating a world altogether unlike the one in which she was living... much more comfortably established than the Austens could ever have hoped to be. Mr. Bennet has never had to follow a profession, and Mrs. Bennet prides herself on her daughters being without domestic responsibilities."<sup>67</sup> But taking a closer look, Elizabeth Bennet, along with

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<sup>65</sup> Tomalin, 154

<sup>66</sup> Austen-Leigh, 17

<sup>67</sup> Tomalin, 159-160



the Bennet family as a whole, seem to serve more as foils for Austen and her family rather than reflections on their personalities. Aside from clear external factors (e.g. similar romance situation, close relationships with older sisters, and similar financial situations), Elizabeth and Austen are very different. It could be argued that if Austen had actually inserted herself into the characterization of Elizabeth, however, this Austen may fall into the notion of “romanticizing” her own life, discrediting her as a female author capable of telling “real” stories.

### *Textual Comparisons of Pride and Prejudice and Fanny Hill*

Unexpectedly, the manner in which Cleland and Austen both wrote their respective novels are very similar. Both authors, either intentional or not, wrote their novels seemingly as an outlet of escape during times of misfortune: Cleland escaping the confines of his prison cell and Austen escaping her present reality. Of course, Austen, having resided most her life in Hampshire and Bath, only making occasional visits to London, she would have been less exposed to the “harsher” sides of humanity, never knowing what it was like to be in prison for debt or poverty. The carefully labeled, “champagne problems” Austen had (I speak hesitantly about commenting on Austen’s emotional state because of the period’s overreactions of womens’ sensible emotions) are reasonable for a woman living among the aristocracy.<sup>68</sup> As someone who was raised to value close familial relationships and for someone who wishes to marry for love, for Austen, her stress was rational.

Austen begins *Pride and Prejudice* with the famous line, “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife,” while Cleland’s first line of *Fanny Hill* is, “I sit down to give you an undeniable proof of my

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<sup>68</sup> Problems one must deal with, but in comparison to events like poverty and war they cannot be considered on the same scale.

considering your desires as indispensable orders.”<sup>69, 70</sup> Both lines constitute submission of a woman towards a higher authority (respectively, a husband and an unknown recipient referred to as “Madam”). Even though there is vast differences in content between the two novels, both grapple with prostitution: *Fanny Hill*, for obvious reasons, and in *Pride and Prejudice* because Austen writes on the notion of marriage as a form of prostitution as being present in Elizabeth’s mind, a disdain for marriage, not of love, but for an exchange of money for companionship, (or in other words, “buying... a social position as a married woman, escaping the humiliations of a dependent daughter at home in exchange for sexual and domestic services.”) an idea that dwelt on Austen’s consciousness knowing this was the situation for her beloved paternal aunt, Philadelphia (Austen’s father’s sister, Eliza’s mother).<sup>71</sup> However, Tomalin mentions that Austen is careful in this sense. Charlotte Collins, the character representing this marital exchange in *Pride and Prejudice*, is written to show that she still had control over some aspects, such as having a few servants, being able to receive guests, and displays strategies in which minimize her husband’s, Mr. Collins, rudeness.<sup>72</sup>

Clearly there are overlapping themes between both novels. Diving into the text reveals more similarities between the authorship, and better cementing my findings that there is not much of a difference between the two novels at face value besides the gender of the authors and the discrepancies in writing styles defined by the period. Below, I present three distinct pieces of textual comparisons between *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fanny Hill*:

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<sup>69</sup> Austen, 5

<sup>70</sup> Cleland, 1

<sup>71</sup> Tomalin, 161

<sup>72</sup> Tomalin, 161

I. The “Love Interests”

In understanding, Darcy was the superior. Bingley was by no means deficient, but Darcy was clever. He was at the same time haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting. In that respect his friend had greatly the advantage. Bingley was sure of being liked wherever he appeared, Darcy was continually giving offense.<sup>73</sup>

– Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

An old jolly stager, who kept it, and understood life perfectly well, breakfasted with us, and leering archly at me, gave us both joy...all which, common landlord’s cant, not only pleased and soothed me, but helped to deliver my confusion at being with my new sovereign, whom, the minute approached, I began to fear to be alone with: a timidity which true love had a greater share in than even maiden bashfulness.<sup>74</sup>

– John Cleland, *Fanny Hill*

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<sup>73</sup> Austen, 18

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<sup>74</sup> Cleland, 41

To show that the writing styles differed between the middle eighteenth century and late eighteenth/early nineteenth century, I have provided two great examples to show these differences. The early eighteenth century, as previously described in the introduction, focused much on the “minute particulars,” small details that detail external observations that may or may not be relevant (e.g. the physical descriptors of a character like hair color, lists, dates, etc.). As the century progressed, there was a shift in preference towards representing the psyche, with more of an emphasis on internal characteristics and perspectives, rather than physical and objective detail. Ian Watt describes this movement as a “transition from the objective, social and public orientation of the classical world to the subjective, individualist and private orientation of the life and literature of the last two hundred years.”<sup>75</sup> Cleland’s release of *Fanny Hill* in the mid eighteenth century is an indicator of this transition since Cleland’s writing shows a mix of both: (1) the first person narrative of his epistolary novel enacts that “subjective” narrative, with the focus of the story being a woman’s sexual relations as seen through private letters; (2) there is still the use of excessively long, minute detail written in the sex scenes of the novel, keeping that objectivity. Austen clearly uses more internal characterization, focusing on the personality of the character and impressions made by that character. Though *Pride and Prejudice* is written in the third person narrative, the narration only gives insight into Elizabeth’s thoughts and intentions. This format leaves no room for objectivity since everything the reader knows and assumes is provided through the filtering of Elizabeth’s perception, hence Austen’s writing being labeled subjective. A positive to having a comparison for novels spanning 50 years across the century also shows how quickly writing techniques of the English novel evolved.

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<sup>75</sup> Ian P. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1957), 157.

In the textual example, Austen describes Mr. Darcy as, “clever...haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting.” Austen further goes on to mention that Mr. Darcy’s uninviting nature “continually giving offense.” Very little does Austen go into the physical descriptions of Mr. Darcy, or any other character for that matter, or beyond what needs to be known. Even when Austen does give more physical descriptions, she tends to stick to holistic views, saying simple words like “handsome” or “tall.”<sup>76</sup>

When Cleland is describing Charles, Fanny’s first lover, you can see the mix of external and internal descriptors. Where Mr. Darcy’s it is aloofness that is supposed to make him “unattractive” to Elizabeth, Charles is immediately described as being a “old jolly stager,” a nod to his physical age which is unsettling to think about in regards to how young Fanny was in the beginning of the novel (around 14 years old).<sup>77</sup> For Cleland, his writing usually comes off as mechanical, even though *Fanny Hill*’s epistolary format allows for the ability to be subjective, “*Fanny Hill* focuses intensely on Fanny’s visceral experiences of a range of sex acts, illustrating erotic pleasure and pain less as psychological experiences than as immediate, embodied, mechanical experiences.”<sup>78</sup> However, here, Cleland writes Charles with a more subjective perspective, portraying him to believably be the first, and only person, Fanny falls in love with. Interestingly, Charles’ character description is one of the more tender in the novel. Immediately after Charles’ physical description, Fanny describes Charles as someone who “understood life perfectly well,” a subtle addition to his physical description indicating that he is not only older but also smart. Unlike Elizabeth, who is repulsed by Mr. Darcy’s intimidating stature, her dislike of him being evident, Fanny appears to be intrigued by Charles’ intimidation. During breakfast,

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<sup>76</sup> Austen, 7, 10

<sup>77</sup> Cleland, 2

<sup>78</sup> Aaron Hanlon. "Fanny Hill and the Legibility of Consent." *ELH* 86, no. 4 (2019): 941-966; 944. doi:10.1353/elh.2019.0035.

Fanny's comment about Charles "leering archly at [her]," shows that Charles' attention, no matter how uneasy she feels towards it, brings her some sort of joy. Fanny's attitude towards Charles reveals that Fanny may be misunderstanding the type of attention Charles shows her because she is blinded by her feelings for him. Fanny describes her feelings when she says, "a timidity which true love had a greater share in than even maiden bashfulness." When she first meets Charles, Fanny was new to prostitution and still a virgin. However, Fanny's hesitancy towards Charles is because her strong and instant affection for him overpowers any shyness and anxiety. Cleland presents us here with what seems to be a "love at first sight" trope, a writing technique often used in "romance novels." After this initial interaction between Fanny and Charles, this viewpoint can reveal two implications: (1) Fanny's naivety will cause her to be prone to developing strong, irreplaceable affections for Charles; (2) it is clear here that Charles' relationship with Fanny will be different than others. Although *Fanny Hill* is not categorized a "romance novel," aspects of "true love" and marrying for love are prominent topics in the novel. Despite Fanny's work as a prostitute and taking on many lovers, she desires a monogamous relationship with Charles, a dream deemed unlikely in the real world. Because of Fanny's "love story" with Charles, and her seemingly "happy ending" (her marriage to Charles and inheritance from a wealthy lover), *Fanny Hill* can definitely be seen as "romantic" and "imaginary" (a satisfying ending for an impoverished prostitute). However, Cleland is able to disguise this aspect of the novel well because the vulgarity and mechanical language drastically overpowers Fanny and Charles' love story, causing the novel's association to be outside the realms of romance, thus making its comparison to *Pride and Prejudice*, a beloved, classic "love story," seemingly absurd.

## II. The Parents

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character.

...

Her [Mrs. Bennet] mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news.<sup>79</sup>

– Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

My father, who had received a maim on his limbs, that disabled him from following the more laborious branches of country drudgery, got, by making nets, a scanty subsistence, which was not much enlarged by my mother's keeping a little day-school for the girls in her neighborhood. They had had several children; but none lived to any age except myself, who had received from nature a constitution perfectly healthy.

...

My poor mother had divided her time so entirely between her scholars and her little domestic cares, that she had spared very little to my instruction, having, from her own innocence from all ill, no hint or thought of guarding me against any.<sup>80</sup>

– John Cleland, *Fanny Hill*

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<sup>79</sup> Austen, 7

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<sup>80</sup> Cleland, 1-2

Fascinatingly, both Austen and Cleland address the characterization of the protagonists' parents before even presenting a description of the protagonist themselves. These descriptions each take place within the first couple pages, depending on the version of the novel. There are many parallels that can be drawn from both Austen and Cleland's descriptions of the parents, and not just similar descriptors, but the same structure regarding the type of information the narration shares.

Both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fanny Hill* describe the father first. It is unclear whether this was a personal preference (which it could simply be) but it could also refer to the importance of the father's place in a family. The role of the husband is the most important as he is the one who cares and provides for the family. The difference between the external and internal characterization is laid out more clearly here. Austen describes Mr. Bennet using only internal descriptors saying, "Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice. . . ." Oppositely, Cleland uses only physical descriptions of Fanny's father (neither of Fanny's parents are given names so both will be referred to now as Mr. and Mrs. Hill) saying, "My father, who had received a maim on his limbs, that disabled him from following the more laborious branches of country drudgery, got, by making nets, a scanty subsistence." Mr. Hill is described as someone who is disabled as a result of laborious work, in order to support his family. This description of Mr. Hill tells not only of his physical appearance, but of the family's financial situation. The fact that Mr. Hill is disabled implies that their family likely lived in poverty during her childhood, based on his taking on of laborious work and his need to continue working despite having a disability. The reader does not learn of Mr. Bennet's occupation until further into *Pride and Prejudice*. Even then, it is implied that Mr. Bennet's main priority is to see his daughters' married, further supporting their wealthy status. Oddly enough, the Bennet sisters



and Fanny are in the same position, pressured with needing to outsource stability; Cleland uses Mr. Hill's occupational description to solely introduce the family as poverty stricken, his eventual death would not benefit Fanny at all, and upon the death of Mr. Bennet neither Mrs. Bennet or his daughters will receive any inheritance due to women being unable to inherit land.

Following both descriptions of the father, is the description of the mother and the mother's relationship with the father. Interestingly, neither protagonists, or fathers, have satisfactory relationships with the mother. Mrs. Bennet is described as being insufficient in understanding her husband in twenty-three years of marriage, and Mrs. Hill devoted her time to working at a day school to help support the family, consequently creating a distance between both Fanny and her husband.

Austen focuses on the state of Mrs. Bennet's mind, giving the implication that she falls victim to "hysteria." Austen describes this by writing, "Her mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous." Mrs. Bennet's outbursts and inappropriate behavior annoyed Elizabeth, and these behaviors became the usual cause of embarrassment to the Bennet family. Mrs. Bennet is a representation of the mental afflictions that could be imposed on women and how that could affect social images. Mrs. Bennet wants nothing more than getting her daughters married, and it is mentioned that this endeavor, and any associated news, is what brings her solace. Mrs. Bennet is aware of the consequences of Mr. Bennet's death, knowing they would be left with nothing, and though she is a nuisance to the family, her intentions are just. Interestingly, in most of Austen's novels, the protagonists' mothers are either absent or absent-minded. This could be because Austen did not have a close relationship with her own mother. Mrs. Austen, like with all of her children, would nurse her babies for a few months and

then pass them off to a wet nurse in the village for the next year, or until the babies could be easily managed. By handing off baby Austen to a nurse, Austen was denied the ability to build a connection with her mother during her prime years as an infant, and that “emotional distance between child and mother is obvious throughout her life; and not only between child and mother.”<sup>81, 82</sup> Because of Austen’s own disconnect with her mother, it is possible that she either chose not to incorporate this relationship into her female protagonists believing that a good relationship with a mother is not important to character development, or she simply did not know how to. Either way, there is clear personal influence in her characterization of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet further supporting that Austen’s stories, in some way, reflect her reality.

Cleland describes Mrs. Hill’s duration in Fanny’s life as brief and, like Mrs. Bennet’s role, uninfluential. Cleland’s own mother, Lucy DuPass Cleland, appeared to be absent, or at least uninfluential in Cleland’s life, similar to Austen’s situation.<sup>83</sup> Cleland writes that Mrs. Hill spared very little time to Fanny’s instruction, Fanny blaming her mother’s lack of attention and care to be the reason her innocence went unguarded (interestingly, this is the only the only time Fanny blames someone other than herself for her misfortunes – discussed more in the next section). Fanny is the only child surviving in her family, meaning that Fanny did not have to compete for her mother’s attention. However, grief from losing many children, and working to support her family, may have “overwhelmed” Mrs. Hill to the point she would not have been able to care for Fanny.

Though Austen and Cleland lived completely different lives, it is clear the lack of a maternal figure is something both authors share in their personal life and it translates into their

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<sup>81</sup> Tomalin, 7

<sup>82</sup> Tomalin, 8

<sup>83</sup> Hal Gladfelder, *Fanny Hill in Bombay: The Making and Unmaking of John Cleland* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ. Pr., 2012), 10.

writing. It also shows that despite gender, rank in society, and wealth, similar traumas cause similar afflictions.

### III. The Self

There are few people whom I really love, and still fewer of whom I think well of. The more I see of the world, the more I am dissatisfied with it; and every day confirms my belief of the inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of merit or sense.<sup>84</sup>

– Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

But our virtues and our vices depend too much on our circumstances; unexpectedly beset as I was, betrayed by a mind weakened by a long severe affliction, and stunned with the terrors of a goal, my defeat will appear the more excusable, since I certainly was not present at, or a party in any sense to it.<sup>85</sup>

–John Cleland, *Fanny Hill*

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<sup>84</sup> Austen, 135

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<sup>85</sup> Cleland, 66

The two textual examples presented before this are descriptions of other characters through the point of view of the protagonist, but here are examples of inward perceptions of Elizabeth Bennet and Fanny Hill towards themselves. In context, both quotes are said in response to being hurt by men: Mr. Bingley leaving Jane, Elizabeth's close sister whom she has a close bond with, and Charles leaving Fanny, driving her into poverty and having to revert back to prostitution in order to make rent (this experience being after returning to the field, being in service for Mr. H. whom she then becomes a kept woman to).

Elizabeth, having the privilege of growing up and living in a comfortable environment, is in the situation to have prejudices against others. Being surrounded by those of wealth and higher rank, Elizabeth is exposed to more people who have comparable character (e.g. the contrast between Mr. Collins and Mr. Darcy). However, her prejudices tend to extend farther than she is able to claim; Elizabeth blames the "inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of merit or sense." She is saying that there is very little who is capable of being trusted, no matter their position in society or relationship to her. Elizabeth objectifies other people by saying "all human characters," she is grouping all humans together as the same, not just calling out men, or "mankind," but women as well. The implication of this statement by Elizabeth shows how she holds herself to a higher standard. She believes that her trust must be earned and it is near impossible to find someone worthy of that trust.

Cleland writes Fanny as being as a young woman who seems to be attracted to the intimidation she feels from Charles possibly because she keeps finding herself in difficult situations, though not always the fault of her own, resulting in her only knowing certain

behaviors. When Fanny describes herself, what stands out is her saying, “unexpectedly beset as I was, betrayed by a mind weakened by a long severe affliction, and stunned with the terrors of a goal, my defeat will appear the more excusable, since I certainly was not present at, or a party in any sense to it.” Unlike Elizabeth, Fanny holds herself to a lower standard, often seeing herself as a victim made by her own doing; Fanny only blames herself, her own weakness, rather than her mistreatment from people. Where Elizabeth views herself as an “object” experiencing the “inconsistencies” of others, she believes that those whom she considers an agent of misfortune can be avoided; Fanny sees herself as that “agent” in which her own misfortune is unavoidable. Fanny uses words such as “betrayed,” “weakened,” and “defeat” to describe herself, indicating the strength of the despair she feels towards her situation, eventually causing her to begin dissociating from her present reality.

One can see Cleland’s portrayal of Fanny’s despair as him exaggerating the weakness of women since Fanny’s distraught state was brought on by the loss of Charles. However, Austen, herself, fell victim to such feelings. After Austen lost her brother in law, Tom Fowle, as a result of the Austen family being so close, Austen’s sadness caused her to look for ways to escape reality. Thus, *Pride and Prejudice* was written as a happy and humorous romance, taking a different tone from her real life. Furthermore, like Fanny, Austen also would also take a more insensitive tone in her letters. Tomalin addresses this saying,

The most striking aspect of Jane’s adult letters is their defensiveness. They lack tenderness towards herself as much as towards others...They are the letters of someone who does not open her heart; and in the adult who avoids intimacy you send the

child who was uncertain what to expect love or to look for security, and armoured herself against rejection.<sup>86</sup>

Tomalin notes here that some of Austen's personal trauma, such as the lack of attention she received from her mother, her admiration (and maybe jealousy?) of Eliza's freedom, and her fear of having a loveless marriage is evident in how Austen writes of herself in her letters. In some ways, Austen emotionally reflects Fanny. This revelation shows that Cleland was able to actually portray an accurate portrayal of an eighteenth century woman, if not through experience, then through the psyche. Austen may have written Elizabeth to foil herself, but in reality *Pride and Prejudice* is imaginative, well at least more imaginative than *Fanny Hill*.

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<sup>86</sup> Tomalin, 8

## Chapter 2: A Comparison of Frances Burney and Samuel Richardson

In the previous chapter I showed how characters can be influenced by the author's personal background and how different stylistic forms can be used to depict those characters. By looking at Frances Burney's *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, I now intend to examine further into how "accurate" the portrayals of Evelina and Pamela are in respect to the eighteenth century British-aristocratic female.<sup>87</sup> Instead of focusing on realism coming from the personal background of the authors and character descriptions, as was done with Jane Austen and John Cleland, I will focus on analyzing perception through the lens of the characters themselves, using how the characters react to situations and interpret interactions. In being more distant from the author's biographical detail outside of the novel, I will take a more psychological viewpoint, looking at specific moments to compare how Evelina and Pamela's reactions and interpretations align with the message of upholding virtue, a lesson intended to be taught through these novels and aimed at young women readers at the time. Therefore, the author's creative liberties are of greater importance.

### *Standardization of Female Characters*

Nancy Armstrong states that "critics have much preferred to regard Pamela as representing an enclosed and gendered self rather than a form of writing that helped to create this concept of the individual."<sup>88</sup> Viewing Pamela as a holistic representative figure instead of her

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<sup>87</sup> "Accurate" as referred to and defined as "accuracy" in section, "Representation of the Female Character" of the Introduction.

<sup>88</sup> Armstrong, 30



own character is interesting, since this implies that the “virtue” that Pamela displays, and her thoughts, must be representative to eighteenth century women as a whole. Furthermore, Ros Ballister writes that “Richardson’s narratives were, then, taken as a the new model for fiction more by virtue of their overt claims to moral purity than the probability of their plots.”<sup>89</sup>

Fascinatingly, Richardson’s novels operated outside the scope of “imagination” and rather inside the realm of moral realism (unlike Cleland’s novel *Fanny Hill* which people criticized for depicting an improbable scenario where a woman of Fanny's prostitute status gains an inheritance and finds a happy ending).<sup>90</sup> To elaborate further, Ballister says,

...the accusation of improbability had come to stand for that of immorality. The likelihood of a serving-maid finally marrying her wealthy and status-obsessed master was, after all, no more or less probable in the English society of the 1740s, than that of an Italian nun eloping from a convent with a Scottish nobleman in that of the 1720s.<sup>91</sup>

Richardson set the standard for novelistic fiction in the mid eighteenth century. But, during a time when there was a shift to the “realistic” from the “fantastical,” it seems contradictory that Richardson would be praised for his work only being semi-realistic, with realism only pertaining to the virtue shown by the female protagonist and not the external circumstances. However, Richardson’s holistic representation of women in Pamela is harmful because idealizing the concept of the morally superior woman diminished the possibilities of female self representation for women writers which canceled out their “truth” in the matter of female representation.<sup>92</sup> As

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<sup>89</sup> Ballaster, 198

<sup>90</sup> Ballaster, 198

<sup>91</sup> Ballaster, 198

<sup>92</sup> Ballaster, 208

such, female authors, like Burney, chose to distance themselves from their works, often publishing anonymously or under pseudonyms, in order to avoid association between themselves and unreputable female authors to create an acceptable connection between themselves and their “morally upright heroines,” thus having their reputation, or associated reputation, not overshadow their work.<sup>93</sup>

Susan Manning explains,

By virtue, of their public roles, men enjoyed a metonymic or representative function that stabilised their metaphoric, transactional relation to their surroundings; seen ‘in private life alone’, in this ethos a woman was metonymically null, deprived of transactional value which defined ‘character’ as property in which the self can claim ownership. If women *were* ‘seen’ in private, it was men who did the looking.<sup>94</sup>

Here, Manning is explaining that male authors, like Richardson, had their own narrative to how a woman was viewed, a narrative in which they controlled. During this time, it was a losing battle for women authors as to who had control over the female narrative. What stands out in Manning’s description of the “carelessness” of women, is the use of the word “transactional.” She mentions that not just women themselves, but their “character”, was defined as “property.” This terminology suggests that women authors did not even have ownership over themselves, and thus could not possibly have ownership or realistic claim towards their own female protagonists even if such fictional characters mirrored the “authoress.”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Ballaster, 208

<sup>94</sup> Manning 109

<sup>95</sup> Ballaster, 208: A term used by Burney in one of her letters

The term “transactional” sounds very economical. It is a very mechanical term to describe women who are seen to be very sensible. Deirdre Lynch speaks to the “economy of character” and the “individuating identification” for fictional characters, she says, “a consumption practice reshaped by that romantic recasting that made knowledge of characters’ truths into personal, private knowledge: that our transactions with characters remain, that change notwithstanding, profoundly social experiences.”<sup>96</sup> Lynch explains character as being “sanctioned versions of what ‘the self’ is or should be.”<sup>97</sup> In this sense, combining what Manning has stated previously with Lynch’s statement, authors, create characters through narrow lens, that is possibly created out of the imaginary or their biased sense of knowledge; male authors in particular, view women through how the characterized woman, deemed ideal to society, and reflect that overarching concept into their female protagonists. Those female authors who may be concerned with reputation and success, may also want to adhere to these perceptions in their characters while attaining no recognition for their work in order to legitimize the concept of the female character they created.

Though female authors tended to remain distant from their characters, Lynch explains the “*Pamela* phenomenon” which shows evidence that in mid-eighteenth century readers enjoyed having an intense personal involvement with a character; towards the end of the eighteenth century, character reading was reinvented as an occasion in which readers self inserted themselves and their own interior knowledge hoping to reveal hidden depths to characters.<sup>98</sup> The blurring of distinctions between reader’s empathy with who a character is and empathy for what the character feels or does caused a discrepancy in understanding how, when shifting social

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<sup>96</sup> Lynch, 20

<sup>97</sup> Lynch, 12

<sup>98</sup> Lynch, 10

circumstances, the personal, the private, the pleasurable, and the psychological relay between each other. Staticness in the reputation for characters became difficult to maintain with the rise of “identification,” what we choose to do with characters as relations between different sectors because there were changes in the discourse between the “reading public” and the discourses that instruct people in how to imagine themselves (e.g. as participants in a nation, market place, followers of fashion, etc.) .<sup>99</sup>

Furthermore, female authors would want to acquire their own literary reputation by asserting their difference from the “fair Triumvirate of Wit” (Eliza Haywood, Delarivier Manley, and Aphra Behn: seventeenth and eighteenth century female authors whose fiction was amatory and did not conform to the sentimental and domestic moralism that dominated the novelistic discourse of the time).<sup>100</sup> Ballaster suggests that the “fair Triumvirate” appear to have been written out of the history of the rise of the novel in order to secure the reputations of female authors.<sup>101</sup> In a way, this protects female authors to maintain legitimacy and their reputation after the ability for a woman to self-adopt a “public” voice (as done so by Haywood, Manley and Behn) while still maintaining critical acclaim radically diminished.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Lynch, 10-11

<sup>100</sup> Ballaster, 201

<sup>101</sup> Ballaster, 211; Ballaster says, “It has only been in recent years that this history of the novel has begun to be reassessed and revised, ensuring that Aphra Behn, Delarvier Manley, and Eliza Haywood be accorded the serious attention their prose writing deserve”

<sup>102</sup> Ballaster, 208

*Morality as Psychology*

Stephanie Hershinow writes about the critiques of Richardson and Henry Fielding's method of characterization, by English writer Samuel Johnson.<sup>103</sup> Hershinow points out how Johnson fears moral ambiguity and prefers characters to have more clear cut manners, and she even mentions that Johnson's assessments would tend to contradict each other in the value of early realism. Johnson seemed to align with Richardson's "mastery of naturalistic psychology" over Fielding's "character of manners" in which Richardson's character involved looking deeper into the human heart in order to understand the character; however, Johnson has also stated that he enjoyed the perfection of Richardson's protagonists as opposed to Fielding's flawed individuals. Furthermore, the praises Johnson would sing of Richardson over Fielding, would stir up this debate of whose characters are more "true." This adds even more blurriness because not only would Johnson continuously contradict himself, his assessments would tend to favor the too-good-to-be-true.<sup>104</sup> Hershinow continues by saying that both "Richardson and Fielding have fundamentally different understandings of how characters should encounter and respond to plot, specifically in terms of how isolated a protagonist can or should be from the workings of plot, understood as the literary depiction of experience."<sup>105</sup> This understanding between Richardson and Fielding can also be applied to Richardson and Burney, or even previously spoken about, Jane Austen and John Cleland. In the end, the author is the one who holds all of the creative power, having the ability to choose the trajectory of the plot and how the protagonist responds, regardless of the author's gender, and as seen with the assessments done by Samuel Johnson, what the reader prefers is ultimately left in the hands of personal preference.

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<sup>103</sup> Stephanie Insley Hershinow, *Born Yesterday: Inexperience and the Early Realist Novel* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), 63.

<sup>104</sup> Hershinow, 64

<sup>105</sup> Hershinow, 64

When discussing the characters of *Pamela* and *Evelina* it is undeniable that they are two young women susceptible to external impressions. Though Pamela seems to be impervious to such impressions, that is not completely the case. It is not by the hands of a lover, or a stranger, or servant, it is the influence of the parental figures that seem to create and shape both Pamela and Evelina's characters (looking outside of the author's influence). Below are two excerpts from each novel, first from *Pamela* then from *Evelina*, detailing letters received from the parental figures respective of the protagonists: Pamela's letter is from her mother and father, and Evelina's letter is from Mr. Villars, Evelina's father figure throughout the novel (when using "parents" as group reference, Mr. Villars will be included, not Evelina's real mother and father, Sir John and Caroline Belmont). The respective letters come in response to Pamela's remarks to Mr. B's gifts, and in response to Evelina's letters detail her first exposure to London society and gaining "unwanted" attention from men, particularly unwanted advancements from Sir Clement:

I cannot but renew my cautions on your master's kindness, and his free expression to you about the stockings. Yet there may not be, and I hope there is not, anything in it. But when I reflect, that there possibly may, and that if there should, no less depends upon it than my child's everlasting happiness in this world and the next; it is enough to make one fearful for you. Arm yourself, my dear child, for the worst; and resolve to lose your life sooner than your virtue. What though the doubts I filled you with, lessen the pleasure you would have had in your master's kindness; yet what signifies the delights that arise from a few paltry fine clothes, in comparison with a good conscience?

These are, indeed, very great favours that he heaps upon you, but so much the more to be suspected; and when you say he looked so amiably, and like an angel, how afraid I am, that they should make too great an impression upon you! For, though you are blessed with sense and prudence above your years, yet I tremble to think, what a sad hazard a poor maiden of little more than fifteen years of age stands against the temptations of this world, and a designing young gentleman, if he should prove so, who has so much power to oblige, and has a kind of authority to command, as your master.

I charge you, my dear child, on both our blessings, poor as we are, to be on your guard; there can be no harm in that. And since Mrs. Jervis is so good a gentlewoman, and so kind to you, I am the easier a great deal, and so is your mother; and we hope you will hide nothing from her, and take her counsel in every thing. So, with our blessings, and assured prayers for you, more than for ourselves, we remain,<sup>106</sup>

– Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*

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<sup>106</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 17-18.

Your evident concern at leaving London is very natural, and yet it afflicts me. I ever dreaded your being too much pleased with a life of dissipation, which youth and vivacity render but too alluring; and I almost regret the consent for your journey, which I had not the resolution to withhold.

Alas, my child, the artfulness of your nature, and the simplicity of your education, alike unfit you for the thorny paths of the great and busy world. The supposed obscurity of your birth and situation, makes you liable to a thousand disagreeable adventures. Not only my views, but my hopes for your future life, have ever centered in the country. Shall I own to you, that, however I may differ from Captain Mirvan in other respects, yet my opinion of the town, its manners, inhabitants, and diversions, is much upon a level with his own? Indeed it is the general harbour of fraud and of folly, of duplicity and of impertinence; and I wish few things more fervently, than that you may have taken a lasting leave of it.

Remember, however, that I only speak in regard to a public and dissipated life; in private families we may doubtless find as much goodness, honesty, and virtue, in London as in the country. If contented with a retired station, I still hope I shall live to see my Evelina the ornament of her neighbourhood, and the pride and delight of her family; and giving and receiving joy from such society as may best deserve her affection, and employing herself in such useful and innocent occupations as may secure and merit the tenderest love of her friends, and the worthiest satisfaction of her own heart. Such are my hopes, and such have been my expectations. Disappoint them not, my beloved child; but cheer me with a few lines, that may assure me, this one short fortnight spent in town has not undone the work of seventeen years spent in the country.<sup>107</sup>

– Frances Burney, *Evelina*

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<sup>107</sup> Frances Burney, *Evelina, or, the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, ed. Stewart J Cooke (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998), 97-98.



You can see a direct comparison of the parental figures' responses to the male attention Pamela and Evelina are receiving (Pamela, Mr. B and Evelina, Sir Clement and Lord Orville). Breaking down these excerpts, first you realize that both parental figures express concern for the protagonists. Pamela's parents write, "I cannot but renew my cautions on your master's kindness, and his free expression to you about the stockings. Yet there may not be, and I hope there is not, anything in it," and Mr. Villars writes to Evelina saying, "Your evident concern at leaving London is very natural, and yet it afflicts me. I ever dreaded your being too much pleased with a life of dissipation, which youth and vivacity render but too alluring; and I almost regret the consent for your journey, which I had not the resolution to withhold." Comparing these two lines, both parents address the natural concern the young woman expresses such as for Pamela's uneasiness of Mr. B's kindness and Evelina being in London for the first time and yet not long after both parents dismiss these concerns.

Pamela and Evelina also express to their parents concerns regarding male attention, indicating they are probably looking for their input and/or approval. In return, they each receive reminders of how smart and virtuous they are and to uphold that. Pamela's parents tell her, "For, though you are blessed with sense and prudence above your years..." and "Arm yourself, my dear child, for the worst; and resolve to lose your life sooner than your virtue." After receiving Pamela's news of Mr. B giving her much of his late mother's wardrobe, Pamela's parents passively tell her to be weary but then escalate to then advise her to uphold her virtue, as nothing Mr. B can do to her more than losing her virtue. Pamela's consistent letters to her parents also suggest that she highly respects their opinion and was most likely reinforced with this virtuous mindset since childhood. Comparatively, Mr. Villars writes to Evelina saying, "Alas, my child, the artfulness of your nature, and the simplicity of your education, alike unfit you for the thorny

paths of the great and busy world” and “If contented with a retired station, I still hope I shall live to see my Evelina the ornament of her neighbourhood, and the pride and delight of her family...Such are my hopes, and such have been my expectations.” Similarly to Pamela’s parents, Mr. Villars reinforces the idea that Evelina is “special” in her natural goodness and that she is destined to be an “ornament of the family.” Not only is it Mr. Villars’ hope for Evelina to excel, it is his expectation. The universal nature for children wanting to please their parents, as well as the lessons taught by them, is evident in both Pamela and Evelina and the root of their strong virtuous nature is evident in their upbringing as well. Psychologically, these lessons must be ingrained in their mind, causing any contradictory action to be manifested as fear of disappointment.

### *Upholding Virtue*

Nancy Armstrong states that critics tend to read Pamela’s sexual encounters as psychological events rather than political. Having this distinction allowed for the texts to be distinct in conversation between two genders rather than a person of station and a person of low rank. This was a framework that benefited the author similarly to how the “feminine voice” would have when on the cusp of sensitive topics. As both Pamela and Evelina are given situations “tests” that test their goodness and virtue, these “tests” usually come from the sexual advancements of men or the male characters’ ill treatment of the protagonists. This poor outlook on what happens in the private world could question such dignities (if these behaviors were extended to all men) and cause outrage towards the novel and author.

Interestingly, Pamela and Evelina each encounter advancements from a male character they both interpret as shocking, Pamela from Mr. B and Evelina from Sir Clement, where each was able to avoid falling victim to these advancements, upholding their virtue. However, the main difference between Pamela and Evelina is their naiveness. Pamela is “innocent,” she is not uneducated, as per her knowledge of the story of Lucretia, famous ancient Roman noblewoman who was raped.<sup>108</sup> She seems to understand the advancements of Mr. B and is able to comprehend the circumstances of losing her virtue, thus allowing her to always be aware of how her virtue could be lost. Every sexual advancement that Mr. B makes towards Pamela causes her to either run away and hide or fight to resist him. In Evelina’s case, she is described to be good natured, but unlike Pamela who inherently has a perfect moral code, undergoes a process of “trial and error” to learn what is proper and what is not. For example, in a less harmful scene, when Evelina attends her first ball, she is unaware of the rudeness she shows by refusing to dance with Mr. Lovel, the first person to ask her, then goes to dance with Lord Orville. Evelina is informed that she must dance with the first person to ask her or to not dance at all.<sup>109</sup> This is an etiquette she was previously unaware of which causes her embarrassment. Then later on in the novel, when Evelina was on the carriage ride home with Sir Clement after the opera, Sir Clement began to express his interest in Evelina, kissing her hand, in which Evelina mistakes for ill intent saying, “If you do not intend to murder me, for mercy’s, for pity’s sake, let me get out!”<sup>110</sup> Evelina finds herself to be mistaken towards Sir Clement’s actions and thus feels ashamed. Though after Evelina’s rejection of Sir Clement sparks his retaliation towards her (because of his jealousy for Evelina’s affections towards Lord Orville, he writes a false letter from Lord Orville to Evelina), at least by the end of the novel he apologizes and is implied to have moved on from

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<sup>108</sup> Richardson, 29, 32

<sup>109</sup> Burney, 28-29

<sup>110</sup> Burney, 83

Evelina.<sup>111</sup> However, Pamela's ability to uphold her virtue is tested again and again by Mr. B. On several occasions Mr. B kisses Pamela without her consent and tries to sexually assault her, Pamela just slipping away on time or fainting; and on several other occasions does Mr. B continuously gaslights and lies to Pamela constantly manipulating her (giving fake promises to send her home, accusing Pamela of harboring feelings for Mr. Williams and demanding he read her private letter as proof of her denial of the accusation) into the point where Pamela eventually believes she loves Mr. B by the end of the novel, which arguably, Pamela never possesses any true or natural feelings towards Mr. B.<sup>112</sup>

The difference between Pamela and Evelina's bildungsroman is that Pamela never truly endures any moral growth, nor any character growth either; Evelina is shown to be initially flawed where Pamela has no indication of such. It is presented that Pamela stays static and strong in her virtue and morals at which she stays true to until the end. Evelina, is instead shown as kind in several ways (like giving money to Mr. Macartney, a destitute Scottish poet, also revealed to be Evelina's half-brother)<sup>113</sup>. Hershinow explains that Burney saw adolescence beginning around the age of 15 in this time in which one seeks identity.<sup>114</sup> Burney almost presents Evelina as a "clean slate" in which her identity has room to grow and mature as it had not had before her years of development. Evelina obviously has a lot more to learn in which her overall character is built up over the course of the novel. Having grown up in the secluded countryside, she had not been exposed to proper society or those who may show her harm; but all her growth was rewarded with Evelina obtaining a true family: Sir John Belmont, her aristocratic and biological

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<sup>111</sup> Burney, 321

<sup>112</sup> Richardson, 33, 213

<sup>113</sup> Burney, 179-180, 265

<sup>114</sup> Hershinow, 115

father, Mr. Macartney, her brother, and married to Lord Orville whom she loved from the beginning.

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In reality there is not much “truth” presented in either *Pamela* or *Evelina*. The lessons and consequences endured by both Pamela and Evelina lead to both being hyperboles of morality and good nature. But in saying so, *Evelina* appears to be the more “true” representation of female representation, but not by much. This is only so because it is believable that a young girl raised in the secluded countryside would not initially know proper etiquette of English high society and mistakenly interprets certain intentions of other characters. It feels irrational, though not impossible, that a young female character like Pamela could uphold such strong will and character for as long as she did. But what is most unrealistic is when Pamela explains the proposals that Mr. B presents to her to initially become his mistress. In a way, these proposals are like a contract that Pamela must agree to.<sup>115</sup> A woman would not have been involved in such matters; a contract is something that is legally binding, an object belonging to the “public sphere” where women would not have been allowed. Even Pamela says herself, “I have a father and mother, I am not my own mistress, poor as they are; and I’ll see myself quite at liberty, before I shall think myself fit to make a choice,” thus Pamela would not have been at liberty to agree to such terms.<sup>116</sup> Additionally, Pamela, during her time working for Mr. B, seems to have been given many liberties and unrealistic resolutions which would be wrong to ask a young woman to follow Pamela as a true role model, as the very end of the novel does so to the reader, since Pamela conceives of “unrealistic” expectations that a master would fall in love and marry a servant girl (a similar, hypocritical event that *Fanny Hill* was ridiculed for).

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<sup>115</sup> Richardson 173-177

<sup>116</sup> Richardson, 136

## Conclusions

Based on the evidence presented in the previous chapters, it is sufficient to say that all four authors present their respective female protagonists to be rooted in “unrealistic” expectations and tightly wrapped up endings. In Chapter 1, I explained how the background of the author *can* have an influence on how they write female protagonists. In the case of Jane Austen and John Cleland, they drew on the same aspects of life, both lacking connection with their mother and using writing as a way to better their own lives. Austen and Cleland, though garnering different respects in the literary canon, are very similar in how they approach story structure and character dynamics. In Chapter 2, I spoke about how Samuel Richardson received praise for his portrayal of the ideal woman as a perfect moral compass; that a woman inherently has good intentions and wishes to preserve her innocence. However, Burney took a different approach by having a good natured character learn through her failures by “trial and error.” In comparison to *Pamela*, *Evelina*, and even extending the conversation to *Fanny Hill* and *Pride and Prejudice*, completed their respective journeys without making a mistake. Richardson makes *Pamela* seem so unrealistic in her goodness and morality, that it comes off as impossible to follow as a demonstration for the younger audience.

In the end, what became the most important in making these conclusions, and the following rankings, was the psychological interpretation and development of the characters. Yes, exploring the background of the authors served as a great reference as to whether any of the authors are capable or narrating their reality. But ultimately, in finding how similar Austen and Cleland are, (assumed in the beginning to be the most distant in comparing their personal lives) it would not have been possible to make any sufficient conclusions based on that.

Overall, there were no implications that one gender of authorship retained a more “realistic” and “accurate” representation than the other. As the following rankings suggest, the evidence presented caused a mixed result.

*So, Who is the Most Accurate?*

The author who depicts the most “accurate” portrayal is John Cleland’s *Fanny Hill*. Though *Fanny Hill* was riddled with vulgarity, the despair that Fanny endures when losing Charles and the fear of having to return to prostitution is reasonable. Fanny often self-blames as she finds herself in the center of all her misfortunes, meaning she is aware of her predicament, having been victim to being impressionable at such a young age, and therefore justifying her hatred towards life. The narration is told from the perspective of an older Fanny, and through this, the reader can see how much Fanny grows in character and matures intellectually through her years, learning through experience on her own. Though seemingly unrealistic, until the end little authorship manipulated outcomes to favor Fanny (like when Fanny retaliates against Mr. H by seducing his footman, he does not just forgive her, but chooses to part with her). Self loathing and despair is not uncommon to be found in female written letters since Jane Austen herself was prone to negative feelings. Therefore Cleland is deemed in this case, he most accurate.

The next “true” representation is depicted in Frances Burney’s *Evelina*. As I mentioned before, much of *Evelina* feels unrealistic, but the natural character growth that Evelina endures from experience seems feasible. Her country upbringing and lack of knowledge to the proprieties of high society incited reasonable embarrassment which she resisted to let happen again. Evelina herself was already naturally in the network of the aristocracy, so her external

circumstances appear more favorable and her situation less dire than the other female protagonists (Fanny and Pamela coming from poor backgrounds, and Elizabeth needing to marry or she will end up poor). Evelina has a father figure in Mr. Villars, a respectable clergyman, and Evelina was lucky enough to have her real father be of aristocratic rank who eventually accepted her as his daughter. Evelina was already set up for a comfortable life regardless, a path that many women in the aristocracy would probably have as well.

Third is Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. For an author so famous for her female protagonists, especially Elizabeth Bennet, it is difficult to imagine that Austen would rank so far down. However, Austen had written *Pride and Prejudice* as foil to her own life, a work of the imagination. Imagination automatically implies "unrealistic." Of course Elizabeth Bennet is a smart and headstrong woman, but Austen probably saw Elizabeth as someone who she wants to be, making her a projection of Austen's desires, and thus giving Elizabeth many favorable attributes that Austen deemed appealing. It is unbelievable to think that a woman of Elizabeth's intelligence would uphold her apprehension of loveless marriages when she herself needed to find a husband in order to survive.

Lastly, and not surprisingly, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* is listed as the most inaccurate portrayal of a realistic female protagonist. The fact that Pamela is written with the purpose of serving as a role model to inspire young women to uphold their virtue automatically strips her of any relatable aspects. Pamela's will and her faith is strong, too strong, for the matter that it is unbelievable that she would not have an unwavering thought or question in it. It is also unbelievable that a man of Mr. B's rank would change his entire character because of Pamela's commitment to her virtue. It is even more unbelievable that Mr. B would want to marry Pamela. By doing so, Mr. B is marrying leagues below his rank just because he is in awe of the strength



of her virtue. Not only is Pamela's lack of need for internal character growth unbelievable, but so is her external circumstance.

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If given more time, it would be interesting to dive deeper into these novels and draw more situational comparisons as here are many parallels; it would also be beneficial to conduct comparisons between same gendered authorship (i.e. Burney and Austen, Cleland and Richardson). For a whole new comparison, it would be beneficial to look into the other novels written by these authors, such as Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, Richardson's *Clarissa*, and Burney's *Camilla* – both Richardson and Burney's novels come after their first respective novels, *Pamela* and *Evelina*. Deirdre Lynch mentions that *Camilla*'s "entrance into the world" is Burney's "revisal" of *Evelina*, so it would be interesting to see how Burney's perspective may have changed over the progression of the eighteenth century, and how that compares to other authors as well.